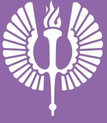

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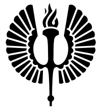
UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

GENDERED SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND COMPLICITY:

A Postcolonial Study of Selected Works by J. M. Coetzee

Amin Beiranvand

TURUN YLIOPISTON JULKAISUJA – ANNALES UNIVERSITATIS TURKUENSIS
SARJA – SER. B OSA – TOM. 656 | HUMANIORA | TURKU 2024



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The originality of this publication has been checked in accordance with the University of Turku quality assurance system using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

ISBN 978-951-29-9599-8 (PRINT)
ISBN 978-951-29-9600-1 (PDF)
ISSN 0082-6987 (Print)
ISSN 2343-3191 (Online)
Painosalama, Turku, Finland 2024

In the memory of my beloved mother.

UNIVERSITY OF TURKU
Faculty of Humanities
School of Languages and Translation Studies, Department of English
AMIN BEIRANVAND: Gendered Sexual Violence and Complicity:
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Doctoral Dissertation, 224 pp.
Doctoral Programme Utuling
May 2024

ABSTRACT

Colonial expansionism has a legacy with continuing effects in the modern era, and Nobel laureate J. M. Coetzee's works are nuanced fictional responses to that legacy. In this dissertation, I analyse the trajectory of the legacy of the colonial/ imperial era for gender-based violence, violence against women representing racially and ethnically oppressed groups as portrayed in three novels: *Dusklands* (1974), *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) and *Disgrace* (1999). I discuss how the representation of these matters might possibly change when Coetzee writes about earlier historical periods compared to more contemporary ones. My analysis shows that patriarchal and imperial power and sexual oppression together with sexual fantasies in connection with power are often depicted in a subtle psychological manner in Coetzee's works. The offensive mistreatment of women by male characters in the novels exhibits pathological strands in patriarchy. In the novels, this pathology is related to gendered sexualised violence but it relates also to the larger theme of colonial and imperial domination and the refusal to acknowledge the colonised others' rights. In the novels, gender-based sexual violence is repeatedly related to the male characters' incapacity to connect to, and ultimately feel sympathy for, the other. It evinces their monstrous, flawed humanity. They take the idea of their racial superiority as granted. Coetzee's novels persistently portray the psychological deadlock in which white supremacist characters who are associated with colonial/imperial power find themselves. This psychological deadlock of patriarchy, the colonial expansionism, and the inhumanity of colonial/ imperial ideology represented in the male characters in the novels invite the reader to follow these themes. In the first two novels, gender-based violence happens at the time of colonial expansion, and in the third it is the legacy of the white supremacy era, continuously creating problems. In a similar manner, the notions of confession, complicity and historical guilt are also analysed. After all, the crimes of the past, and the era of colonial expansionism, affect the heirs of the colonisers.

KEYWORDS: gender-based violence, colonial expansionism, postcolonial literature, J. M. Coetzee, confession, complicity, historical guilt

TURUN YLIOPISTO
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Kieli- ja käännöstieteiden laitos, Englannin kieli
AMIN BEIRANVAND: Gendered Sexual Violence and Complicity:
A Postcolonial Study of Selected Works by J. M. Coetzee
Väitöskirja, 224 s.
Utuling-tohtoriohjelma
Toukokuu 2024

TIIVISTELMÄ

Kolonialistisella ekspansionismilla on jatkuvia vaikutuksia nykyaikana, ja Nobel-palkitun J. M. Coetzeen teokset ovat tämän perinnön kirjallinen kuvaus. Väitöskirjassani analysoin sukupuoleen perustuvan väkivallan, rodullisesti ja etnisesti sorrettuihin naisiin kohdistuvan väkivallan, perintöä kehityskulkua kolmessa romaanissa: *Dusklands* (1974), *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) ja *Disgrace* (1999). Analysoin, miten tämän perinnön esittäminen mahdollisesti muuttuu Coetzeen kirjoittaessa aikaisemmista historiallisista ajanjaksoista nykyisempiin aikoihin verrattuna. Analyysi osoittaa, että Coetzeen teoksissa patriarkaalinen ja imperialistinen valta ja seksuaalinen sorto yhdessä valtaan liittyvien seksuaalisten fantasioiden kanssa on usein kuvattu hienovaraisen psykologisesti. Romaanien mieshahmojen naisia loukkaava kohtelu ilmentää patriarkaatin patologisia piirteitä. Romaaneissa tämä patologia liittyy sukupuoleen perustuvaan seksualisoituun väkivaltaan, mutta se liittyy myös laajempaan imperialistiseen siirtomaaherruuteen ja kieltäytymiseen tunnustaa kolonisoidun toisen oikeuksia. Romaaneissa sukupuoleen perustuva seksuaalinen väkivalta liittyy toistuvasti mieshahmojen kyvyttömyyteen olla yhteydessä toiseen ja tuntea myötätuntoa toista kohtaan. Se osoittaa heidän luonnottoman, kieroutuneen ihmisyytensä. Heille ajatus rodullisesta paremmuudestaan on itsestään selvää. Coetzeen romaanit kuvaavat usein kolonialistista/imperialistista valtaa ja valkoisten ylivaltaa edustavien henkilöhahmojen psykologista umpikujaa. Romaanien miesten ilmentämät patriarkaatin psykologisen umpikujan, koloniaalisen ekspansionismin sekä kolonialistisen/imperialistisen ideologian epäinhimillisyyden teemat houkuttelevat lukijan pohtimaan niitä. Kahdessa ensimmäisessä romaanissa sukupuoleen perustuva väkivalta asettuu siirtomaavallan laajentumisen aikaan, ja kolmannessa se on valkoisen ylivallan aikakauden perintöä, joka aiheuttaa edelleen jatkuvasti ongelmia. Analysoin myös tunnustuksen, osallisuuden ja historiallisen syyllisyyden käsitteitä, sillä menneisyyden rikokset ja kolonialistisen ekspansionismin aika vaikuttavat edelleen kolonialismin perillisiin.

ASIASANAT: sukupuoleen perustuva väkivalta, kolonialistinen ekspansionismi, jälkikoloniaalinen kirjallisuus, J. M. Coetzee, tunnustus, osallisuus, historiallinen syyllisyys

Acknowledgements

My debts are many. First and foremost, my thanks and sincere gratitude go to my supervisor, Professor Joel Kuortti, for his meritorious supervision and excellent support during my PhD studies. My thanks also go to my second supervisor, Professor Jason Finch (Åbo Akademi University), who has guided me during these years and shed light on my way from a different vantage point. I have spent many hours discussing my project with my supervisors. They have been very patient, and I have found their comments and analyses of my dissertation invaluable. Their comments have given me new perspectives and have opened up for me new horizons into the literary canon and Coetzee's works. I am in particular grateful to the former Rector of the University, Kalervo Väänänen, who funded me as a research assistant. It was a great opportunity for me: I gained new experience, and this position helped me to support my research financially. It is certain that without this support it would have been unlikely I would have been able to accomplish this dissertation. I am also in debt to the hardworking staff of the Turku University Library, Ludvig Forsman in particular, who have provided me with access to the materials required for. this research. They have always been available and as quick as possible in providing books and scholarly journals needed for my project. Special thanks also go to the administrative staff and fellow researchers of the Doctoral Programme UTULING, the Department of English, and the School of Languages and Translation Studies.

Warm thanks also to Associate Professor Minna Niemi (UiT, The Arctic University of Norway) and Docent John Stotesbury (University of Eastern Finland) who pre-examined my dissertation carefully and provided me with critical perspectives and comments. I am also thankful to Associate Professor Mats Tegmark (Dalarna University, Sweden) and Professor Stefan Helgesson (Stockholm University, Sweden) who meticulously read my dissertation and provided me with invaluable feedback. My heartfelt gratitude goes to Docent John Stotesbury (University of Eastern Finland) who has agreed to act as my opponent in the public defence. It is wonderful to have such an expert as my esteemed opponent on this important occasion.

My special thanks and sincere gratitude go to my parents, especially to my beloved mother, sadly no longer with me, who have always constantly motivated

and encouraged me to continue my studies and supported me to the best of their abilities, both during my PhD studies and during my MA studies in Sweden that functioned as a base upon which I commenced my doctoral research. Definitely, without their support I could not have proceeded to my PhD research and completed this degree. I am also grateful to my brother and sister for their unqualified encouragement and support. I owe a debt of gratitude to my darling wife, who has been a true comrade in particular during my research years and has made every effort to provide the best environment for my research. It was a vital asset to have her beside me, especially during the harder moments of my studies. I am in particular thankful to my sweetie daughter Anahita, who by her adorable statements has always made me feel refreshed. Her cuteness turned any bitter moments to sweetness!

In Turku, May 10, 2024
Amin Beiranvand

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1 Introduction

Nobel Laureate J. M. (John Maxwell) Coetzee (born 1940) is one of the most famous novelists in English, and his works have attained worldwide attention and acclaim. On October 2, 2003, the Swedish Academy awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature to Coetzee for his novels, which have "well-crafted composition, pregnant dialogue and analytical brilliance." The press release announced that Coetzee "is a scrupulous doubter, ruthless in his criticism of the cruel rationalism and cosmetic morality of western civilisation" (nobel prize.org 2003). This comment attests to the constraints of ethics when people gain power. In the preface to his book, *Countries of the Mind: The Fictions of J. M. Coetzee*, Dick Penner (1989, xiii) asserts that Coetzee is "one of the most respectable novelists writing in English." Over the decades, numerous other critics and writers from across the globe have expressed their admiration for Coetzee's works.

Coetzee's significance can be illustrated by glancing over some of the prestigious awards that his works have attained after his debut novel *Dusklands* (1974). *In the Heart of the Country* (1977) won the CNA Award (Central News Agency Literary Award), *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980; references will be given parenthetically, preceded by *WB*) was included in the Penguin list of Great Books of the twentieth century, *The New York Times* (1982, sec. 7, 3) referred to it as one of the best books of 1982, and it won both the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. *Life and Time of Michel K* (1983) was recipient of both the Booker Prize in 1983 and the French "Prix Fémina Etranger" in 1985 (Penner 1989, xiii). *Disgrace* (1999) won Coetzee the Booker Prize for the second time. Thus, Coetzee is one of the four authors who have been the recipient of the prestigious

Booker Prize twice.[1] Significantly, four years after the publication of *Disgrace*, in 2003, Coetzee was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

1.1 Aims and methods

In this dissertation, I analyse selected works by Coetzee in the specific context of racialised gender-based violence and complicity. My analysis focusses in detail, in chronological order, on three of his works, namely *Dusklands* (1974), *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) and *Disgrace* (1999). My main research questions are:

1) What type of trajectory of racialized and gendered sexual violence (i.e., violence against women representing ethnically racialised groups) can one trace in Coetzee's novels in the light of colonial/territorial overpowering?
2) How do the representations of these matters (i.e., the type of trajectory of racialised and gendered sexual violence) change (if they change) between Coetzee's earlier and more recent works?
3) Furthermore, how is complicity, confession and historical guilt in racialised and gendered sexual violence depicted in Coetzee's works?
4) What is the role of the male psyche in the selected works? In other words, in connection with the notion of gender-based violence, can we say that there is a related, yet more overarching theme of patriarchal male pathology represented in each novel?

To begin addressing these questions, I should say that abuse of power by males plays a key role in racialised gender-based violence. In this work, when I refer to gender-based violence, it implies a racialised setting, such as Coetzee's novels depict. It is through the inequality and misuse of power by male characters within the context of imperial/colonial overpowering that such violations happen. Thus, it is pertinent to consider this aspect in the analyses of Coetzee's novels. In the first part of *Dusklands*, "The Vietnam Project," the American forces are more powerful than the Vietnamese, as the American forces and particularly their adviser, Eugene Dawn, are linked with the imperialist system. The Americans treat the native Vietnamese

[1] The other authors are Peter Carey (1988, 2001), Hilary Mantel (2009, 2012) and Margaret Atwood (2000, 2019). Coetzee's other novels include *Age of Iron* (1990), *The Master of Petersburg* (1994), *Elizabeth Costello* (2003), *Slow Man* (2005), *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007), *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013), *The Schooldays of Jesus* (2016) and *The Death of Jesus* (2019). He has written three autobiographical novels: *Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life* (1997), *Youth: Scenes from Provincial Life II* (2002), *Summertime: Scenes from Provincial Life* (2009; the 2011 omnibus includes the trilogy: *Boyhood*, *Youth* and *Summertime*), as well as short stories and nonfiction works.

violently and exploit them sexually. In the second part, "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," the protagonist Jacobus is viewed as a colonial traveller who symbolically stands for the Dutch colonisers, controls the natives and abuses women sexually by taking advantage of weapons and his hegemonic position. In *Waiting for the Barbarians,* as in *Dusklands,* we witness power inequality in the expansion of imperial domination and sexual abuse, although here there is no mention of ethnicity or colour of the nomads or the Empire (Begam 1992, 424). The Empire tyrannises and tortures the nomads, and its representative, the Magistrate, controls a nomad girl and mentally tortures her by invading her privacy and sexually harasses her. Thus, it can be said that in these two novels the idea of penetration of land, imperial domination and sexual objectification happen together.

As analysed in Chapter 4, power, patriarchy and the colonial era also play key roles in gendered violence in *Disgrace*. In the novel, the protagonist misuses his power sexually by objectifying his student, a violation that resembles the abuse of colonised women during the colonisation epoch, and later on, in what is argued to be the legacy of the white hegemony era, he and his daughter fall prey to predators who abuse their power in turn. The tables of violent power are turned when the protagonist is beaten and remains helpless while his daughter is sexually abused.

In short, all the three novels contain male characters who reveal a pathological strand in patriarchy. Such themes are seen in the light of colonial/imperial expansion. My analysis reveals a certain theme of *male patriarchal pathology* that is evident in these novels.[2] This pathology is twofold: it concerns not only gendered sexual violence but also the larger frame of colonial/imperial expansionism which I shall discuss in this dissertation. It is this psychological deadlock of patriarchy, colonial expansionism, and the inhumanity of colonial/imperial ideology represented in the characters in the selected novels that invite the reader to follow the characters' thoughts. In this dissertation I shall also examine the connection between power relations and sexual fantasies. Dawn, the Magistrate, and Lurie all fantasize sexually about othered females. Of course, the ways they engage in such offenses differ as I shall discuss in the relevant sections, for example, Lurie's way of fantasising about having sex with both Melanie and her sister. Dawn also fantasises sex scenes with the oppressed Vietnamese women, and the Magistrate fantasises the body of the female other. This aspect of Coetzee's work will be considered.

In relation to gendered sexual violence, I also analyse complicity in the narratives and the characterisation of the protagonists, particularly in the light of the notion of

[2] I would like to thank Associate Professor Minna Niemi for suggesting in her pre-examination report the expression 'male patriarchal pathology' to describe this feature embedded in patriarchy. The expression accurately encapsulates the destructive side of male hegemony.

historical guilt. With the first two novels, historical guilt is discussed with regard to the genre of the confessional for the crimes of the imperial agents during the times of imperial expansion. In *Disgrace*, the crimes of the past are a burden on the white protagonist and his daughter. Accordingly, this makes them prone to danger in post-apartheid Africa. I argue that in Coetzee's debut novel, *Dusklands,* there is no prohibition against such felonies as violence and sexual abuse against the 'other', whereas in *Waiting for the Barbarians* it is only the male character's conscience that acts (or tries to act) as a prohibition against such crimes. However, as we move to analyse *Disgrace*, Coetzee's latest work to be discussed here, we notice that in the new South Africa, it is actually the country and its legislations and practices that is expected to penalise characters such as Lurie, who, in the past, have had more or less limited licence for harassing the female other without being punished for their acts.

It is quite crucial to establish the difference between the various male characters and narrators in Coetzee's narratives. It is clear that they do not act as sexual predators quite to the same extent, or at least their own relationship with these acts remains different. In the analyses in Chapters 2 and 3, the offenders are Western, at least allegedly, and the sexualised are non-Westerns. In Chapter 4, then, the offenders and the victims are both Westerns and non-Western. This, in addition to some other features, such as land ownership that will be discussed in a later section, signifies a shift of power in *Disgrace*. Moreover, as I mentioned above, here, we encounter legislative measures, as in the trial scene we witness the committee of inquiry, and disciplinary measures are taken against the white protagonist. At this committee he is asked to make a confession, which, I argue, alludes to the confessionals made during the Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) sessions in post-apartheid South Africa.[3] If we consider Coetzee's latest works, we notice that his attention to colonialism has shifted in the course of his long writing career. His three most recent "Jesus" books are a major case in point. Since these works are not within the scope of this dissertation, however, I stop short of discussing them further.

A further dimension in Coetzee's novels concerns media coverage of the sexual objectification of women. While in *Dusklands* and in *Waiting for the Barbarians* there are no references to media, in *Disgrace* media coverage has a distinct significance. Unlike biased media coverage of incidents of sexual violence in the

[3] The Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) was established in 1994. The idea was for national hearings in the country to gather evidence and information both from the victims and perpetrators. If the oppressors had made a full confession, they would be granted amnesty. The aim was to unearth the crime committed in the past and by bringing confession and testimony together heal the country and facilitate a swift transmission to the multi-ethnic democracy in South Africa. However, the TRC failed in its mission and the novel seems to parody its failure.

real world, media coverage in *Disgrace* remains, by large, neutral, suggesting that the novel encourages media impartiality, heralding a new era in South Africa.

Since power plays a role in gendered sexual violence, I shall explore the intricate representations of characters whose close proximity to power obviously has serious psychological effects on them as well – characters such as Eugene Dawn in *Dusklands*, the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* and Lurie in *Disgrace*. I shall explore the mindset of people in power in Coetzee's novels, and the questions of one's proximity to power and its harmful effects on one's psyche are considered in the analysis of the characters. Through this analysis of Coetzee's selected works, we see that such proximity to power is contaminating for the characters, and the novels invite us to think deeply on our moral acts. They make us question and ponder about our relation to power and how that would affect us. We may say that every human is prone to morally suspicious acts if the stage is set for them, that is to say, if they come into contact with power. Would we always do our moral duty? People in such positions, in this case, Eugene Dawn, Colonel Joll and to some extent the Magistrate, act on the basis of rationalisation and a sense of duty, thus they help to sustain the tyrannical rule in the dominated areas.

With *Dusklands*, I shall use textual analysis to consider the rationale for the novel's two, apparently unconnected, parts to show how complicity and gendered violence support reading the two parts as one novel. Part one is the author's reaction to the Vietnam War, and my interpretation is based on the author's testimony. In this novel, through a connected theme over a time span of two hundred years, the author situates his own position and those of white South Africans and alludes to the idea of complicity.

Furthermore, in the first two novels, the narrative reveals the justification for discriminatory attitudes, torture and violence in regard to the other. Such tyrannies are rooted in differences between ethnicities, religions, cultures and values. The climax of ridiculing the culture of the other is discussed in "The Narrative Jacobus Coetzee" as colonisation of culture or cultural imperialism. Cultural differences are manifest also in *Disgrace*. Furthermore, I aim to show that for women, oppression under imperial domination is doubled due to the patriarchy and the sexual objectification of women. In Chapter 4, I shall mainly focus on gendered violence in *Disgrace*. The context of this novel is post-apartheid South Africa. South Africa, as a country that suffered years of racism and oppression under apartheid, is still grappling with the aftermath of that era. So, *Disgrace* shows that race still matters in post-apartheid South Africa. I would like to show that while the race problem and gendered violence is commonplace in the novel, it is a mistake to consider any particular race as rapists, although there have been some critics who have accused

the novel of doing so.[4] Gendered violence and race problems have their roots in the centuries of domination, racism and oppression. I draw on one particular legacy of colonialism and apartheid, that is to say, gendered sexual violence, and the way Coetzee's *Disgrace* deals with it. It is not gendered violence itself that is the legacy but the racialised form of it. My argument is that Coetzee's novel illustrates how Lurie objectifies black women and misuses his power. In objectifying women, he carries the legacy of the era of white supremacy. As mentioned, the way he treats his coloured student is similar to the treatment of women during white supremacy. He assumes the coloured student as his property. Significantly, the gang-rape of Lurie's daughter is the result of that era as well. To this aim, I draw on Friedrich Nietzsche's ([1887/1908)] idea of the debtor–creditor relationship that I shall discuss in Chapter 4. I assert that the attack on the farm and sexual violence against the protagonist's daughter are the result of the colonial condition. Nonetheless, the fact that the scenes of gender-based violence encompass both blacks and whites implies that the novel, as I mentioned earlier, suggests gender-based violence is not race-specific issue.[5]

An important stylistic feature that both *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians* share is their place in the genre of confessional writing. The confessional tone is employed in both novels, and it is considered in connection with the questions of colonial domination and its psychological effects on both oppressed people and the people in power who dominate them, and these people's experiences of guilt. With the first two novels I call this feeling of guilt historical guilt. I discuss this in relation to the narratives of the protagonists. Thus, one of the main themes in *Waiting for the Barbarians* is an exploration of *guilt* and how one can (or cannot) come to terms with it. This is suggested in the characterisation of the Magistrate who has a conflicted character and feels guilt for the crimes of the Empire. He tries to redress this guilt by helping the so-called barbarians. However, as I see it, he is still an *accomplice* in these crimes. The ideas of complicity and historical guilt, as I perceive them, allude to the historical guilt of the author. That is to say, these themes are related to Coetzee's position as a white South African writer of Dutch origin who speaks English and Afrikaans, writing during the most repressive political era of apartheid.

To have a better understanding of the idea of complicity and historical guilt in *Dusklands*, we should note that Jacobus Coetzee's narrative, as I shall analyse in a later section, bears close resemblance to that of early European colonial travellers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As I studied the matter, I noticed that in

4 I shall return to these issues in Chapter 4, where I discuss accusations against the novel.

5 In my study, I do not capitalize ''black' and ''white' similarly to most of my sources. There are arguments for both capitalizing and not capitalizing these words as an attempt at neutrality, not as an evaluative gesture.

the time of composing this novel, Coetzee had access to documents about the viciousness of colonisers including his distant relative in the Cape Colony, one Jacobus Coetzee after whom the protagonist of the second part of the novel is named. This suggests that the book belongs to the confessional genre. It expresses denunciation of the misdemeanours of the early colonial travellers to the Cape Colony as represented in the text. In other words, the brutality of the protagonist Jacobus and his men alludes to the viciousness of the colonisers in general, including Coetzee's ancestors.[6]

In *Disgrace* I analyse the idea of historical guilt in relation to the attack on the protagonist Lurie's daughter, Lucy's farm and her rape. That is to say, Lurie and Lucy are held personally responsible for the crimes of the whites during colonisation and the apartheid era. After this discussion, my justification for selecting these works for this research will be clear – they are admirably suited to the theme of this dissertation and provide excellent responses to the research questions. After all, it was with *Dusklands* that Coetzee fictionalised the crime of imperial/colonial expansion and utilised the confessional genre. This genre is also used in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. *Disgrace* was published just a few years after the demise of apartheid. One could say that at that time discussion about the tyrannies of apartheid and the idea of complicity were prevalent. Moreover, I believe that the novel depicts gender-based violence and its roots in the best way, as I shall show in the course of this dissertation.

In the next section, I define key terms that are used in this dissertation and in subsection 1.2.1, I shall discuss gender violence, particularly in South Africa.

1.2 Definition of key terms

A central term used throughout this dissertation is *violence*. While it may seem obvious what violence is, in practice it is a slippery term that challenges us to define it. Furthermore, it is also worth briefly considering the concept of imperial violence, especially in fiction. Although violence seems to be an obvious term, there are debates about its definition. Vittorio Bufacchi (2005, 194) argues that 'violence' comes from

[6] Coetzee's first six novels, that is to say, *Dusklands* (1974), *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), *Waiting for the Barbarians* 1980, *Life and Times of Michael K* (1983), *Foe* (1986), and *Age of Iron* (1990), were written under the shadow of apartheid. Thus, it can be said that the influence of apartheid is discernible particularly in these books. We should also note that there are many Coetzees in the novel, which invites us to ponder why there are so many. The shadowy supervisor of the protagonist Eugene Dawn is named Coetzee. The narrator of the second text in *Dusklands,* Jacobus's last name is also Coetzee. There is yet another Coetzee, one S. J. Coetzee in the second text who is described as the editor, with an afterword on "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee."

"the Latin *violentia*, meaning 'vehemence', a passionate and uncontrolled force." Manfred Steger (2003, 12) writes that violence encompasses a variety of meanings, including 'to force', 'to injure', 'to dishonour' and 'to violate'. Referring to Cecil Coady (1986), Bufacchi (2005, 195) writes further that "'violence' should be seen in terms of interpersonal acts of force, usually involving the infliction of physical injury, which suggests that the concept of violence cannot be understood independently from the concept of force," and for many people the use of force may equate with violence. However, the use of force does not necessarily signify violence per se, as it is not always a negative phenomenon. For example, the police may sometimes use force to arrest a criminal or to neutralise a terrorist, parents may use force to save their children from danger or using force may be necessary to rescue endangered people, for example from a fire, or from debris after earthquakes. Such use of force is not reprehensible but appreciated because it is needed to keep order in society and to save people's lives.

Violence could be involved in acts of ambiguous legitimacy. For example, someone whose country is occupied by a foreign power might consider it legitimate to use violence (e.g., assassinating an illegitimate official) in pursuit of liberating the country. One difficulty regarding defining violence would be when institutions such as the US Army or the apartheid government of South Africa fabricate unjustifiable legitimations for their actions. Colonial violence is built on this problematic: those enacting it say it is legitimate (e.g., to suppress violent insurrection); those on whom it is enacted say it is not (it is an alien power subjugating them). Here, I should like to highlight two issues: First, the claims by the imperial and repressive systems aim to justify their transgressions and the violent treatment of the oppressed. Second, the oppressed people themselves use violence, too, *but less effectively*. In other words, there is a power imbalance between the imperial power and the oppressed, and this latter point is the key in defining the gravity of violence.

The aim of this dissertation is not to discuss the transgressions of the apartheid era nor the US war in Vietnam. Rather, I reiterate that I focus on analysing fiction. I shall return to the idea of justification of violent treatment of the natives in particular in the next chapter. Suffice it to say here that Eugene Dawn and Jacobus Coetzee in *Dusklands* and the imperial agents in *Waiting for the Barbarians* all have their own rationale for committing violence. As I shall explore, such rationalisation is just a pretext for committing violence in order to hold imperial control over the dominated. Moreover, the power imbalance is tangible in Coetzee's novels. The US army benefits from state-of-the-art weapons of the time, as does Jacobus and his men. Similarly, in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the Empire is safeguarded by the imperial army that oppresses the native people.

In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, violence is defined as "behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something" (OED, s.v. 'violence'). I shall discuss the limitations and implications of the definitions of force,

but as John Dewey (1980, 246) notes, force must have destructive consequences to be considered violence,

> energy becomes violence when it defeats or frustrates purposes instead of executing or realizing it. When the dynamite charge blows up human beings instead of rocks, when its outcome is waste instead of production, destruction instead of construction, we call it not energy or power but violence.

There are numerous definitions of violence, and scholars have developed the concept further, but here I simply present the above-mentioned characterisations of the term and its implications for my analyses of Coetzee's novels. Thus, briefly, defining violence as illicit use of force is not self-evident, but contingent on the sociocultural context in which it occurs, and from whose perspective it is defined.

Furthermore, I distinguish 'colonial violence' from other types of violence. In *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, violence is exerted by the imperial power or its representatives on people of ethnicities that are different from the perpetrators. Hence, violence in Chapters 2 and 3 is understood to be exerted by alien forces, that is to say, by imperial agents, on native people. Sexual violence in these chapters and Chapter 4 are viewed as examples of violence and domination of the other as well. The imperial agents and Lurie, in fact, dominate the native women and in so doing misuse their power. Here, again, I make a distinction between racially motivated gender-based violence from other individual acts of violence such as spousal abuse.

In *Dusklands*, violence involves humiliation, as the victims are looked down upon and are not viewed as human. Villages, towns and the environment are razed to the ground, people are massacred and women are raped. The use of force does not achieve optimal results but causes destruction and annihilation. I should add that, in the case of Eugene Dawn, complicity implies that he supports the violent treatment of the natives and prepares plans for securing victory for the invading American troops in Vietnam, as I shall discuss in detail later in this chapter.

Since some issues in this dissertation concern imperial rule and domination, it is pertinent to define how imperialism is understood here. The term imperialism is a very broad term and covers many countries throughout history and its roots go back for centuries. However, the application of this term in this dissertation is quite specific. I use its definition as has been presented by Edward W. Said (1993, 8): "[T]he practice, theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory."

Critics have discussed the relation between confession and literature differently. Some critics, like James Olney (1980) have examined confession in connection with autobiography, and some have equated it with autobiography. For my understanding of confession, I find its definition by Francis R. Hart (1974, 227) useful. He states that

confession is "personal history that seeks to communicate or express the essential nature, the truth, of the self." In this respect it can be said the first two novels in this dissertation tell the truth of the self of the author, which collectively stands for the white South Africans. Importantly, the notion of confession in fiction is attested by J. M. Coetzee (1985, 194): "[ln] our time, confessional fictions have come to constitute a subgenre of the novel in which problems of truth-telling and self-recognition, deception and self-deception, come to the forefront." A more comprehensive definition of confession and literary confession is presented by Gallagher. She considers confession a "specific literary mode or form, which can appear in either autobiography or fiction. Confession, in my definition, is a narrative first-person account by either a fictional or historical speaker who expresses the need to testify concerning and/or admit guilt about certain events" (1995, 95). In the first two novels we see that the narrators admit to crimes happening during imperial expansion. Complicity then is understood to be involvement in the crimes of this imperial expansion. While for the characters in the novel it is the actual involvement, for the white South Africans it is not understood as such. It is not literal and actual involvement, rather it implies an intricate association with their ancestors and the crimes that happened during imperial expansion.

Although I shall return to gender-based violence, complicity and historical guilt and confession time and again, let me explain briefly how they are used and how they are related to one another in the selected works. The protagonists in all the selected novels fantasise about sex with a female subaltern other and this fantasy is related to male power and is viewed in the context of colonial/imperial domination. Historical guilt is the feeling of guilt that the author (and some white Africans) might have due to the misdemeanour of their ancestors during the time of colonial/territorial expansion. This historical guilt is confessed and dramatized in the selected works. Thus, predominantly I shall focus on fiction. In the first two novels, the settings are the time of imperial expansion, and the novel confesses to such felonies as violence, torture and sexual oppression committed at that time. The protagonists here are accomplices, and this complicity stands for the complicity of the author. In Chapter 4, we shall see that the crimes of the past, that is, the historical guilt, predispose the protagonist and his daughter to attack. That is to say, white South Africans carry the burden of the crimes of their ancestors during the colonial era, according to the novel. With this, we come to gender-based violence in South Africa and the role of the colonisation era in fostering gender-based violence – I shall discuss this role in the next section.

1.2.1 Gender-based violence in South Africa

As I have mentioned, both *Disgrace* and "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" in *Dusklands* are set in the context of South Africa, and the history of the country is interwoven in the narratives. For my analysis, we need to outline concisely what the

colonisers had done that set the stage for gender-based violence. Then, I shall briefly examine some native responses to the whites doomed to be the heirs of colonialism. In the attack on Lucy's farm, we find a similar setting, with the notion of historical guilt. The arrival of the colonisers had devastating effects on the indigenous peoples and included the sexual abuse of black women. My intention is to link these historical facts to Coetzee's fictional representations. This makes sense especially when in Chapter 4 I argue that gender-based violence is rooted in the past, and that the events of the past have set the stage for sustained gendered violence in South Africa that is, then, fictionalised in *Disgrace*.

Having already been colonised by the Dutch in 1652, the British capture of the Cape Colony in 1795 and the subsequent domination of South Africa, was a turning point in mushrooming sexual violence, in that the British would either turn a blind eye to the sexual exploitation of black women or, if the violator was British or otherwise a white male, they would side with the perpetrators, thereby depriving the plaintiffs of their rights. The colonisers believed that sexual violations of black women could not be prosecuted since the blacks were of an inferior race. Thus, they not only imposed their will on the natives, but also provided perfect conditions for making gendered violence rampant.[7]

The arrival of the white colonisers was a tipping point for local South Africans; it accounts for the tremendous suffering and mistreatment they faced at the hands of the invaders. Leading a nomadic pastoral life, they became a destitute population shortly after the advent of colonisation. Historian Leonard Thompson (2001) discusses how the Dutch East India Company (VOC, Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie) established a base in the Cape and developed it further. The locals had to either withdraw from their native lands, rich in pastures and springs, or remain there and work as servants. Occasionally, when the natives tried to recapture their lands, they were soundly defeated. This gave the colonisers confidence to further suppress the locals. In doing so, the VOC developed its tactics of land grabs and confiscation of livestock of the natives and gained for example 14,363 cattle and 32,808 sheep from the indigenous population from 1622 to 1713 (Thompson 2001, 38).

In short, the colonisers wreaked havoc with South Africa and its people. In South Africa, the arrival of white colonisers, first the Dutch and then the British, had dire effects in particular on women. It is worth mentioning that the position of women prior to the arrival of Europeans remains unknown due to lack of evidence. Under the VOC, however, women were encouraged to prostitute themselves to sailors to augment the company's income and were made to work alongside men on the most

[7] For detailed information on the rule of colonial Britain in fostering gender-based violence, especially through colonial British judicial system in South Africa, refer to Elizabeth Thornberry (2010) and Pamela Scully (1995).

gruelling tasks. Furthermore, while the white colonisers were disinclined to marry black South Africans, they were indeed keen on their sexual exploitation (Thompson 2001, 43–45). This background of sexual violence accounts partly for the rampant gender-based violence in contemporary South Africa.

Analysing the violence and gendered oppression that resonate in the South African fictions, in this case Coetzee's works, demands examining both the context and the texts. In this dissertation, I shall focus predominantly on the fictions as analysing the social context is beyond the scope of my study. Suffice to say, as Dennis Walder (1998, 153) argued a few years after the elections of 1994, that "[t]he transition from white minority rule to non-radical democratic state in South Africa remains a time of trauma, confusion and violence, although the dominant mood is optimistic." Surely, we should not expect the prevailing effects of white colonial hegemony to disappear with the waning of colonialism and apartheid; rather its burgeoning effects are still causing countless problems in contemporary South Africa.

In this dissertation, I demonstrate that the root causes of these phenomena as represented in particular in Coetzee's *Disgrace*, need to be sought in the colonisation and apartheid epochs. That is, what is happening in contemporary South Africa, is a corollary to the centuries of domination and repression imposed on the indigenous black South Africans by white supremacy. Significantly, Georg M. Gugelberger (1994, 584) writes that "postcolonial discourse problematises one face of response to former Western hegemonic discourse paradigms." In order to understand what might trigger these reactions, we need to see the extent of the gender repression and despotism practised by the patriarchal white hegemony; the long history of white brutality and tyranny has resulted in whites prone to violence. Referring to Olive Schreiner's *Trooper Peter Halket of Mshonaland,* Lucy Valerie Graham (2003, 19) writes that "British Imperialism in South Africa is criticised as a catalogue of rape and mass murder." She also argues that a history of troublesome representation has influenced and shaped the environment of post-apartheid South Africa.

Another witness, Aimé Césaire (1993, 172), writes that colonisers persecuted, im-prisoned, brutalised and killed thousands of blacks all across the colonised areas. He also argues that now the people in the former colonies "set themselves up as judges" and bring indictments against Europeans. Such resentment created by the history of colonialism among the former colonised could provoke violence and make whites in such areas prone to attacks by blacks. Similarly, in her book *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism and History*, Vron Ware (2015, 38) writes that as a symbol of rebel-lion, white women are prone to native attacks: "One of the recurring themes in the his-tory of colonial repressions is the way in which the threat of real or imagined violence toward white women became a symbol of the most dangerous form of insub-ordination." In such a threatening environment, where white women

are in danger of being targeted, they do not feel secure. This feeling of insecurity and the idea that whites are prone to revenge will be discussed in relation to *Disgrace* in Chapter 4.

In her article "The Unspeakable Limits of Rape: Colonial Violence and Counter-insurgency," Jenny Sharpe (1993, 236) discusses how in E. M. Forster's (1924, 178) *A Passage to India* we see that Mrs Blakiston, a young British woman with golden hair, and a friend of hers, see her golden hair as a symbol of colonisation. She is "the wife of a small railway official" whose husband is away, and afraid to move around freely, because she fears that she would be targeted by the natives (ibid.). In the South African context, quoting from Ian MacCrone, Graham (2012, 71) writes that a feeling of insecurity prevails among white women. She interviews white women and asks them about their feelings upon dreaming about the appearance of black men. Here are some examples from their responses:

> I dreamt that as I walked home late one afternoon a native began to chase me — I woke up paralysed with fear; frequently a dream of a native chasing me with a gleaming knife in the one hand; […] I have often dreamt – especially as a child, that a native man was chasing me and I was unable to run away; […] I once dreamt that a native was standing in my room – the fact that he was there caused me to shriek with fear; a very repulsive dream in which I was not able to escape from native who had me in a corner and was just about to touch me. (ibid.)

As the above accounts show, there was a discursively-established myth of black males as sexually dangerous. This despotic repression was more intense in the case of women; while during colonialism both black men and women were oppressed, in the case of women the violation was especially aggravated since it involved both patri-archal hegemony and sexual abuse. The colonial era can, thus, be conceived as an androcentric epoch in which women's basic rights were dramatically violated. As Kirsten Holst Petersen and Anna Rutherford put it in the preface to their edited collection *A Double Colonisation: Colonial and Post-colonial Women's Writing* (1986), a male dominated environment has permeated the colonial and postcolonial eras (in McLeod 2000, 175). In this patriarchal environment, men were represented as courageous conquerors and explorers with women in minor roles, subjected to men. Moreover, in the colonial environment, black women were seen as objects by the colo-nisers who sexually abused them. Thus, for black women the colonisation was double.

However, like a seed that longs for suitable conditions to germinate, the Africans waited for appropriate conditions to flourish and overthrow colonialism (Cabral 1973, 60). To achieve their goals, sometimes the dominated people envisioned armed rebellion and attacking the colonisers as a solution. For example, the Martinican

political philosopher Franz Fanon abandoned his occupation to join the armed rebellion against the colonisers, believing that it was the best solution to the problem. Or in the case of the Indian Mutiny of 1857–1858, during a bloody rebellion many British were massacred and women sexually assaulted (Sharpe 1993). A clergyman of the time reported in *The Times* of London that many women were forced to parade in the streets while being raped by the lower cast people, before being executed (Sharpe 1993, 228–29). While there were doubts about the authenticity of the report, cases of raping and mass murdering of the British are well documented.

Such counter-colonial insurgencies notwithstanding, the fact is that the colonisers used force and their military prowess in the subjugation of the colonised. I shall return to the notion of imperial violence in Chapters 2 and 3. Furthermore, apart from violence, the colonisers, as shall be explored in Chapter 4, viewed black women as their property, open to sexual exploitation, a characteristic that seems to have been transmitted to the protagonist David Lurie. In Chapters 2 and 3, then, I continue analysis of complicity and gender-based violence, which as mentioned earlier, occurs in the depictions of colonisation of foreign lands and extending imperial domination. In Chapter 4, I analyse the crime of the past that lurks in the in the novel, in the characterisation of Lurie and the scene of the sexual abuse of his daughter. My analysis lies within a theoretical framework that I shall discuss in the next section to allow a better understanding of the analysis.

1.3 The theoretical framework of the dissertation

In my dissertation I shall draw on a range of theories, notably from Said, Michel Foucault, Homi K. Bhabha, Elleke Boehmer and Abdul R. JanMohamed. My analysis shares a sense of commonality with Said's *Orientalism* (1978). I argue that Coetzee's novels relate to the colonial and imperial discourse of orientalism. In this respect, my work offers a new angle to research on Coetzee. In *Orientalism*, Said describes how knowledge and power are related. He analyses a diverse body of works in various styles and disciplines. However, such works, despite their variety, all pivot around a view that the West has been in the foreground of human civilisation and the East, in contrast, is inferior and uncivilised. Based on such discrimination, the oppressed under imperial domination are represented as less than human. One should note that, according to Said (1978, 23), these representations cannot be construed as real, but are associated with power as "there is no such thing as delivered presence, but a re-presence, or a representation." In other words, Eurocentric knowledge about the East provided the West with self-assigned justifications for the domination of the East.

In the following, I apply Foucault's and Said's notions of power to Coetzee's work and show that the West's sense of superiority over the non-Western in these

works can be analysed through these notions. I analyse how Coetzee makes use of colonialist discourses in order to illustrate what I see as his major themes. In my analysis of the narrative of the first two novels, I show that imperial agents view the dominated from above and use stereotypical appellations in regard to the natives. It is in the line of these thoughts that in the discursive practice of the protagonists of the selected works we notice a sense of superiority. This is true even in the case of such conflicted characters as the Magistrate, who both supports the natives and condemns the Empire and its violence. In my analysis of the Magistrate, I make use of G. W. F. Hegel's theory regarding history and writing. I apply this to the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* to show that his views of the nomads can be regarded as a view from above. In the discursive practice of the white protagonist of *Disgrace*, I analyse the narrative to show the view of superiority in it with regard to the blacks in the novel. The protagonist Lurie's digressive practice maintains a similar perception as well. He has a high opinion of his own western heritage in the post-apartheid South. Signifi-cantly, the narrators of the first two novels are colonists and imperial agents, that is to say, we do not get any views from the natives' own perspective; they have no voice.

In the same way as Said in *Orientalism* studies different materials that contribute to determining the East as primitive, and the West as the apex of civilisation, I assert that in Coetzee's selected works the knowledge the protagonists possess with regard to the other cannot be construed as true. Their knowledge is bound up with their power and white supremacist ideas and heritage. Such Eurocentric representations were baseless, and colonial travel writings suggest that it was the white colonisers who were brutal. In these writings, the customs, culture and lifestyles of the natives were judged in comparison to those of the travellers. I shall get back to this later in Chapter 2, when I analyse colonialist characters and their narratives in contemporary fictional texts.

It is in line with viewing Coetzee's selected works as a part of colonist discourse that these characters contribute to fabricating a discourse in which the West's other is perceived as uncivilised or wild. With regard to colonial discourse in the novels, I refer to the Foucauldian notion of knowledge compactly summarised by Bill Ashcroft and Pal Ahluwalia (1999, 51): "A coherent and strongly bounded social knowledge; a system of statement by which the world could be known." In Coetzee's works, this bounded social knowledge, as I mentioned above, represents the way the West's other is viewed by the West. It is as a result of such knowledge that women in particular are oppressed and sexually exploited. In addition, with regard to women, I build my analyses based on theories presented by postcolonial scholars such as Gayatri Spivak, who writes about the double oppression of colonised women.

In Chapter 4, we move to a different era with a different context of sexual violence. Whilst in Chapters 2 and 3 I study sexual violence that takes place at the

time of colonialism and imperial expansion when imperial domination, penetration of land and sexual objectification are simultaneous, in the analysis in Chapter 4 the context of sexual violence is the post-apartheid era after the demise of colonialism. However, the knowledge of the protagonist is derived from his colonial heritage, and it objectifies coloured women. In this chapter, I shall also make use of other theories by such scholars as Sue Armstrong and Graham, who write on how the rule of white supremacy fostered gender-based violence in post-apartheid South Africa. In my analysis, I make use of postcolonial literary theory presented by postcolonial scholar Boehmer, who argues that postcolonial theory could undermine the hegemony of the colonists. She argues that the ideas of subversion and resistance are characteristic of postcolonial literary theory: "Postcolonial literature [and theory] scrutinizes the colonist and colonised relation and sets out in one way or another to resist colonialist perspectives" Boehmer (1995, 3). Such literature undermines race classification and the superiority of the colonist (ibid.).

Through such offences as depicted in the novels, the idea of the civilisation of the empire and its agents is subverted. With my analyses, I demonstrate how the novels resist and undermine the colonialist and imperial perspective about the dominated people, and in the end, show how the novels deconstruct the otherness of the other, that is to say, how the narrative of the colonial and imperial agents deconstructs itself. While they have disdain for the dominated people, and cultural imperialism can be discussed in their narratives, they betray that the natives and their culture have been unfairly disdained. The attitudes of the imperial agents are baseless as they are based on false cultural, social and religious preconceptions and condemn the natives accord-ing to the colonialists' own criteria. In a similar vein, for my analysis I find JanMo-hamed's arguments useful as he argues that the colonisers label the oppressed as the other. According to him, this brand of otherness is not real, but discursively ascribed to the natives; nonetheless, it has real effects. As JanMohamed (1985, 67) puts it,

> the gratification that this situation affords is impaired by the European's alienation from his own unconscious desire. […T]he self becomes the prisoner of the projected image. Even though the native is negated by the projection of the inverted image his presence as an absence can never be canceled.

These preconceptions are manifest in the novels. For example, Jacobus Coetzee takes it for granted that the natives are dirty and smelly. Such preconceptions can be discerned in the narratives of early colonial travellers to South Africa. This sort of fabricated otherness sets the stage for the mistreatment of the natives, including the sexual abuse of women. Thus, according to JanMohamed (1985, 65), "to say 'native' is automatically to say 'evil'." In line with such preconceptions, the natives are

deemed to be a threat. In short, the narrative of the colonists is a view from above and it is deconstructed in writings like Coetzee's novels. Last but not least, since punishment plays a role in all the works I analyse, the punishment methods in the novels change over time. I view the trajectory of punishment within the framework presented by Foucault. That is to say we encounter physical punishments in *Dusklands* and through *Waiting for the Barbarians* we move towards more non-physical punishments in *Disgrace*. I shall discuss this issue further in Chapter 4.

1.4 The architecture of the dissertation

This dissertation is composed of five chapters. In the present chapter, Chapter 1: Introduction, I offer a brief preamble to Coetzee and his works. The Introduction also outlines the aims and methods, definition of key terms, and a concise discussion of gender-based violence in the colonial history of South Africa. This discussion is even more pertinent when we note that the context of *Disgrace* and one part of *Dusklands* is South Africa. This section is followed by the theoretical framework of the dissertation. Since the overall approach is postcolonial, it is appropriate to devote a section to it and provide, in the next section, some background to the emergence of this fairly new field. This section is followed by a literature review where I discuss the critical studies on Coetzee's works and describe the way my approach either differs from or builds upon these studies. Throughout this dissertation, the terms gender-based violence, complicity, guilt and confession are used. In all the selected works, with the exception of Lucy, the female others are sexually abused. In the first two novels, the perpetuators are affiliated with imperial power and in the third, gender-based violence happens under the influence of the colonial era. That is to say, the white era of hegemony appears to influence the novels. This is likely due to the fact that the author is the offspring of the colonisers and resented their crimes. As I shall explore, white South Africans do feel a sense of complicity due to the misdemeanour of their ancestors. Importantly, these themes, that is gender-based violence, complicity, guilt, and confession, are primarily discussed in the fictional world in the selected novels. The settings of the first two novels are the white hegemony era, at the time of imperial expansion. Thus, the crime – brutality and gender-based violence – is committed by the imperial agents, to which the novels bear witness in the confessional genre. While the feeling of guilt, complicity and resent-ment of the past may be historical for the author and the white South Africans, it is not historical guilt which instigates gender-based violence in *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*. However, in the third novel, the setting is different from those of the previous ones. It is after the demise of colonialism and the white hegemony era. In other words, it is the crime and guilt of the *past*, namely *its legacy*, which instigates gender-based violence in the novel, so despite the previous novels,

guilt in *Disgrace* is historical both for the whites in the novel and in contemporary South Africa.

I shall follow the trajectory of gender-based violence and complicity in Chapter 2 on *Dusklands*, where the focus is on these issues. In the first part of *Dusklands*, some Americans commit sexual crimes and use physical violence, with Eugene Dawn as an accomplice in these crimes who fantasises about sexual abuse of women. Here we see that the perpetrators face no punishment for their violations, nor do they condemn their own transgressions, or feel remorseful. Rather, Dawn ridicules the pain of the victims and pokes fun at the sexually abused women, taking pleasure from the violent scenes in photographs. In the second part of the novel, when the main perpetrator, the protagonist Jacobus, uses violence and commits sexual crimes, he is neither brought to court, nor is he shameful of his crimes. I view him as an imperial agent whose authority has been subverted, and to revitalise his authority, he resorts to violence. Furthermore, as I mentioned earlier, his narrative bears a close resemblance to those of early European colonial travellers. Hence, in this chapter, I also analyse the seven-teenth- and eighteenth-century travellers' accounts to the Cape Colony. In such ac-counts, similar to Jacobus's cultural imperialist narrative, contempt for the culture and lifestyle of the natives can be discussed. That is to say, Jacobus and his fellow colonial travellers cannot understand and respect cultures that are different from theirs.

As noted earlier, in this novel the confessional genre is utilised. Through the narrative of Jacobus and colonial violence in South Africa, which is the prelude to the imperial violence in Vietnam, the novel witnesses the brutalities committed by the colonialists while extending imperial rule. It is in relation to this imperial expansion that the author situates his position as the heir of the white colonists. Complicity, then, is analysed and discussed in the context of *Dusklands*, in relation to the historical guilt of the author and his sense of guilt. That is to say, the novel confesses to the crimes of the colonists and imperialists, and this then alludes to the guilt of the heir of the colonists and imperialists. My focus is not, however on the author, although I refer to his research on early colonial travellers to South Africa and occasionally to biographi-cal details and Coetzee's own commentaries on his writing. Rather, I shall discuss the characters and the narratives, as I believe that through my analysis I can bring light to the notions of complicity, historical guilt, feelings of guilt and expiation. These ideas in turn could illuminate the situation of the whites in post-apartheid South Africa.

Chapter 3 deals with *Waiting for the Barbarians*, and there I discuss gender-based violence together with implications of torture, complicity, guilt and expiation. In my discussion, I regard the Magistrate as a conflicted character. He is different from his cruel counterpart, Colonel Joll, taking sides with the native nomads. However, the Magistrate is still an accomplice in the crimes of the Empire and,

moreover, imposes mental torture, and fantasises about the body of the female other. In this novel, there is a shift in the trajectory of gender-based violence towards a less coercive direction. The perpetrator, the Magistrate, feels guilt at the conscious level and tries to do repentance for his sense of guilt. The Magistrate witnesses the torture of captives, evaluates and criticises himself, and through this process he becomes more aware of the tyrannies of the Empire. He understands that he is a coloniser and wants to reject this position. A crucial incident in awakening the Magistrate's consciousness is the public beating of the captives. This awakening shows that the Magistrate is seriously concerned with ethics. However, he cannot dissociate himself from the Empire and he is involved even in torture, as I shall explore later. As in the previous novel, the Magistrate's complicity and feelings of guilt can be interpreted as those of the white South Africans.

Waiting for the Barbarians can be read as a critical commentary of both the apartheid era and the post-apartheid times as the setting and the time of the novel are imprecise, although clearly set in an outpost of the colonial era. In the novel, there are specific references to apartheid, but there are also references to the problems embedded in the contemporary era. Whichever way one interprets the setting, the novel is not explicitly resistance literature of the apartheid era. Such literature was realistic and directly criticised the regime and its brutalities. However, in *Waiting for the Barbarians* we witness a more nuanced way of criticising the state-sponsored torture and forced confessions prevalent in the country, although it alludes (indistinctly) to certain milestone events during the apartheid era, such as suppression of the Black Consciousness Movement, the Soweto uprising, and the capture, torture and the death of one the founders of the Movement, Steve Bantu Biko, which I discuss in a later section. All these can also denote the idea of historical guilt. Notwithstanding these details, the novel can be read as a critique of imperialism and totalitarian regimes in general. As I mentioned above, the time, milieu, Empire and place of the novel are unspecified, although certain details suggest that it is set in South Africa. The way the Empire tries to tease out confessions from the captives by torture indicates that the system in question is totalitarian. However, there is evidence in the novel, such as the direction of the winds, which suggests that the setting is not South Africa. To read the novel as a commentary against imperialism, the novel presents, as David Attwell (1993, 73) notes, "a form of ethical universalism." Dominic Head (1997a, 72) further corroborates this, commenting that reading *Waiting for the Barbarians* as a universal anti-imperialist work strengthens its significance: "The omission of the definite article helps to widen the connotations of 'Empire', which becomes available as an emblem of imperialism through history."

In Chapter 4, I move on to analyse *Disgrace*, with the focus on gender-based violence and historical guilt. As in the earlier chapters, I show here that in gender-

based violence misuse of patriarchal power plays a key role. Through my analysis, I argue that the roots of sexual violence need to be sought in centuries of domination and oppression, that is to say, in the times of colonialism and the apartheid era. In this chapter, I argue that the narrative of the novel portrays the social and political landscape of contemporary South Africa. It is within this framework, together with the historical setting of sexual exploitation of women, that we can analyse sexual exploitation and grasp its brutality. In *Disgrace*, we find milestone changes in the trajectory of sexual violence and how the white perpetrator is brought to justice: *The white protagonist of the novel, Lurie, is charged with sexual harassment, and interrogated.* This interrogation has similarities with the TRC hearings where the perpetrators were asked to make a confession. The fact that Lurie is expelled from his job shows that a new era had arrived. As I have mentioned earlier, the arrival of the new era is also signified by the shift of power and media coverage of the incidents of sexual violation of women.

To sum up, all the three works selected for analysis show a trajectory of gender-based violence and complicity, suggesting that the ethical integrity of people can be contaminated by proximity to power. In these novels, the perpetrators abuse their power to achieve their goals. Furthermore, in my analysis of *Disgrace* I suggest that the introduction of modern political and judicial apparatuses proposes a new world where perpetrators are punished – maybe not systematically but at least to a certain degree. Furthermore, my analysis suggests that the way Lucy is gang-raped suggests that she and her father carry historical guilt.

1.5 The emergence and relevance of postcolonial theory and literature

Since postcolonialism (i.e., postcolonial theory, postcolonial studies and postcolonial literature) is a fairly new field, it is worth presenting a concise background to the emergence of postcolonialism and postcolonial theory in this section. One should note that postcolonialism is a very broad concept and covers multiple fields such as history, politics, literature and so on. In my discussion, I focus on the colonial powers, colonial Britain in particular – the context in and about which Coetzee writes. Furthermore, Britain was one of the principal colonial powers for the last two centuries leading to the demise of colonialism, and, at its climax, it covered more than a quarter of the globe. I shall also introduce some significant theorists and texts that have contributed to the emergence and development of the field of postcolonialism.

To put it simply, in *postcolonialism* the prefix post means ‘after’, and colonialism refers to the occupation and conquest of foreign lands by imperial powers. All in all, European colonialism covers a time span of several centuries, and

the history of it goes back to the time of European global expansion, Christopher Columbus's 'discovery' of America and Vasco da Gama's mapping of the African seashore in charting the trade route to India. A concrete definition of colonialism is presented by Boehmer (1995, 2) who writes that colonialism can be defined as "consolidation of imperial power, and is manifested in the settlement of territory, the exploitation or development of resources, and the attempt to govern the indigenous inhabitants of occupied lands." According to the definitions presented above, a major part of the world was at some point colonised.

As to the emergence of postcolonial theory Neil Lazarus (2004, I) observes, "[b]efore the late 1970s there was no field of academic specialisation that went by the name 'postcolonial studies'." However, this does not mean that before this time – when Said published the book *Orientalism* (1978) – there had been no studies on the culture and society of post/colonial nations. Nor does it mean that nothing had been written on the devastating impact of colonialism on the livelihood of the colonised. On the contrary, postcolonial theory did not appear overnight; much had been done on these issues. It is the result of centuries of domination in the colonies in Asia, Africa, the Americas and other areas dominated by the European imperial powers. So, the roots of postcolonialism go back to the colonial era, at the time when the European colonisers were occupying foreign territories. At that time, colonisers faced counter-colonial resistance. Hence, while affecting native cultures, a clash of cultures ensued, which triggered the emergence of postcoloniality. As the Australian postcolonial scholars Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (1995, 1) put it, colonial mastery in itself involved interaction between the colonisers and the colonised that already triggered the formation of postcolonialism. During the times of colonialism, various European countries were major imperial powers. However, in the nineteenth century, imperial Britain became the primary imperial power that ruled globally.

The colonisers had a disparaging attitude towards the dominated people and labelled them as primitive or savage. They were considered inferior to the colonisers in terms of their culture and race. Such derogatory attitudes influenced the way the colonisers acted towards the natives. I should like to mention that these issues are manifest in my analysis of *Waiting for the Barbarians* and *Dusklands*, in particular in Chapters 2 and 3. For example, in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, indigenous people are referred to with defamatory terms, such as 'barbarians' and 'the enemy'. In "The Vietnam Project," then, Eugene Dawn has a disparaging attitude towards the native Vietnamese and compares them to animals. The same theme is sustained in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," where the theme of belittling attitudes and remarks toward the native South Africans is expressed very strongly.

During the first half of the twentieth century, colonial Britain lost its authoritative rule over most of its colonies. For instance, on August 15, 1947, India and Pakistan

gained their independence. Even before, a number of other colonies had gained politi-cal autonomy. The independence of India – considered 'the Jewel in the Crown' – to-gether with some other events, that is to say, the publication of some momentous texts that will be disclosed below, could be argued to play a pivotal role in the emergence of Postcolonial Studies and its conceptual and social domain. The texts published in the 1950s that laid the cornerstone of postcolonialism include *Black Skin*, *White Mask* (1952) by Fanon who propounds multifarious philosophic, political and literary pers-pectives on the profound impacts that racial prejudice and colonisation had on differ-ent aspects of black people's lives. Another important book of around the same time is *Things Fall Apart* (1958) by Chinua Achebe. In this novel, Achebe fictionalises the traditional tribal lives of Nigerians in Igboland in the south-eastern part of Nigeria be-fore and after the arrival of the European colonisers. The novel shows how the arrival of white colonisers and missionaries wreaks havoc with the life of native black people.

The 1950s and 1960s witnessed further steps towards the foundation of Post-colonial Studies. In this period, the Barbadian novelist George Lamming published *The Pleasures of Exile* (1960) in which he appropriates Shakespeare's *Tempest* from what can be called a postcolonial perspective. Since the 1950s, the early developers of the critical analysis of colonialism (Fanon, Césaire and Albert Memmi) published their works thus preparing the ground for postcolonialism. The next decade also witnessed important steps in the emergence and introduction of Postcolonial Studies, in particular in its introduction to the Western world. The first is the publication of Said's landmark book, *Orientalism* (1978, 36) in which he draws on the Foucauldian notion of relation between power and knowledge that knowledge is linked to power: "Knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control." Said investigates a body of text and views of philosophers and thinkers whom he argues that constituted the lens through which the Orient was and is viewed. Central to this vision is distinction:

> A very large mass of writers, among whom are poets, novelists, philosophers, political theorists, economists, and imperial administrators, have accepted the basic distinction between East and West as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, 'mind', destiny, and so on. (Said 1978, 2–3)

Thus, Said argues that through such tools as European literature, travel writing, philosophical and political texts and the like, segregation was established between the Orient and the West. Based on these representations in the West, Western culture assumed its hegemony over the East. An example of such Eurocentric representations can be found in the words of the French philosopher and historian of

the nineteenth century Ernest Renan when he views Asians and Africans as totally deprived of human intellect. He argues that all those who have been in the East, or in Africa are astonished by the dyed-in-the wool thoughts of the man there. He states that one is kept narrow-minded "by the species of iron circle that surrounds his head, rendering it absolutely closed to knowledge" (Renan 1896, 95). Such a distorted view of the non-Westerners could be rooted in the supremacist view of Renan and the likes. This is likely associated with the colonial power of the West of the time.

During the nineteenth century, European colonisers dominated a large part of the globe, and although some decolonisation processes had started, non-Westerners were by large subjected to western powers. This gave rise to the idea that the reason for the success of colonisation was the 'fact' that the colonised were not as intelligent as the Westerners. As discussed in the theory section, based on Said's argument, such knowledge is bound up with power and is not authentic.

By the 1970s, the term postcolonialism was used by a few critics, and the works of authors such as Spivak and Bhabha, following Said, provided a foundation for development in the area (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 1989, 197). The 1980s, then, inaugurated the pivotal role of colonialist debate with its centre of attention on how imperialism had impacts on colonies and how the former colonies wrote in order to rectify Western attitudes (Gugelberger 1994, 581–82). Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's (1989) important book *The Empire Writes back*, together with Said's *Orientalism*, played a pivotal role in the introduction of Postcolonial Studies, in the sense that with these two books, "the voices and concerns of many subaltern cultures were heard in both academic and social arenas" (Bressler 2007, 237). Initially, these two terms, that is to say, postcolonial and postcolonialism appeared

> as subtitles in texts such as Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin's book and Ian Adam and Helen Tiffin's *Past the Last Post: Theorizing Post-colonialism and Post-modernity* [1990]. By the early and mid-1990s, both terms had become firmly established in academic and popular discourse. (ibid.)

Today, these terms have been established and are of commonplace usage in literary studies as well as in other fields. Further discussion of the development of Postcolonial Studies is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but the foregoing emphasises that Coetzee's works were published at the same time as the theoretical framework was being crafted.After this introduction to the emergence and foundation of Postcolonial Studies, one could ask what is postcolonial literature, and what could be regarded as postcolonial writing? Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1989, 2) define *postcolonial* as a term "to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present." According to this definition, many countries and nations throughout history and in different

geographical situations can be considered postcolonial. However, I shall not be concerned with such issues as to which countries were affected by imperialism and colonialism. The main focus of my dissertation is on literature in English, and to be more specific, on the South African fictions of J. M. Coetzee.

What is postcolonial literature? According to Boehmer (1995, 4), it is literature that comes from postcolonial countries. This cannot, however, be a very precise definition as there is a lot of literature from the postcolonial countries that is not classifiable as postcolonial. Another definition of the concept is presented by the literary scholar Walder (1998, 2), who argues that postcolonial literature refers to literature produced after the demise of colonialism. However, one should note that the postcolonial perspective could be applied to texts published before the demise of colonialism and could be viewed as postcolonial literature as well. For example, I already mentioned that Lamming in *The Pleasures of Exile* adapts Shakespeare's *Tempest* for the postcolonial context. Furthermore, some critics such as Boehmer (1995, 1) believe that such early texts as *Beowulf* and Geoffrey Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* could also be viewed as postcolonial writings.

A limitation in Walder's definition of postcolonial literature is that he does not discuss the characteristic or nature of postcolonial literature, nor does he mention what postcolonial authors seek to achieve. One could say that one aim of postcolonial literature is to challenge the hegemonic view of the colonisers and to show the readers the damage done by them. Drawing on this assumption, I find the definition of postcolonial literature presented by Boehmer (1995, 3; the second italics added) more comprehensive and pertinent:

> Rather than simply being the writing which 'came after' empire *postcolonial* literature is that which critically scrutinizes the colonial relationship. It is the writing that sets out in one way or another to resist colonialist perspectives. As well as a change in power, decolonization demanded symbolic overhaul, a reshaping of dominant meanings. Postcolonial literature formed part of that process of overhaul. To give expression to colonized experience, postcolonial writers sought to undercut thematically and formally the discourses which supported colonization – *the myths of power*, the race classification, the imagery of subordination. Postcolonial literature, therefore, is deeply marked by experiences of cultural exclusion and division under empire.

In my analyses of Coetzee's texts, I demonstrate that although imperial agents in *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians* boast about being the epitome of civilisation, the narrative in the novels subverts this perspective since despite such claims of civilisation the imperial agents in effect act uncivilly. I shall also analyse

cultural exclusion in the selected works, and as mentioned earlier, in Chapter 4 I shall also discuss the shift of power.

A critical aim of Postcolonial Studies – and postcolonial literature – is to give voice to the voiceless, the silenced, the tyrannised, the repressed of history – those whose voices have been disdained for ages and who were deprived of basic human rights. Based on this argument, I shall analyse Coetzee's stories to show that the texts deconstruct the otherness of the other and suggest that the natives' culture and their lifestyles are disdained out of Western despotism, and from the Western vantage point on the protagonists' narratives.

1.6 Literature review of studies on Coetzee

In this section, I consider the body of scholarships that discuss Coetzee's novels and show how my work is built on or differs from those works, and how my analyses produce new knowledge. Since the publication of Coetzee's first novel*, Dusklands* (1974) to the present, considerable criticism has been published on his works. Due to the abundant research on Coetzee's *oeuvre,* it is worth addressing this criticism at some length. My critical appraisals of studies on Coetzee do not disavow findings by other critics, quite the contrary. For example, I build my argument on the work of David Attwell when he states that *Dusklands* is an angry book. I shall also use the works of such prominent authors as JanMohamed and Head when they maintain that Coetzee's novels illustrate the notion of self versus other. Similarly, I find Troy Urquhart's analysis useful regarding the Magistrate's endeavour to atone for the crimes of Empire. However, what is original in my study is the fact that the three novels, that is, *Dusklands*, *Waiting for the Barbarians* and *Disgrace*, have never been analysed *to show the trajectory of gender-based violence and complicity* with universal ethical points. The critical ethical point in my dissertation is that all humans can commit serious crimes, especially when bestowed with positions of power. Furthermore, in Chapter 4 on *Disgrace,* I demonstrate that the prevalence of rape in South Africa is the legacy of colonial times and the apartheid era, and that to understand and address the problem, the novel suggests that a thorough analysis should be conducted with regard to the source of the problem.

First, I shall discuss to some extent the critics who view Coetzee's works within the context of South Africa. While this view is plausible, the works can also be analysed within the larger framework of colonial/imperial overpowering, the approach which will be taken in this dissertation. Nonetheless, many critics have viewed Coetzee's works predominantly within the South African context. Head (1997c, 1) argues that while Coetzee's fictions play a significant role in the direction of the late twentieth-century fiction, they are woven into the context of South Africa.

For example, he believes that when Coetzee writes about colonial violence it is a particular kind of violence, one that prevailed during the apartheid regime:

> The novels of J. M. Coetzee occupy a special place in South African literature, and in the development of the twentieth century novel more generally. His works present a sophisticated intellectual challenge to the particular form of colonial violence embodied in Apartheid. (ibid.)

Likewise, Graham Huggan and Stephen Watson (1996, 1; 3) place Coetzee's novels in the context of South Africa. They argue that the prolonged oppression of the country throughout the centuries manifests itself in the characterisation of Coetzee's novels when they write that Coetzee

> is a first-world novelist writing out of a South African context, from within a culture which is as bizarre and conflicted an amalgam of first- and third-world elements as any on this planet. […] The more oppressive conditions of life in South Africa were to become – and these conditions have hardly relented, even at the time of writing – the more transcendent, one might say, became the formal impulses of his novels, the more profound the misery and revolt of their protagonists. (ibid.)

Samuel Durrant (1999, 430–31), too, writes that Coetzee's novels concern South Africa and the plight of South Africans caused by apartheid. Similarly, Susan VanZanten Gallagher (1991, x), in her book *A Story of South Africa: J. M. Coetzee's Fiction in Context*, states that Coetzee's novels address the repressive practices that have been prevalent in South Africa for centuries.

Saying that Coetzee's works have mostly been viewed in the light of the South African context does not mean that the approaches to his works are limited to certain aspects. Rather, his works are open to interpretation: "J. M. Coetzee remains the most elusive of writers, one whose fictions seem almost deliberately constructed to escape any single framework of interpretation" (Huggan and Watson 1996, 1). Thus, each of his works can be analysed from different vantage points.

In my analysis, I view *Dusklands* as a whole novel;[8] however, there are some critics who have expressed doubt about the rationale of having two supposedly unrelated stories in one book and argued that the book is confusing or defies

[8] I should note that there are other critics who have considered the novel as a whole, and I discuss some of them here. In this dissertation, where pertinent, I shall make use of such argu-ments; however, my approach is as I shall discuss in the course of this dissertation is unique.

categorisation. In comparison with, for example Carrol Clarkson (2009, 4–17), who considers Coetzee's oeuvre as a whole, my approach is unique in the sense that while Clarkson reviews Coetzee's background in linguistics and focuses on the linguistico-ethical aspects of his oeuvre, I analyse *Dusklands* as a certain thematic whole, of gender-based violence and complicity, that is related to the other two novels, and especially *Waiting for the Barbarians.*

In the original narrative of Jacobus Coetzee (or Coetsé Jansz), a translation of which is included in *The Journal of Hendrik Jacob Wikar* (Wikar 1779, 285), there are some friendly occasions between Jacobus and the natives that have been omitted and substituted with violence in the fictional narrative. We read in the original text that: "Jacobus has been presented in friendly manner with a few young oxen […] in return [Jacobus] made them [the natives] a present of some links from the trek-chain of his wagon, with which they were highly pleased. But the narrator not being provided with any other trifles, was therefore unable to find out what else is desired most amongst them." What can be the justifications for such modifications? I think the reason is that the friendly moments would subvert the idea of the violence of the colonisers. It can also undermine the idea of complicity. In this way, in Attwell's terms, the novel holds its consistency (1998, 34–35).

Attwell (ibid.) argues that the novel exposes the game of power as it shows how Jacobus as a coloniser moves from "assertion" to "sharp encounter," followed by weakness, "reconstruction of the self," and "finally re-assertion" (Attwell 1998, 35), which manifests itself through punishment of the natives. Head (1997d, 40) views Jacobus's violent treatment of the natives as "the need for self-confirmation" and believes that in this way Jacobs "confirm his reality" and his violence alludes to the colonisers.

My analysis shares a sense of commonality with Head, as mentioned above, in that we both see that via his violence Jacobus reveals his reality and alludes to the tyrannies of the colonisers. Furthermore, like Attwell (1998, 43) who views Jacobus's attack on the Namaqua as an act of "sadism," I believe that Jacobus's violence is an indication of sadism. Attwell (2015, 58) argues that *Dusklands* is an angry book and that Coetzee feels guilty for the tyrannies of his ancestors. According to Attwell, *Dusklands* presents "a young author who is angry about his origins, and angry about the role that his origins have assigned him in the world" (ibid.). Attwell argues that all these feelings are evident in the novel. I believe that this is due partly to Coetzee's works on confession, partly due to Jacobus Coetzee being a forebear of the author, and partly to the fact that "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" is based on Jacobus's diary. In this respect, then, it could be that in *Dusklands* Coetzee is trying to absolve himself and his fellow white people of guilt by bringing these things out into what he presents as the open (as opposed to, say, proposing practical, e.g., monetary compensation).

In my analysis, I build upon Attwell's argument, introduced above, and develop it by considering the complicity involved as manifested in Dawn and in Jacobus's nar-rative. In addition, I analyse the representation of gender-based violence in the first phase of Coetzee's oeuvre. However, while Attwell views Jacobus as a self-assertive man whose rationale for the attack is to show a "drive toward self-consciousness," I, on the other hand, view the attack as a depiction of gender-based violence in line with imperial domination, a process through which Jacobus "confirms his identity." In my analysis, I shall not address similarities or differences between the fictional and the historical narratives and I do not believe that Jacobus commits violence due to his frustration in search of his identity and with regard to his relationship with the world. Accordingly, the violence is not viewed simply as a means for bridging the identifi-cation gap. With these views, I hope to add a new dimension to previous studies.

A common way of understanding the connection between the two parts of *Dusklands* is related to the depiction of violence. Jonathan Crewe (1974, 90), for one, praises the novel and writes that it is a "very remarkable book, written with a fastidiousness and power that are rare on the South African literary scene, or any literary scene." On another note, Sarah Christie, Geoffrey Hutchings and Don Maclennan (1980, 182), the authors of the book *Perspectives on South African Fiction,* are critical of the novel, claiming that it is incoherent and not worth reading:

> The suspicion remains that the unity of *Dusklands* is too shallow, too easily borrowed from the Laingian bomb-in-the-head syndrome […]. The novel is so solipsistic, so keenly its own peculiar and startling revelation, that, if we follow the strict logic of the situation, 'nobody' wrote it and, and perhaps 'nobody' read it.

In a similar vein, Jane Poyner (2009) comments that the two separate narratives have baffled many critics. Lynda Ng (2016, 418), too, believes that the two distinct parts in one novel has been a challenge to the readers:

> The novel's unusual structure – a diptych of two self-contained novellas that does not easily offer any recognizable continuity in terms of character, geography, milieu or even narrative style – challenged readers to find the broader 'inner connections' between 'The Vietnam Project' and 'The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee.'

Here, Ng does not really seem to argue that the book had perplexed its audience. Rather, it seems as if Ng acknowledges that there are "inner connections" between the two novellas, even though it is challenging to find them. Ng (2016, 419) discusses

the relationship between violence and forgetting, and argues that in order to commit violence one must forget that the victim is human. I agree with Ng in that to be able to commit such atrocities, as those described in the novel, one would need to ignore the humanity of the victims, and that through their offensive attitudes towards the natives, the imperial agents themselves become inhumane.

Other critics, such as Gallagher (1991, 51), argue that *Dusklands* depicts colonialism and oppression: “Together, the two stories explore the common psychology of colonialism and oppression, the dark mentality that informs the United States’ involvement in Vietnam and the Dutch colonisation of southern Africa.” However, Gallagher does not consider Jacobus and Dawn as representatives of imperial powers. This is suggested when she states that they “are unmoved by the physical atrocities performed by their respective colonial powers” (Gallagher 1991, 59). She does not, however, discuss complicity and gender-based oppression in the way I do in this dissertation. Critics such as Peter Knox-Shaw (1996) and Michael Vaughan (1982, 124), are dissatisfied with the way the novel deals with colonialism and violence. Vaughan comments further that simply to write about violence does not necessarily mean one rejects it (ibid.).

My analysis challenges the views that see the novel as confusing and unreadable as Christie, Hutchings and Maclennan (1980, 182) suggest. I argue that *Dusklands* forms a whole with a common theme that is related also to *Waiting for the Barbarians* and *Disgrace.* When I say it forms a whole, we should keep in mind that the setting for military intervention in Vietnam was different from the setting of colonisation of South Africa; the motives for occupation were different, as the Vietnam War was a postcolonial proxy war fought during the Cold War era. In that war, by fighting in Vietnam, the Americans thought they were fighting international communism; behind North Vietnam loomed the Soviet Union and China. In the case of South Africa, the motives for occupation were different. Despite the differences, violence in the two countries had certain similarities. That is to say, it was violence by white people carried out on non-white people, and construed in this way, it is valid to bring the two cases together. Surely there are other thematic similarities beside racial violence, for example, gender-based violence and the idea of complicity. These thematic similarities are discussed in Chapter 2, where violence on the natives is manifest and gender-based violence enters its second phase, a phase where the perpetuator feels guilty and tries to expiate for his sins.

Comparing *Dusklands* with other works – such as those of the twentieth-century South African novelist Alex La Guma – and analysing their syntax, clauses and subordination, Jarad Zimbler (2014, 36–41) argues that *Dusklands* is, like La Guma’s works, realistic. Nonetheless, as he asserts, it does not display signs of the worst ex-cesses of realism, accommodating instead its moderate version. I agree with Zimbler (2014, 45) that *Dusklands* is a realistic work that depicts violence and

represents the dark side of the world. I disagree with Zimbler's (2014, 45) view that the novel repre-sents a world in which everything is brutal and argue instead that it does not portray everything in that way. While the empire and its agents are brutal, there is no evidence that the dominated are brutal even when they are oppressed, humiliated and massa-cred. Unlike Zimbler, I maintain that the depiction of violence is purposeful as it shows the dark side of human psyche when they are bestowed with positions of power.

In *Dusklands*, I shall also look into the 'cultural exclusion' suggested by Jacobus's disdain for the culture of the natives. A typical element of local cultures is their dance. Dance plays an important symbolic role in representing culture, and some scholars have investigated the significant interconnection between dance and cultural studies (see also Morris 2009). What I argue here is that mocking the dance of a people trans-lates as derision of their culture at large. As we see in Chapter 2, Jacobus treats the lo-cals contemptuously, ridiculing their dance and, thus, has no respect for their culture.

In the wake of the publication of *Waiting for the Barbarians*, much work was done on it. Some critics consider *Waiting for the Barbarians* to be an allegorical novel. For example, Head (1997a, 72) writes that it is an allegory of Empire, and that it is about "the destructiveness (and self-destructiveness)" of imperial systems. Indeed, the novel can be read as an allegory of imperial and totalitarian systems like apartheid. In the novel, there are moments of self-reflexivity that, like other Coetzee's novels, invite allegorical reading. For example, when the Magistrate at the ruins of a historical site finds slips of paper, he comments that they "form an allegory. They can be read in many orders. Further, each slip can be read in many ways" (*WB*, 122), or when he accuses himself and says: "*NO! No! No!* […]. It is I who am seducing myself, out of vanity, into these meanings and correspondences" (*WB*, 47). The Magistrate is not able to grasp the meaning of these slips, which reminds us of Foucault's (1972, 6) notion of discontinuity in historiography, which he calls "the questioning of the *document*," (emphasis in original) that is to say, that there is discontinuity in the history of thought and that in the historical analysis discontinuity has become an indispensable factor. According to Foucault (1972, 6–7), history "organizes the document, divides it up, distributes it, orders it, arranges it in levels, establishes series, distinguishes between what is relevant and what is not, discovers elements, defines unities, describes relations." The Magistrate's attempt to interpret the slips by placing them in different orders, implying that they can be interpreted endlessly (*WB*, 17), alludes to the Foucauldian method of reading history.

Postcolonial scholar JanMohamed (1985, 73) argues that *Waiting for the Barbarians* is based on segregation between self (West) and other (non-Western), in which the self has disdain for the other – a view that entails mistreatment of the other. Some critics have, anachronistically, reread the novel in the light of the US War on

Terror of the early twenty-first century, or as a testimonial against torture in the American prisons of Abu Ghraib in Iraq and Guantanamo in Cuba, although it was published as early as twenty years before the US invasion of Iraq which led to the torture and forced confession of the captives deemed to be a threat against the civilised world. This notwithstanding, some critics have argued that in the same way the Empire in the novel fabricates an enemy, the United States fabricates an enemy to justify its military presence abroad and the pain and torture they inflict on the detainees. For example, Patrick Lenta (2006, 17) argues that the novel is an allegory for underrating the relation between torture, law and power in the post-9/11 era. In his article "*Waiting for the Barbarians* after September 11," Lenta (2006, 71) writes:

> The United States responded to the September 11 attacks with its "War on Terror." Authorized under emergency powers, the US administration has captured and tortured those that it deems its enemies. […] [T]hese acts of torture are comparable to the use of torture by colonial and imperial powers. […] J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) offers allegorical terms for understanding the relationship between torture, law and power in the post-September 11 context.

Such criticism, like the other scholarly works I discuss, seems to be quite relevant and suggestive, since significant parallels can be drawn between the treatment of the natives in the hands of the imperial army in the novel and that of the US politicians of their enemy after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

A Foucauldian notion of a regime of truth will clarify the US interrogators' projection of truth on the detainees who were captured during the War on Terror and tortured. As Foucault (2000, 131) points out:

> Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.

As I perceive it, there is a relation between power and truth. That is to say, the Foucauldian view of power would be that everyone is complicit with power. Hence, the US authorities, those at the Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib involved in obtaining truth are no exceptions in this regard. This is corroborated by my own analyses. Moreover, we should note that the authorities appear to possess the state-of-the-art technology and machinery. The relationship between truth and power is described by Foucault (2000,

132) when he states: “Truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it – a ‘regime’ of truth.” It can be said that that the events of the War on Terror, for example how torture was carried out at Guantanamo Bay, resemble the historical accounts of Coetzee and Foucault, both fictional and philosophical, of how power operates.

Anton Leist (2010, 207–10) comments that the Magistrate’s so-called care about the nomad girl is not rooted in love, but rather it in his interest in torture. Further, he believes that public beating of the captives has a positive effect on the Magistrate, because through witnessing the pain on the body of the other the Magistrate is awakened. This helps the Magistrate to become a better person. Leist calls this process ‘self-improvement’. Like Leist, I believe that the Magistrate tortures the girl willingly. Also, I believe that torture of the nomads plays a role in distancing himself from the Empire. However, he remains a complicated person. His relationship with the girl is a mixture of shame, guilt and torture. Moreover, the question remains: can he be exonerated from the guilt of the Empire?

Head (2009, 48) believes that the novel is about the apartheid era. However, he also argues that since the novel does not include the “sustained correspondence” which is typical of political allegory, the mode of the novel can denote to somewhere “between a universal allegory or parable about power and oppression, and an excoriating critique of a specific form of oppression” (Head 2009, 50). Like Head, I believe that the novel refers to the apartheid era, but it can also be read as a general critique of imperialism and repressive states.

Gallagher (1991, 113–14) writes that torture in *Waiting for the Barbarians* alludes to the torture in the apartheid era. To support her claim, she writes that torture evokes the misconduct of the apartheid regime in the aftermath of the Soweto uprising of 1967–1977, and Attwell (2015, 117) also asserts that the context of the novel is South Africa:

> The fictional translations of the political context are clear enough: the clamp-down by the security detail (South Africa’s BOSS, the Bureau of State Security, renamed the Third Bureau after Tsarist Russia), the torture chamber, and the effects of these on people of liberal conscience, represented by the magistrate.

Like Attwell and Gallagher, I think that the novel alludes to events in South Africa under apartheid such as the Soweto riots and the death of Steve Bantu Biko. As I shall show, the way a prisoner in the novel is tortured to death is similar to Biko’s death in the apartheid regime’s custody. Furthermore, Coetzee himself confirms the connection: “I must make the relation of the story to the Biko affair, the inspiration, the inspiration of the story by the Biko affair, clear. End it with a massive trial scene in which the accusers get put in the dock” (qtd in Attwell 2015, 177). While the

allusion to Biko's death in the novel is not related to gender-based violence, it emphasises the violent structure of oppressive regimes. I maintain that under totalitarian regimes like the one depicted in the novel, citizens are pessimistic about the future as such systems tyrannise them.

The fact that the novel has often been read allegorically does not mean that this is the case with all of the critique. Derek Attridge (2004, 32–39) – while highlighting the different ways that Coetzee's novel can be read allegorically – states that he is straightforward in reading *Waiting for the Barbarians* with regard to allegory. That is to say, he believes that sometimes the characters in the novel and the events refer to local or certain issues, that is to say they are specific, and sometimes they refer to universal issues. He calls these kinds of reading "literal" (Attridge 2004, 39). According to Attridge (2004, 48) reading the novel should not be confined to an allegorical one, since this would be detrimental to the power of the novel. In such an exclusively allegorical reading, he states, "[t]he powerful physical depictions, the intimate experience of an individual's inner states, […] the posing (but not resolving) of delicate ethical dilemmas" would be ignored. Similarly, I believe that the novel has specific connotations, as sometimes it alludes to the apartheid system, torture and confessions of that era; I also believe that the novel can allude to universal ideas about totalitarian and imperial systems. I shall also consider ethical issues and the "inner states" in the characterisations, especially of the Magistrate. While the novel can be read allegorically,[9] the analysis of the novel should not be limited to an allegorical reading. For example, Clarkson (2009, 1–4), in her study of the linguistic structure of *Waiting for the Barbarians*, also states that Coetzee's novels, including *Waiting for the Barbarians*, do not simply serve as allegories.

In my dissertation, I analyse the objective behind the depiction of the violent treatment of the natives. Attwell (1993, 71) believes the roots of the Empire's violence are in the paranoia over the rumours (regardless of who spread it, the Empire, or the people of the outpost) on the basis of which the Empire sends troops to destroy the (presumed) enemy. I believe that the objective is related to the paranoia, but even more, it is that the Empire needs, and in fact welcomes, such hearsay because it serves as a pretext for justifying the occupation of the outpost in

[9] "Both Teresa Dovey ('Allegory vs. Allegory') and Wade ('The Allegorical Text and History') have provided interesting discussions on some of the allegorizing tendencies in *Barbarians* by relating them to Walter Benjamin's *Origin of German Tragic Drama,* especially the famous dictum 'Allegories are, in the realm of thoughts, what ruins are, in the realm of things.' Although both arguments stress indeterminacy, the point I wish to emphasize is that the novel continually frustrates the allegorizing impulse, disallowing even inconclusive or qualified meanings to emerge. For Wade, the novel's allegorizing is about historical catastrophe and systemic crisis in South Africa; for Dovey, it dispenses lessons about textuality" (Attwell 1993, 132n6).

order to protect imperial rule. I argue that, instead of exonerating the Magistrate, the novel depicts him as culpable, and through my analysis I demonstrate that the Magistrate in fact upholds the Empire through his actions and is an accomplice in the violations, despite his difference from Colonel Joll. I maintain further that in the text there is no evidence to suggest the nomad girl feels as if she is the Magistrate's favourite, as Belgacem claims.[10] In contrast, the Magistrate embarks on the nomad girl's mental torture as he does not understand her. Unlike Belgacem (2018, 36–39), I argue that it is not due to the disfigurement, in the case of the nomad girl, her broken rib and her wounded eyes, that generate the animalistic views held towards the natives. Rather, I believe, first, that the marks of torture on her body provoke the Magistrate's hermeneutic epistemological interest to unveil the truth about her being tortured. This in turn results in the mental torture of the girl. Second, any negative thoughts on the girl and her people are due to their difference, that they do not belong to the same race and culture as the Empire and its agent. Importantly, in comparison to *Dusklands*, here we witness a shift in gendered violence when the perpetrator tries to repent for his sins. The Magistrate does not enjoy the scenes of physical torture, unlike, for example, Jacobus and Dawn, and the Magistrate at any rate knows that he is oppressing the girl and that brings some kind of judgment on his conscience.

[10] Olfa Belgacem (2018, 39) views the Magistrate's caressing of the girl as an opportunity to understand her and her people and to understand the way his colleagues are oppressing the alleged barbarians. Belgacem (2018, 36, 39) compares the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* to Ms Curren in Coetzee's 1990 novel *Age of Iron* as Ms Curren's body, too, is marked by suffering. She suffers pain due to her illness, and she has witnessed violence in her proximity. The Magistrate is also affected by pain, and Belgacem writes that both characters share a sense of commonality: empathy. That is to say, Ms Curren and the Magistrate, are sympathetic towards the other. Ms Curren sympathises with the pain of her countrymen who are being killed and wounded by the police, and the Magistrate understands the nomads who are tortured by Colonel Joll. Consequently, they both suffer pain. Moreover, Ms Curren′s body, despite being a white woman's body, is marked by the removal of her breast due to illness, which shows that she is closer to the other, the black people, than to the whites (Belgacem 2018, 36–39). One should note that there is no explicit mention that the barbarians are black. We hear, instead, that they have black hair and dark eyes, and that some of the people from the Empire's army have blue eyes. Furthermore, the idea of a marked body can be discerned in Ms Curren′s words. Referring to her body she says: "People don't like marked objects" (Coetzee 1990 167). Belgacem argues that many characters in Coetzee's fictions are maimed and disfigured, and these features make them prone to violent treatment. This ill-treatment is based on the perception of them being closer to animals than humans (Belgacem 2018, 43–45). Moreover, applying Foucauldian notions of *enclosure*, *partitioning* and *ranking* to the nomad captives, Belgacem (2018, 44) argues that the Magistrate makes the nomad girl feel that she is his favourite.

JanMohamed (1985, 73) states that *Waiting for the Barbarians* portrays the relationship between the self and the other in imperial systems in which the other is always inferior. He also writes that the fact that the Empire is not specified implies that all nations are prone to "fascism" – or "imperial domination" –, and he comments that *Waiting for the Barbarians*

> refuses to acknowledge its historical sources or to make any allusions to the specific barbarism of the apartheid regime. The novel thus implies that we are all somehow equally guilty and that fascism is endemic to all societies. In its studied refusal to accept historical responsibility, this novel, like all 'imaginary' colonialist texts, attempts to mystify the imperial endeavor by representing the relation between self and Other in metaphysical terms. The fundamental strategy of all such fiction is its unchanging presentation of the natives' inferiority as an unalterable metaphysical fact. (ibid.)

JanMohamed offers a postcolonial critique of Coetzee, accusing him of obscuring particulars as a way of supporting a hierarchy in which the colonisers are above the 'natives'. However, I do not perceive that Coetzee is supporting such a hierarchy, but, rather, while the Empire perceives the other as inferior, the aim of the book is to expose the tyrannies of the Empire.

I argue that the reader of *Waiting for the Barbarians* gets acquainted with justifications of torture – how it is used to spread imperial rule. The reader is made aware that humans can be corrupted by power, even if, like the Magistrate, they have good intentions. In so doing, to borrow Jacques Derrida's (1978, 292 [1967, 427]) term, the reader is involved in "active interpretation" of the texts, "of a world of signs […] without origin." Critics such as Belgacem (2018, 122) argue that in this way the reader of the novel is engaged in an endless interpretation of torture. However, I am more specific about the implications of torture. While I argue that the novel engages the reader with the topic of torture, at the same time it is specific about its purpose and function. Torture is used to get a desired confession from the captives by both soft and cruel means, and to eliminate the so-called threat. In other words, the existence of the menace is fabricated by the Empire, in a way resembling the view of totalitarian power's operation in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949).

In the existing criticism on *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, attention has not been paid to the consideration of these two novels together in order to explore, as I mentioned earlier, the fictionalized trajectory of gendered violence and the confessional genre with fictional representation of universal ethical points. Thus, in my analysis of *Waiting for the Barbarians*, while probing into the topics of torture, confession, and gender-based violence, I show a major shift in the way of depicting

gendered violence. This change is analysed in the narrative of the Magistrate who feels guilty for his crime and tries to make amends. Moreover, building upon Albert Memmi (2003, 38), that a coloniser who rejects their relation to colonialism is still coloniser, I argue that the Magistrate is still an accomplice. Together this complicity and the confessional genre in the novel stand for the author himself, who can be viewed as a coloniser who rejects his inherited past.

Disgrace is the most controversial and the most debated of Coetzee's oeuvre, and it has also been criticised for its negative depiction of the South African society and for representing the blacks as assailants of white women. For example, Nadine Gordimer condemns the novel for spreading racial stereotypes and portraying blacks as negatively as possible.[11] Not all criticisms of *Disgrace* are negative, however. Head (2009, 77) believes that the rape scenes remind readers of the colonial era: "It is impossible for the reader not to draw a parallel between the sexually predatory Lurie and his daughter's rapists; and this suggests a depressing lesson in the legacy of colonialism." Like Head, I believe that the rape scenes allude to colonialism but also to the apartheid era. As a matter of fact, the white supremacy era played a crucial role in setting the stage for rampant gender-based violence in the country. Lizalise Idinga Lakho (2009, 149–50) believes that through the trial of the protagonist, David Lurie, at the committee of inquiry, the novel presents him as a character who seeks self-forgiveness when a public pardon is not possible, arguing further that a more important implication of the novel is its allusion to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and in so doing *Disgrace* questions the efficiency and politicisation of the TRC.

Adriaan van Heerden (2010, 55–56) perceives a kind of metamorphosis in the novel in the characterisation of Lurie, arguing that before Lurie's expulsion from the university, he had no religious affiliation, nor belief in God. However, the novel has a quasi-religious ending, as Lurie's transformation assumes a Christian dimension. The sort of metamorphosis van Heerden identifies is also suggested in the changed attitude towards animals. As van Heerden argues, Lurie is not compassionate to animals in the early parts of the novel but, later on, he refers to himself as "dog-man"– an "inversion of god-man" according to van Heerden, placing humans and dogs together on the same level, arguably deconstructing the previous hierarchy by placing dog before man. In this way, the novel undermines the previous hierarchy between humans and animals. According to van Heerden (2010, 56), in this way Coetzee seems to say that "the way to salvation is to rediscover our fundamental animality, to recognize our deep affinity with animals, and to stop treating them as a

[11] For a more detailed discussion of the criticism on *Disgrace*, refer to Chapter 4.

lower order of being.[12] In my analysis, I shall also draw on metamorphosis in the novel but from a different vantage point. In other words, to a certain extent my analysis is in line with van Heerden's, in the sense that I believe that the characterisation of Lurie shows a metamorphosis. He becomes compassionate to animals and seems to understand them towards the end of the novel. However, in addition to van Heerden's argument, I shall consider metamorphosis in other respects of Lurie's characterisation, and more importantly I take into consideration the idea of power as well. That is to say, in a later section I show that the metamorphosis is also suggested, not only in his treatment of the animals but in the shift of power in the depiction not only of Lurie but also of Lucy and the black South Africans. The shift of power is suggested in particular in relation to land ownership and in the perception that Lurie lacks the power to protect Lucy.

Attridge (2000, 118) analyses Lurie's sexual desire for his black student Melanie Isaacs, and argues that sexual desire is heinous per se. However, while sexual abuse is negative in itself, desire as a natural instinct cannot be considered immoral. What Attridge seems to imply is to condemn the *nature* of desire rather than the *use* of desire to justify one's abusive behaviour, which is in line with the workings of the committee of inquiry in the novel.

Andy Lamey (2010, 184) affirms that the relation between the black and the white in the novel depicts the early years after the collapse of the apartheid when violence was becoming commonplace, and the country was witnessing "an ongoing spiral of violent revenge." Like Lamey, I do believe that the relationships between Lurie, Lucy, and Lurie's student, Melanie, act as an allegory of the relationships between blacks and whites in post-apartheid South Africa. However, while Lamey does not comment on the root causes of the problem, or the way gender-based violence and punishment are depicted in Coetzee's earlier works, I shall probe into these issues and argue that in *Disgrace* the white supremacy era, that is to say, the colonisation and the apartheid eras, have had an important role in fostering gendered violence.

Martin Woessner (2010, 238–39) examines the fall of Lurie from his job as university professor to his job at the animal clinic as a disgrace when a charge of sexual harassment is brought against him, and he is forced out of the university. Another disgrace befalls him when his daughter is raped, and he is helpless. He also

[12] The idea of feeling compassion to animals is presented in Coetzee's other works as well. For example, Elizabeth Castelo highlights this notion and states that sympathy for animals make up, "an acceptance that we are all of one kind, one nature" (*Elizabeth Costello* 2003, 106).The idea of kindness to animals is also presented in *The Master of Petersburg*. At some points, Dostoevsky acts as a "dog-father" for a stray dog and assumes that the saving of Pavel, his son, would not happen "till he has freed the dog and brought it into his bed, brought the least thing, the beggarman and the beggarwoman too" (Coetzee 1994, 82).

states that the purpose of Lurie's daughter's rape is to force her to seek protection from her black neighbour. According to Woessner, the third kind of disgrace for Lurie is his country's history of racism. Furthermore, Woessner argues that love plays a role in Lurie's treatment of animals at the end of the novel. Like Woessner, I believe that Lurie is disgraced when he is expelled from the university, from a job where he had a position of power. It is also disgrace for him that his daughter is sexually exploited, and he is powerless. Above all, however, *Disgrace* is a presentation of an environment and culture which has set the stage for such crimes. However, I do not believe that the attack occasioned with the intention of the making Lurie's daughter seek refuge from his neighbour. Rather, I believe, first, that the attack is rooted in colonialism and apart-heid. Second, I believe that the novel suggests that contemporary South Africa has changed so that the whites are no longer the supreme power but a new era has arrived in South Africa, an era in which power has shifted towards the black South Africans. In the novel, the shifting of power is exemplified in the characterisation of Lurie, Lucy, and their black neighbour, Petrus. I consider that the father and the daughter stand for the whites and Petrus for the black South Africans. It appears that in the novel the whites have lost their power, whereas Petrus has gained power. The shift of power is also suggested when Lucy hands over her lands to Petrus and in return seeks his protection. That is to say, Lucy assumes that her black neighbour can protect her better than her father. I shall analyse these issues in more detail in Chapter 4.

The arrival of a new era is suggested also in the media coverage in the novel. The significance of this point is highlighted when we discern that some white media have depicted the blacks as rapist. Significantly, this depiction has its background in the colonisation era, during which whites encouraged the idea of the threat of the Black Peril, that is to say, the idea of black men raping white women, in the public imagination. In contemporary South Africa, there are still some white media that uphold such notions. However, the novel suggests that with the advent of the new era, the media should remain neutral. An important factor which heralds the arrival of the new era and signposts the last phase of depicting gender-based violence in Coetzee's works, is the way in which Lurie is apprehended and punished for the sexual abuse of his black student, Melanie. We do not see such measures in the previous works.

Last but not least, I argue that *Disgrace* has a fair ending, as suggested in the characterisation of Lurie. While some critics presume that the ending is bleak with David Lurie falling from grace for good, I argue that the novel offers a lesson in ethics, that we should be kind, even to animals. That even people who seem to be merciless can indeed turn into people with compassion. Kindness to animals can lead to kindness to human beings, and thus we could have a better world where we care both about animals and our fellow human beings.

2 Violence and Complicity in *Dusklands*

> If the press is awaiting a declaration of war before it imposes the self-discipline of combat conditions, then I can only say that no war ever posed a greater threat to our security. If you are awaiting a finding of "clear and present danger," then I can only say that the danger has never been more clear and its presence more imminent […]. Every newspaper now asks itself with respect to every story: "Is it news?" All I suggest is that you add the question: "Is it in the interest of national security?"
>
> – John F. Kennedy (1962, 336–37)

> I can't say I completely agree with the people who think that when battle scenes are brought into the living room the hazards of war are necessarily made 'real' to the civilian audience. It seems to me that by the same process they are also made less 'real' – diminished, in part, by the physical size of the television screen, which, for all the industry's advances, still shows a picture of men three inches tall shooting at other men three inches tall, trivialized, or at least tamed, by the enveloping cozy alarums of the household.
>
> – Michael Arlen (1982, 2)

In this chapter, complicity and historical guilt are analysed in the narratives of, first, Eugene Dawn and, second, Jacobus Coetzee while penetrating overseas territories. I shall also look into gender-based violence in both parts of the novel in the light of imperial/colonial penetration.

2.1 Apartheid, resistance literature and social conditions of South Africa: The notion of historical guilt of White South Africans in *Dusklands*

During the 1980s, South Africa was still under the reign of the apartheid regime. Some authors at this time challenged the oppressive system in the country via the power of literature. In trying to unmask the brutalities of apartheid in literature, as Louise Bethlehem (2001, 367) notes, an author "opposes apartheid through exposing it" (see also Niemi 2021, 76). Some literary scholars maintain that authors should write in a realistic way about the society and the misdemeanours of the state, so that nobody can claim that they were ignorant of the affairs in the society. For example, Jean-Paul Sartre (1949, 23) states that: "[t]he engaged writer knows that words are action. He knows that to reveal is to change and that one can reveal only by planning to change." He also argues that "the function of the writer is to act in such a way that nobody can be ignorant of the world and that nobody may say that he is innocent of what it's all about" (Sartre 1949, 24). In the context of the South African literary canon, we witness such a trend for engagement. For example, Christie, Hutchings and Maclennan (1980, 99) state that the power of South African literature

> comes from knowledge, and from deep concern for social and political change. The crime, for a writer of this group is to be in any way escapist, not committed to the greater human cause […]. Consequently most of this writing is by intention critical and protesting, for its main function is to present the truth and the truth is seldom pleasant.

Comparatively, Richard Peck (1992, 67) argues that "existentialism maintains an extraordinary grip over white South African dissident writers." Minna Niemi states that André Brink was one of the South African writers who were very persistent in challenging the repressive system. In his collection of essays, *Writing in a State of Siege*, Brink (1983, 35) establishes his method as follows: "There lies a peculiar satisfaction in countering the tactics of secrecy with exposure: the dark fears nothing quite so much as light."

However, there are also scholars who doubt the efficiency of mimetic reality in literature. For example, Theodor Adorno (2020, 215), in criticising Sartre's notion of committed arts, writes: "The notion of a 'message' in art, even when politically radical, already contains an accommodation to the world," and that "works of art that react against empirical reality obey the forces of that reality" (Adorno 2020, 211). In her interpretation of Adorno, Niemi (2011, 130) considers that for Adorno, "art is not to mime empirical reality, but to follow its own rules of creation." I, too, think that Coetzee is in line with Adorno, and that his works do not mime reality. Rather,

his works aim for truth that is not represented in a realistic, but in a complicated and subtle way. Thus, for example, *Dusklands* is a combination of fact and fiction, and in *Waiting for the Barbarians* complicity and gender-based violence can be discussed via the conflicted character of the Magistrate who is an accomplice.

Coetzee's (1992a, 364; italics original) objective to represent truth in an indirect way is attested in his own words when he talks about torture in the novel:

> For the writer the deeper problem is *not* to allow himself to be impaled on the dilemma proposed by the state, namely, either to ignore its obscenities or else to produce representations of them. The true challenge is: how not to play the game by the rules of the state, how to establish one's own authority.

In other words, if authors try to challenge and respond to the tyrannies of the state such as torture in their fiction by representing them, they are, in Niemi's (2017, 235) terms guilty of "self-deception," and, in fact, promote oppression by reproducing it. It is the state violence that has dictated the author how to write. Thus, Coetzee distances himself from this kind of representation of truth. This does not mean that he is not aware of the environment of his country. In contrast, the unsettling environment of the 1980s has "overwhelmed" him:

> Let me add, *entirely* parenthetically, that I as a person, as a personality, am overwhelmed, that my thinking is thrown into confusion and helplessness, by the fact of suffering in the world, and not only human suffering. These fictional constructions of mine are paltry, ludicrous defences against that being-overwhelmed, and, to me, transparently so. (Coetzee 1992c, 248; italics original)

It can be said that in the turbulent environment of the 1980s, Coetzee, as an author, was not just watching without acting. Rather, in his fiction he tried, despite the subsequent impediments, to maintain his integrity and autonomy. The novels selected for my analyses, do not describe violence as it has been committed by the state, rather, they depict the effects of physical and gendered violence on people. In the words of Niemi (2011, 139), autonomous art – towards which Coetzee has taken his own aesthetic project – is not apolitical but rather sees the political struggle between the writer and the state from a more nuanced position. So, I shall analyse the characters and their narratives in the first two novels from the standpoint of this nuanced position.

As I say in the Introduction, I shall look into complicity in addition to gender-based violence. Head (2009, 27) believes that complicity is a common theme in postcolonial discourse. With regard to complicity, Simon During's (1994, 127) ideas of difference between the "post-colonised," those who identify with the culture

overlaid by imperialism, and by the language of the coloniser, and the "post-colonisers," those who are embroiled in the culture and language of colonialism, even while they reject imperialism, is important. The situation for an English writer in contemporary South Africa seems to be very special and needs closer consideration. On the one hand, they are heirs of colonialism. On the other hand, Afrikaans is the actual language of imperialism in South Africa. As Head (1997c, 17) reminds us, it was "the enforced use of Afrikaans in teaching" that led to the Soweto riots of 1976–1977. Thus, according to During's definition mentioned above, Coetzee belongs to the post-colonisers. On this account, complicity in his work can be said to play a key role, and a trace of what I refer to as historical guilt can be perceived in his writing. This idea is highlighted in Helen Tiffin's (1987, 17) comment that "decolonization is process, not arrival." Importantly, Coetzee (1988a, 11) himself confirms such discursive impact when he writes that white writing is writing "generated by the concerns of people no longer European, not yet African." In fact, *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians* can be read as testimonies of how imperial systems work through tyranny, with the knowledge that the author himself as a white South African is an accomplice and an heir of colonialism. The tyrannies in the novels take the forms of violence and gendered oppressions while extending imperial domination.

In *Dusklands*, as I mentioned earlier, there are many Coetzee's, which invites us to ponder why there are so many. At the time of writing the novel, Coetzee, as I shall discuss later in this chapter, had access to documents about the brutalities of his ancestors in South Africa, namely a distant relative, named Jacobus Coetzee who resembles the fictionalised Coetzee, venturing deep into the Caple Colony, committing atrocities. As I shall explore, "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" bears a close resemblance to the narratives of early colonial travellers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to the Cape. This may indicate complicity, or the historical guilt to which I alluded earlier. In this respect, like Head (2009, 42), I believe that both players in the shadows, Coetzee in the Vietnam Project and Jacobus in the second part, stand for complicity of the author. Head (2009, 42) writes that the abundance of Coetzees in *Dusklands* could be due to "the ancestry that implicates him [i.e., J. M. Coetzee] in the early colonial discourse of the Cape." It is this sense of complicity that has set the stage for writing *Dusklands*, and Coetzee (1992d, 343) has admitted this in an interview with Attwell.

Coetzee seems to be aware of the historical guilt that he carries. This can be discerned in his comments. He states that Afrikaners are guilty of crime against Africans, and he confirms his affiliation with them. Thus, he states that *Dusklands* is work concerning complicity. In an interview with Attwell, Coetzee (1992d, 342–43, emphasis in original) states:

> The whites of South Africa participated, in *various degrees, actively or passively*, in an audacious and well-planned crime against Africa. Afrikaners as a self-defining group distinguished themselves in the commission of that crime. Thereby they lent their name to it. It will be a long time before they have the moral authority to withdraw that brandmark. There are nuances on which they might want to insist — for instance, that the crime doesn't belong to the post-1948 period alone, or even to the twentieth century alone, but is continuous with the entire enterprise of colonialism […]. Is it in my power to withdraw from the gang? I think not. […] More important, is it my heart's desire to be counted apart? Not really. Furthermore — and this is an afterthought — I would regard it as morally questionable to write something like the second part of *Dusklands* — a *fiction*, note — from a position that is not historically complicit.

So, it can be said that Coetzee's writing has been under the influence of his Afrikaner lineage that associate him with the colonial era, the misdemeanours of the colonisers and the subsequent apartheid era. The idea of ancient guilt shows in Coetzee's conscience, that he sticks to his moral principles. Head (2009, 23) believes that in Coetzee's writing this acceptance and admission of guilt is necessary "upon which the genuine voice of a writer like Coetzee depends."

Coetzee's awareness of historical guilt was developed in his time as a graduate student at Buffalo where he did profound research on the colonisation of South Africa, which I discuss in the next section. Due to his insight into the misdeed of the colonisers of South Africa and Coetzee's affiliation with them as their offspring, the origin of "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" can be associated with this idea of historical guilt. Attwell (2015, 52) confirms that the tyrannies of the colonisers had a strong impact on Coetzee writing this novel, and *Dusklands* is a kind of a confession. Not Coetzee's personal confession, but rather that the novel should be viewed in the wider context of white South Africans as the legatees of white colonisers. In this case, the white South Africans can be said to be "the heir of an expansionist colonial philosophy of violence in South Africa" as can be inferred from *Dusklands* (Attwell 2015, 54). That is to say, due to the tyrannies of their forefathers during colonialism and apartheid, white South Africans feel guilty and they might confess to this. Moreover, according to Attwell, Coetzee at the time of composing the novel was establishing himself on the terrain of German Romanticism à la Oswald Spengler (Attwell 2015, 53). Spengler was knowledgeable of the role of the European imperial power in Africa, with Cecil Rhodes as the prime example. He writes:

> Imperialism is Civilization unadulterated. In this phenomenal form the destiny of the West is irrevocably set. […] I see in Cecil Rhodes the first man of a new

> age […] and his phrase "expansion is everything" is the Napoleonic reassertion of the indwelling tendency of every Civilization that has fully ripened […]. The expansive tendency is doom, something daemonic and immense, which grips, forces into service, and uses up the late mankind of the world-city stage, willy-nilly, aware or unaware. (Spengler 1959, I, 36–37)

According to Spengler's prophetic view, the men at the service of the Empire, in *Dusklands* Eugene Dawn and Jacobus Coetzee, are "something daemonic and immense," using "up the late mankind." Drawing on Spengler, Attwell (2015, 54) argues that the characters of *Dusklands* in both sections of the novel – with a 200-year gap between their settings – make particular refence to the crimes of the imperial powers and parody them. In the following section, I discuss the logic of having two settings in *Dusklands* within the aforementioned time span. We shall see that there is thematic connection between the two parts of the novel. This is to so say that what happened then in South Africa happened again 200 years later in Vietnam, and the novel shows the resentment of the author at such crimes. This in turn relates to the ideas of complicity and historical guilt which are discussed in this chapter.

2.2 Imperialism and violence: The rationale of the two novellas in *Dusklands*: Coetzee and complicity

For over fifty years Coetzee has been involved in writing. His first literary appearance was with *Dusklands* in 1974. Although he had produced some poetry before that, as Attwell (2015, 49) points out, for Coetzee the year 1974 marks the beginning of his writing career. *Dusklands* is set in two parts and each deal with a very different setting. This has resulted in the bemusement of some critics and readers as to why the novel should have two aberrantly disparate parts. For example, Poyner (2009, 15) writes that in this novel Coetzee has perplexed many readers by "juxtaposing two apparently discrete narratives." This does not mean that all critics and readers have failed to see the novel as a whole. For example, Attwell's analysis, as we shall see later in this section, implies that the novel is a whole. I believe if we consider the conditions in which Coetzee composed this novel and track a path back to Coetzee's studies in the US, such queries would be answered. In this respect, I base my interpretation on external biographical evidence rather than textual analysis, and argue that it does, indeed, make sense that the novel has two parts.

In September 1965, during President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration, John Maxwell Coetzee emigrated to the US to embark on his graduate studies at Buffalo. This period of his life coincided with the climax of American military involvement in the Vietnam War. After President John F. Kennedy's assassination in November

1963, Johnson became President and ordered military operations in Vietnam to become more intense. As Daniel C. Hallin (1998, 60) puts it, Johnson decided to use both air and ground forces. An attack on an American navy vessel in the Gulf of Tonkin in 1964 paved the way for Johnson's decision. Coetzee's arrival in the US in 1965 coincided with these incidents. In fact, his time in the US witnessed a turning point in the role of the United States in the war as the violence was escalating and America was mobilising more troops in the battlefields. As Murray Marder reported in the *Washington Post*: "The secret war turned into an open war in early 1965" (qtd in Gallagher 1991, 50). Simultaneously with these atrocities, the American authorities presented the United States as the land of democracy that would bring prosperity to the world. However, the atrocities of the Vietnam War subverted such a claim. As Gallagher (1991, 50) writes, Johnson's agenda of the Great Society and "the passage of Civil Rights Acts of 1964," which aimed to portray America as the beacon of democracy, proved to be unrealistic.

The Vietnam War had another unique feature and that was TV coverage. It was the first time that graphic scenes of war zones were brought to American homes; every day, there was news of the campaign in Vietnam, and this war, as Gallagher (1991, 51) writes, was "the first televised war."[13] At first, the TV programmes aimed at gathering support for the war and tried to create the binary of self versus other, with Americans as the self and the Vietnamese as the other. The news media tried to depict the US citizens and the US army as one entity: TV coverage of the war heightened "the unity of the National Family" (Hallin 1998, 125). Later on, in 1967–1968, with the shift of political attitudes concerning the war, the media became more critical and covered some of the harsh realities of war (Mermin 1999, 4). Televised coverage of the war had its consequences. People became more aware of its devastating consequences, and many were shocked by the atrocities. Coetzee was among those who were revolted by the scale of destruction presented through the lens of the media. When the cruelties of the war started to leak out, the public were outraged and massive demonstrations against American military intervention in Vietnam were organised. Demonstrators urged the government to end the war and to bring the armed forces home. Others expressed their objections through such means as writing, and Coetzee was among those who chose to write about the reality of the imperial expansion.

With regard to "The Vietnam Project," Coetzee writes that he was provoked by the events of the time, especially the Vietnam War: "I can now see that D

[13] Coetzee is concerned with the way news media show the destructive capabilities of American troops: "I think particularly of the effect televised airstrikes had on the small screen. The violence erupted at you, the massiveness of thousands of tons of high explosives dropped" (Temple 1974, 3).

[*Dusklands*] was a product of the passionate politics 1965–71, USA" (qtd in Attwell 2015, 106). Furthermore, in an interview with Stephen Watson, Coetzee (1978, 21–24) comments that "a long, crucial period of my life [….] the major emotional involvement, from a political point of view, was not with the South African situation but with the war in Viet Nam." Coetzee maintains that he, at that time of writing *Dusklands*, was politically active and the current events propelled him to devote the first part of his novel to the Vietnam War. Importantly, in *Summertime* (2009), written three decades after *Dusklands*, the latter is depicted "as a book about cruelty, an expose of cruelty involved in various forms of conquest" (Coetzee 2009, 58–59). When asked why he had written "The Vietnam Project," he said that it was in reply to the Vietnam War (Coetzee 1992c, 27). So, as I mentioned above, in this respect, my interpretation is a biographical reading based on the author's testimony rather than textual analysis.

In contrast, "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," has its background in Coetzee's time as a graduate student in America. During this period, he did research on imperial violence in South Africa, and had access to documents about the brutalities of the Dutch colonisers there. During his research, he came across documents regarding a distant relative, named Jacobus Coetzee, and the protagonist of the second part of the novel is Jacobus Coetzee, who led an expedition deep into South Africa in 1706. During his research, according to Gallagher (1991, 51), Coetzee thought deeply about the white colonial travellers' perspectives on South Africans. The result of his research is presented in his *White Writing* (1988a), which I shall discuss in this chapter. Gallagher (1991, 51) writes that Coetzee conducted extensive research also on one of the common genres of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, travel writing by European colonisers, and found out about the punitive raids against the natives.[14]

In that era, the natives were looked down upon by early European colonisers,[15] and were often equated with animals in the travel narratives.[16] In these narratives, the natives were denied their humanity, which paved way for the natives to be

[14] European colonial travel writing reached its climax in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. As Charles Linwood Batten, Jr (1978, 1) writes: "Although Englishmen had been describing their voyages and journeys for many years, the eighteenth century [...] witnessed a new era in which non-fiction travel literature achieved an unparalleled popularity."

[15] For more information about the depiction of the Native South Africans by European travellers and the ways in which the Khoikhoi (pejoratively called Hottentots by the Dutch) were regarded as indolent by the European travellers, see Coetzee (1988b).

[16] In the next chapter, I probe into the animalistic view of the natives held by the early European colonisers and examine how such attitudes bear a resemblance to those of Jacobus Coetzee.

subjected to the most brutal acts. I shall return to such narratives later in this chapter as well.

Further corroboration for the idea that Coetzee wrote the first part of the novel due to the violent events in the Vietnam War and the second part of the novel as a reaction to the colonisation of South Africa can be found in his own words. In an interview with Attwell, Coetzee (1992c, 27) states that he wrote “The Vietnam Project” in response to the “spectacle of what was going on in Vietnam,” and states that he wrote “The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee” in response to the history of colonisation of his country, pointing out that what is behind this part of *Dusklands* concerns particularly “the annals of the exploration of Southern Africa, of what had been going on there” (ibid.). Thus, having conducted thorough research on the colonisation of South Africa and obtaining documents concerning the diary of a distant relative, Jacobus Coetzee, a kind of travel narrative in which Jacobus details his expedition into mainland South Africa and his punitive raid on the Namaqua people, he devoted the second part of *Dusklands* to South Africa. Using the brutalities of both the Vietnam War and the colonisers in South Africa, Coetzee designed *Dusklands* in two parts – in distinctive, temporally or geographically unrelated, contexts – with the connecting theme of gender-based violence and complicity in extending imperial domination. In the next section, I shall discuss how the way that imperial agents viewed the natives made them vulnerable to oppression. There is a problem with their attitudes and ideology that they deny the humanity of natives and committed gender-based violence.

2.3 Dehumanisation of the natives: A postcolonial reading

Since in *Dusklands* imperial agents treat the natives violently and opt for their annihilation and the sexual abuse of women, and particularly in the case of Jacobus we witness commodification of women, it is pertinent to ask how humans can be so desensitised to the pain of others. How do the imperial agents in the novel, and the Empire in the next chapter, view the natives? To answer this question, I draw on Bhabha’s (1994, 42) argument that “white man’s eyes break up the black man’s body and in that act of epistemic violence its own frame of reference is transgressed, its field of vision disturbed.” I apply Bhabha’s argument in two ways. First, in line with this argument I assert that the attitudes of the imperial agents towards the dominated is distorted. That is to say, they are not able to see that the dominated are human and deserve humane treatment. Rather, the oppressed are attributed a false identity and are relegated to the position of a subhuman. This dehumanisation is accomplished through discourse. *Dusklands* is not Coetzee’s only work in which identity is created through language for the dominated. For example, in *Life and Times of Michael K*

(1983), the authorities exploit Michael by creating a fabricated identity for him. In both *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, however, language plays a key role in the imperial systems in rendering the dominated as people who can be violently treated, oppressed, and sexually abused. The role of language is expressed, in Tzvetan Todorov's (1984, 123) words, as the "companion of the empire." In this and the next chapters, I shall explore the way in which language renders the oppressed as people who are different from the imperial agents and thus allegedly deserve to be grossly mistreated.

In my analyses of "The Vietnam Project" and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, I broaden Bhabha's notion of epistemic racial violence. While he addresses the white man's eye with regard to the black men, I argue that the racialised broken body is not necessarily black but could be of any ethnicity under colonialism and imperial domination, the distorted view can look at all the oppressed. The native people are also dehumanised, as I shall explore. In *Dusklands* we perceive how paternalistic and patriarchal the discursive practice of the imperial agents' narrative is towards the natives. These attitudes cannot be construed as authentic, as the colonialists deprive the natives of their agency and their independence is denied.

Bhabha's view can aptly be applied to "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee." Jacobus himself is a white man and has a distorted vision towards blacks in South Africa. Like Eugene Dawn and the Empire agents, in particular Colonel Joll, Jacobus is not able to see that black people are human, that the native women are not there for him to sexually abuse them. Instead, he views them as beasts. Such attitudes, in turn, lay the ground, in the colonialists' view, for their violent treatment and oppression.

In *Dusklands and Waiting for the Barbarians*, the view of the imperial agents towards the natives is associated with power, which contributes to their disturbed vision. That is to say, in the narrative of the imperial agents, they present themselves as the symbol of civilisation. This resonates with the Foucauldian notion of power that knowledge is affected by power. In Said's interpretation, this means that the knowl-edge of the West about the East is connected with colonial power and is based on the Western perspective that renders the East an inferior deviation from the former. Such knowledge cannot be innocent since it is connected with power rooted in an Occidental standpoint (Said 1978, 36). I argue that the imperial agents in *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians* uphold Western power with an Occidental perspective towards the other, the Vietnamese, the South Africans, and the nomads. Said argues that there is a specific, complicated tradition of representing the other. Through such factors as power, culture, travel writing, and visual images, a colonial Orientalist discourse was established. This discourse creates the East as other, portraying the East as the product of Western power/knowledge. Said (1978, 3) argues that Orientalism is a "systematic discipline by which European culture was

able to manage – and even produce – the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period." The Western view, as Said shows, is still a radical misreading because it constructs an image of 'the East', which helps 'the West' construct itself in a way that suits it best. As such, 'the East' exists as a discursive construction. The idea of viewing the West's other as inhuman is evident among colonisers in South Africa as well. John Phillip from the London Missionary Society writes that missionaries and the British imperial authorities have done a great job in "civilizing natives" (qtd in Gallagher 1991, 56). Such a view of civilisation, or to use commonplace terminology in colonial discourse, civilisation mission, has roots in the othering of the dominated people.

Another factor that accounts for the mistreatment of the natives is the idea of otherness as I discuss in this chapter and the next. Bhabha (1994, 67) argues that otherness is a source of ambivalence, and this otherness includes "desire and derision." Ambivalence towards the other, as mentioned in the Introduction, manifests in a number of postcolonial fictions. However, in my analysis of Coetzee's novels, I argue that the other is usually derided through negative attitudes towards them, they are treated disrespectfully, and there is no interest or desire with regard to the other. The only exception, as I mentioned earlier, is in regard to the nomad girl and the Magistrate. As a result of the negative attitudes, which is the fruit of the ideology of the imperial/colonial systems, it is not surprising that Eugene Dawn does not sympathise with the victims of the war but, in contrast, ridicules them. Nor is Jacobus Coetzee compassionate towards the natives, and when he punishes them, he mocks their pain and agony. By the same token, the Empire agents are generally oblivious of the suffering of the oppressed people and view them as other.

In my reading of *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, I analyse how Coetzee makes use of colonialist/imperialist discourse to show the way violent treatment and sexualisation of women is justified. In my analysis, I extend Said's Middle Eastern 'East' to comprise other non-Westerners, as represented in Coetzee's fiction. In the empire agents' view, the other deserves ill-treatment. In *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the imperial agents are powerful, and it is through their lens that the dominated are portrayed. Nowhere do we encounter any information about the natives, their customs, and traditions from their own point of view (cf. Spivak 2006), nor is there any indication of respect for the above-mentioned issues: customs, culture, and tradition. This I shall discuss later.

In general, one could argue that *Dusklands, Waiting for the Barbarians*, and *Disgrace* make a general point about the inhumanity of humans when they are gifted power. Coetzee's works, as I shall explore, show how humans, in this case white colonisers and imperial agents, can be inhumane. In so doing, Coetzee draws on the behaviour of white colonisers as evidence. Hence, it is not that his books are merely

about violence and savagery without a critical purpose as some critics have claimed. For example, Knox-Shaw (1996, 114) writes that *Dusklands* "furthers the claims of savagery. This is an art that can only re-enact," and W. J. B. Wood comments that the book is "curiously symptomatic of the very thing it purports to diagnose" (qtd in Head 1997d, 29). My view is that Coetzee is specifically depicting how white male people have behaved when it comes to imperial power. The issue of power is asserted by Steven Groarke (2018, 31), too, when he writes that *Dusklands* depicts historical events as an archive, reworking this archive. In so doing, the novel shows the colonial will to power, and the corruptive effect of power on humans and the malignant consequences of patriarchy. That is to say, the novel alludes to the tyrannies that occurred during the colonial/imperial expansion eras and to the notion of historical guilt and the complicity of those who are doomed to be the heirs of the oppressors. The idea of complicity in this novel, as I have mentioned, is fictionalised via the characterisation of Dawn and Jacobus, which I shall delve into in following sections in this chapter.

2.4 "The Vietnam Project": Violence and complicity

In *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, there are abundant scenes of violence which involve the misuse of power by men. It is via violence that complicity can be discussed. In both novels, violence and the conquest of foreign territory coincide with gender-based violence. Domination of overseas territory and gender oppression happen in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, too. In the next chapter, I analyse how violence causes the conflicted Magistrate to become aware of the guilt of the Empire and opt for his expiation. Imperial violence, in the first part of *Dusklands*, manifests itself gruesomely in the carpet bombing of the Vietnamese, with a 'climax' in the second part, where the so-called enemy are massacred.

In "The Vietnam Project," Eugene Dawn, a military advisor, or, rather, a mythographer, to the American military, is writing a magnums opus on a project in the propaganda war to boost America's victory in Vietnam. He writes reports for the Kennedy Institute (*Dusklands*, 5; references will be given parenthetically, preceded by *Dusk*) in the Harry S. Truman Library (*Dusk*, 45). He prepares a report on the psychological impact of warfare, a process during which he has access to the war crimes of the American troops, which has a negative effect on him. Through his job as the mythographer of the Department of Defense, he witnesses the American army's brutality. Mythography in *Dusklands* is related to George Eliot's masterpiece, *Middlemarch* (1871), in which the fictional character Edward Casaubon is composing a work entitled *The Key to All Mythologies. This work is never finished, due to* Casaubon's *death. In the same way, Dawn's mission as a*

mythographer is aborted. Had it been successful, the Americans might have won the war. After all, the aim of his job was to help the Americans defeat their enemy.

The American army's violence in Vietnam is so overwhelming that Dawn loses his mind and stabs his own child to death. After stabbing his son, he ends up in a mental hospital. The fact that he loses his sanity suggests that the nature of violence in Vietnam is so terrifying that it affects him profoundly, even through mere reports. One can imagine the devastating effects of the war on the Vietnamese who experienced the war directly. Even before his breakdown, Eugene's wife Marilyn predicts that exposure to the blatant violence of the American troops would affect him severely. Marilyn's friends, too, associate the war with brutalisation and say that it will have a damaging influence on anyone dealing with it: "Marilyn and her friends believe that everyone who approaches the innermost mechanism of the war suffers a vision of horror which depraves him utterly" (*Dusk,* 15). That is why they believe that Eugene's project is "psychic brutalization" (*Dusk,* 14). Eugene himself understands that Marilyn believes he has been transformed and is not the same good person he was, since in her eyes he behaves abnormally:

> There is no doubt that Marilyn would have liked to believe in me. But she has found honest belief impossible ever since she decided that my moral balance was being tipped by my work on Vietnam. My human sympathies have been coarsened, she thinks, and I have become addicted to violent and perverse fantasies. (*Dusk,* 14)

Thus, she is worried about Eugene's psychological state. Eugene is aware of the source of Marilyn's anxiety and tries to reassure her that his project will have no negative impact on him: "I kiss her brow and croon comfort. I urge her to cheer up. I am my old self, I tell her, my same old loving self, she must only trust me" (*Dusk,* 14). However, she knows that this is not the case, and hopes that the war and the project would soon end so that her husband could return to normal life.

Poyner (2009, 16–19) reads Eugene's job against Ronald Barthes's argument in his book *Mythologies* (1957) in which Barthes defines three modes for interpreting myths. In the third mode, according to Barthes (1984, 128), a myth reads as "inextricable whole made of meaning and form." According to Poyner, Dawn's objective is to achieve this third mode. However, due to his insanity he cannot accomplish this goal. I shall not, however, address his failure regarding the interpretation of the myth as such but, instead, argue that as a part of the imperial system, as an accomplice with his military counterpart, he strives to foster American victory. Attwell (1998, 30) writes that the novel explores complicity in the sense that Coetzee connects his life story and forebears, and in so doing makes "sense of the contiguity of American and Dutch imperialism in determining his own historical

situation." Here, Attwell seems very aware of the connections between the two parts, arguing that in the novel, the Dutch and the Americans are seeking self-realisation (ibid.). I agree with Attwell that there is a sense of complicity. After all, Coetzee names the main character in the second part of *Dusklands* 'Coetzee'. In this way, he says that 'my ancestors did this', and I am thus an accomplice. I argue that the power of Coetzee's exploration of imperial violence is that he recognises personal complicity in it, just as Achebe in *Things Fall apart* recognises that, in important ways, his own ancestors were not morally better than the British who occupied the land; they were just much more poorly armed. Importantly, at the same time, it is the white colonists and imperialists who did the abominable things Coetzee and Achebe describe, not the Igbo, the Vietnamese, or other people at the Cape when the Europeans arrived. In my analysis, I develop the idea of complicity and analyse it in the following four respects:

1) Dawn's recommendation of massive violence and his cold-heartedness regarding the military operation resemble the real documents of the Hudson institute, with particular reference to Herman Kahn's words. In this way the novel parodies the war in Vietnam to a certain extent.
2) Dawn and the cultural exclusion of the Vietnamese.
3) Dawn's treatment of a series of photos indicates complicity as he ridicules the pain of the victims and their relatives and enjoys scenes of sexual abuse of women. I argue that the depiction of gender-based violence in Coetzee's oeuvre is here at the first stage.
4) Dawn's acts based on rationalisation.

In the first part of *Dusklands*, the Americans seek to gain overseas control by mili-tary methods. The violence of the army is indiscriminate; it uses advanced military technology and unconventional weapons that kill and injure more than a million people and devastate agriculture and natural habitats. These atrocities are so over-whelming that, as was discussed above, they affect even Dawn dramatically. How-ever, since such brutality against the Vietnamese appears to be ineffectual, the US au-thorities opt for other solutions. The necessity to find other solutions becomes clearer if I briefly outline the main issues about the Vietnam War relevant for my analysis.

The war lasted almost twenty years, from November 1955 until April 1975. In the beginning, after the French had withdrawn from Indochina, North Vietnamese forces, led by President Ho Chi Minh and backed by the US's rival, the Soviet Union, attempted to capture South Vietnam, an ally of the West, in order to reunite Vietnam. The US authorities of the time perceived this as a threat to their interests. The complexity of the Vietnamese context is that the Americans had local supporters,

namely the elite South Vietnamese. They eventually lost and many of them emigrated after the war. The Americans had first supported the French occupation of Vietnam with financial aid, and afterwards the South Vietnamese state, but the situation escalated to war between the North and the South. Subsequently, the US increased its military presence heavily in favour of South Vietnam in 1964. However, things did not proceed as they planned. The war was prolonged, with no imminent prospect of victory for the Americans. The North Vietnamese were determined to defend their territory and inflicted heavy losses on the American troops. When the American authorities came to realise that victory could not be achieved exclusively by military means, they opted for other solutions.

For all practical purposes it can be argued that "The Vietnam Project" replicates the aftermath of the US authorities' attempt to deal with the situation in Vietnam when the American forces and their allies in Vietnam suffered heavy casualties. At this point of the war, a commission was set up in America to investigate the situation and to suggest strategies to promote American military operations, with a project similar to Dawn's. In this study, the result of which has been presented by the Hudson Institute in the book *Can We Win the War in Vietnam? The American Dilemma* (Armbruster et al. 1968), the commission found that triumph in the war would not exclusively depend on the use of state-of-the-art weaponry and violence. Rather, the commission suggested that non-militarily matters play a key role. In other words, the commission believed that by the virtue of intimidation only it would be very unlikely that the Vietnamese could be defeated, but that an amalgamation of both military and cultural factors was needed to win the war, and that cultural issues would need to be given more prominence. In the document, the cultural issues are discussed at some length as a factor that can play a key role in determining the fate of the war. As I discuss later in this chapter, in "The Vietnam Project," cultural issues play a role in determining the outcome of the war. Hence, to have a beneficial impact upon the culture of the Vietnamese the Americans set up a radio station to promulgate American culture.

There were varying reactions to the publication of the study. Among the contributors to the volume, some supported the withdrawal from the war and some argued that the war should be intensified. That is to say, there was an anti-war group and a pro-war group. Importantly, Herman Khan, the founder of the Hudson Institute and a military strategist, belongs to the latter. Khan supported the war campaign, arguing for fierce bombardment of the so-called enemy. In his view, the root problem of the war was in the military means used, and he believed that the war could end triumphantly, since the "theory of victory" was embedded in it (Armbruster et al. 1968, 204–12). A worthwhile comparison to Kahn's statement would be Dawn's claim: "The only problem [in Vietnam] is the problem of victory. The problem of

victory is technical. We must believe this. Victory is a matter of sufficient force, and we dispose of sufficient force" (*Dusk,* 42–44).

In the book Khan tries to discuss at some length the ethical issues, for example that the lives of the civilians should not be endangered, and the military operation should be done as far as is practical (Armbruster et al. 1968, 211, 219). He also argues that:

> There may be in this kind of war vital special operations that do not meet these criteria [Geneva Convention and the laws and customs of civilised warfare]. If so, I would recommend, first, that they be isolated from regular military operations, and secondly, that they be rigorously reviewed and controlled at some points. (Armbruster et al. 1968, 319–20)

Nonetheless it can be said that "The Vietnam Project" reflects the suggestions made by the Hudson Institute. After all, like the strategists at the Institute, Dawn is looking for ways to improve the American military campaign in Vietnam.

Dawn's function in the novel reflects the views of the pro-war activists who recommend stepping up the war campaign. He makes suggestions for winning the war, as the ultimate goal is to make America victorious. To conceptualise this aim, he integrates cultural and technological matters. In this plan, with the help of sufficient troops and propaganda work, victory would be achievable. Moreover, in talking about the American military campaign and its brutalities in Vietnam, the callousness in Khan' words is discernible:

> Obviously *it is difficult not to sympathise* with those European and American audiences who, when shown films of fighter-bomber pilots *visibly exhilarated by successful napalm bombing runs* on Viet-Cong targets, react with horror and disgust. Yet, it is unreasonable to expect the U.S. Government to obtain pilots who are so appalled by the damage they may be doing that they cannot carry out their missions or become excessively depressed or guilt-ridden. (Armbruster et al. 1968, 10; emphases added)

Quite coldheartedly, the report talks about napalm bombing and killing the Vietnamese, commenting that the American pilots should not sympathise with the victims and should destroy the enemy targets without caring about their agony. These words entail major ethical points, as Dawn shares the attitude they imply and is in a position of power. Similar to the characters of Jacobus, in the next section, the Magistrate and Colonel Joll in Chapter 3, and Lurie in Chapter 4, Dawn is beguiled by his position of power. The point here is that all these characters misuse their power. Here, in the case of Khan, feeling guilt in regard to massacring of the civilians

is condemned and he thinks it “unreasonable” to employ pilots who are saddened by the scale of damage. In other words, Khan’s ethics recommends employing pilots who can use weapons of mass destruction, for example napalm bombs, cold-heartedly. In his view, this is the right and ethical thing to do.

Such views, and those of Dawn, which I discuss in the following, could allude to Robert Pippin’s (2010, 27) interpretation of Heidegger. In Pippin’s view, Heidegger shows us that the late-modern dependency on technology has altered “our sense of ourselves, our sense of Being itself” and we have come to live comfortably “with a sense of thoughtlessness and forgetfulness.” In line with this interpretation, Khan is “thoughtless” and “forgetful” of the pain of the Vietnamese. That is why he can be so heartless. Accordingly, Dawn is thoughtless of the pain of the so-called enemy.

Such statements signify a lack of ethics in modern warfare. We should note that the question of responsibility is more complex than pointing to individuals without considering their affiliation with power. It is this proximity with this factor that nourishes and nurtures such violent thoughts. This is a strong ethical point. The same holds true for Eugene Dawn, the Magistrate, Colonel Joll, and David Lurie and the rapists of his daughter: people become contaminated by misusing the position of power they gain, even if they are not necessarily evil by nature. Eugene, Jacobus, and the Empire agents hold powerful positions due to their affiliation with the evil system that results in evil situations. These situations, as I analyse in Chapter 4, are the result of centuries of domination and oppression.

Like Khan, Dawn displays a spirit of *ataraxia* – Epicurean tranquillity in the face of atrocities – when he talks about the bombing and mass murdering the Vietnamese. It is Dawn’s job to recommend, on the basis of his knowledge, valid means for the army to defeat the Vietnamese. He is afflicted with the imperial system and his knowledge is connected to this power. For him, the Vietnamese are the other, and from this standpoint he makes his recommendations, advocating persistence with the military operation. Accordingly, in what can be interpreted as a *confession* to use brute force, he says:

> When we attack the enemy via a pair of map co-ordinates we lay ourselves open to mathematical problems we cannot solve. But if we cannot solve them we can eliminate them, by attacking the co-ordinates themselves – all the co-ordinates. (*Dusk,* 45)

In this, “The Vietnam Project” alludes to the Hudson Institute report since it makes particular reference to similar strategies presented there. Kahn is credited with creating mathematical methods for scenario planning in the post-World War II milieu. In the novel, Dawn is talking about the wartime situation and the war zone

as mathematical problems, which in this context stand for defeating the enemy with conventional weapons. However, if victory is not achieved in this way, the army can "solve the problems" by other means – like the napalm bomb – although this will pitilessly wipe out also civilians. While one might say that such callous statements might be due to Dawn's insanity, in fact this is not the case. Like his military counterparts, he is viewing the North Vietnamese/Vietcong as an enemy. He is simply advocating inhumane violence and does not care whether this would wreak havoc upon the country and its people.[17] Thus, in this respect I agree with Head (1997d, 29) when he writes that *Dusklands* is about complicity.

The use of air force and carpet bombings is a recurring subject in "The Vietnam Project." This is the way that the American forces try to bring the Vietnamese under their domination. In this sense, it could be argued that the novel refers to President Johnson's order for the extensive use of the air force. Dawn refers to the use of the air force and recommends the bombardment of the country:

> There is an unsettling lack of realism about terrorism among the higher ranks of the military. Questions of conscience lie outside the purview of this study. We must work on the assumption that the military believe in their own explanations when they assign a solely military value to terror operations. (*Dusk,* 35)

Dawn's narrative complicity surfaces in his view that the enemy's territory should be razed and the US should show "the enemy that he stands naked in a dying landscape" (*Dusk*, 45), in terms of sexual violence: "[A]ssault upon the mothering earth herself" (*Dusk*, 25). We see similar issues in the second part of the novel. The difference is that while in the first part the scale of violence, also sexual violence, with the exception of Dawn's son, remains verbal, and he does not embark on physical violence, in the second, Jacobus does indeed commit sexual and physical violence. He destroys the land and sexually abuses women. I shall return to this latter issue in a later section in this chapter. We should note that although Dawn is not directly involved in physical violence, his recommendations highlight his cold willingness to eliminate the enemy. His manner in talking coldheartedly about violence and the annihilation of the enemy suggests he is an accomplice in the US

[17] A similar disregard for the humanity of non-Western people has also happened later. For example, in the War on Terror during the Second Persian Gulf War, the US army used depleted uranium to destroy the so-called enemy targets, which resulted in the killing of civilians alongside Iraqi army personnel. Use of such weapons posed a serious health hazard to the people in the area. Civilians are still wrestling with the consequences of those bombs and many children are born with leukaemia and other cancer-related diseases. For a detailed discussion of the use of depleted uranium in the Persian Gulf War, see Fulco, Liverman and Sox (2000).

Army brutalities. He labels the Vietnamese as the other and advocates their massacre imperturbably. In this respect, I agree with Pippin (2010, 28), who argues that for Dawn and the US authorities in a "postmetaphysical or scientific age all that is 'other' than the self and human will is merely stuff, obstacle, material, chaos, and dangerous contingency to be mastered." In other words, the natives are objectified and attributed a false identity.

As I stated earlier, Dawn's complicity is also suggested in his equanimity towards the victims of war and gender-based violence. I analyse this particularly keenly in his treatment of pictures depicting the scenes of torture and sexual abuse of Vietnamese people. His complicity is also suggested in cultural imperialism over the natives, and his acts based on his rationalisation. Cultural imperialism manifests itself in the second part of the novel, where Jacobus displays disdain for the culture of the natives. Such narratives root in the stereotypical understanding of the natives and affiliation with imperial power. Under such conditions, Dawn and the American troops in Vietnam are not able to recognise the pain of the other and do not care about the agony inflicted on their so-called adversaries. This holds true for both Jacobus and Colonel Joll. Stereotypical understanding of the other is manifest in Lurie's attitude as well.

In fact, the colonial and imperial powers, as represented in the novel, had no respect for the culture of the territory they occupied. In the novel, the culture of the Vietnamese is considered as that of the other. This is what I call the colonisation of culture. The American involvement in the war in *Dusklands* is based on the idea of the superiority of Western culture over that of the natives. Thus, they opt for the exclusion of the Vietnamese culture and substitute it with American culture. This in turn reminds us of the definition of postcolonial literature by Boehmer (1995, 3), that such texts are marked by "cultural exclusion" and that colonial and imperial agents' perspective with regard to the dominated is subverted. By virtue of cultural transformation, or to use Boehmer's concept "cultural exclusion," of the Vietnamese, the US forces hope to eliminate resistance to the spread of US domination. They also seek to make the natives cooperate with them. I shall return to the idea of disdain for the culture of the other in my discussion of the "Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," but let us see how the Americans endeavour to achieve their goal in the novel with regard to cultural transformation.

In "The Vietnam Project," in order to impose American culture upon the Vietnamese, the Americans try to break and rebuild Vietnam according to their Western criteria, in other words to Americanise it. To achieve this goal, there is an American radio station that broadcasts special cultural programmes to attract the Vietnamese to America, and they hope to attract a large audience. Importantly, Dawn is aware of the power of the radio: "Radio information, I ought to know from practise, is pure authority" (*Dusk*, 21). However, the Vietnamese do not welcome

this idea: they resist and fight against this scheme and abstain from listening to this radio. Thus, despite the US authorities' investment in cultural issues, the unpopularity of the US Armed Forces Radio signifies the failure of the American cultural transformation of the Vietnamese. There are very few people interested in the radio and in contrast, the Vietnamese are attracted to another radio, "Radio Free Vietnam" (*Dusk*, 32), which celebrates the local culture, traditions, and the Vietnamese heroes (ibid.). It also implies that by sticking to their Vietnamese values and culture they could subvert American attempts at dominating them. To counter this, the American troops inflict extreme violence on the Vietnamese as a result of stiff resistance. In what can be a *confession* to atrocities in his narrative, Dawn says:

> From tears we grew exasperated. Having proved to our sad selves that these were not the dark-eyed gods who walk our dreams, we wished only that they would retire and leave us in peace. They would not. For a while we were prepared to pity them, though we pitied more our tragic reach for transcendence. Then we ran out of pity. (*Dusk,* 27–28)

As David James (2013, 91) writes, "this warped logic of pity" is exercised through military ferocity. This is similar to what we see in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee." Seeking retribution, Jacobus and his men raid the Hottentots and kill them and confess to being brutal. In "The Vietnam Project," the running out of pity, which Dawns mentions, is realised by means of a military operation that kills many people and causes deforestation. Likewise, in the next section, the gun plays a role in violence and Jacobus confesses to this viewpoint as well.

In all these transgressions, modern weapons play a pivotal role. This could account for Dawn's confession when he states that the only mediator between the Americans and the world, in this case the Vietnamese, is the gun (*Dusk,* 27). He says: "We brought with us weapons, the gun and its metaphors, the only copulas we knew of between ourselves and our objects" (ibid.). A fruitful comparison here would be with Jacobus Coetzee when he talks about the privilege of the gun and refers to it as the mediator between the colonial agents and its targets, this stands for his sadism as well:

> The gun stands for the hope that there exists that which is other than oneself. The gun is our last defence against isolation within the travelling sphere. The gun is our mediator with the world and therefore our saviour. The tidings of the gun: such-and-such is outside, have no fear. The gun saves us from the fear that all life is within us. It does so by laying at our feet all the evidence we need of a dying and therefore a living world. […] The Instrument of survival in the wild

> is the gun, but the need for it is metaphysical rather than survival. (*Dusk,* 122–24)

This also can be the madness of the Empire since he enjoys the annihilation of what to him is other in other to dominate them. This desire for domination Rosemary Jolly (1996, 117) calls the "desire for absolute mastery": "The gun saves us from the fear that all life is within us" (*Dusk,* 122). Similar to the rhetoric of the Hudson Institute report, and Dawn's callousness towards the Vietnamese, cold-heartedness is suggested in Jacobus Coetzee's treatment of the native South Africans, as will be explored later in this chapter.

The above-mentioned gun-centred viewpoint suggests the destruction of the country, which I call colonisation of the land and harsh treatment of the natives – the magnitude of which is revealed through Dawn's narrative. This alludes to an important issue between the Americans and the Vietnamese, which is the gross power imbalance, the level of firepower the Americans have, their bombers, and technology for killing. Enjoying military superiority, the Americans enter with their armed forces and commence military operations that devastate the country, and here we notice confession in Dawn's narrative: "We bathed them in seas of fire, praying for the miracle. In the heart of the flame, their bodies glowed with heavenly light; in our ears their voices rang; but when the fire died, they were only ash" (*Dusk,* 27). Dawn says that the army had burnt and killed many people, they had been cruel towards the corpses, cutting the flesh of the dead bodies open and tearing out their livers (ibid.). Moreover, the shelling and bombing had not only killed people but also resulted in wreaking havoc on the flora and fauna of the country. Dawn confesses that, too:

> For years now we have attacked the earth, explicitly in the defoliation of crops and jungle, implicitly in aleatoric shelling and bombing. […] We discount 1999 aleatoric missiles out of every 2000 we fire; yet every one of them lands somewhere, is heard by human ears, wears down hope in a human heart. (*Dusk,* 45)

Coetzee's works are said to be allegorical. In such expressions as the above-mentioned excerpt, the reference to damaging the land could be interpreted as an allegory of the ways human activities are wreaking havoc with the environment, but it also signifies the way in which the imperial and colonial powers have exploited and devastated the land. Significantly, Peppin (2010) finds allegory in Dawn as well. However, in this regard, his view differs from that of mine. That is to say, while both of us believe that Dawn's behaviour is allegorical, Pippin (2010, 28) sees allegory in Dawn's behaviour towards his son, that in the same way that Dawn injures his son, we are damaging our planet. In a sense, this interpretation could be true, and both

Dawn and our own acts in damaging the earth share similar features – Dawn does not know why he hurt his son, nor do we know why we damage the planet. However, since Dawn is involved in a military project, his narrative signifies the scale of destruction of the imperial military operation. Such an allegory of destructing the land and nature by imperial powers can also be discerned in the "Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee." As I shall explore in a later section, by exerting his power on nature Jacobus is damaging nature, referring to himself as a destroyer of nature. Thus, Dawn and Jacobus's attitudes and actions towards nature, besides being allegories of colonising and destruction of the land by the imperial powers, serve also as allegories of human pernicious activity on the environment, including during wartime. Since this dissertation is not on environmental studies, I stop short of discussing the issue further.

Despite his confession, Dawn is himself an accomplice in the imperial atrocities and has similar derogatory attitudes towards the victims, endorsing the tyrannies of the American army. Furthermore, a further factor that plays a role in his complicity is his rationalisation. Woessner (2010, 230) reminds us that Dawn, like many others, helps keeping "the American war machine running in Southeast Asia." Furthermore, Woessner writes that Dawn's discursive practice "is filled with the platitudes of imperial hubris" (ibid.). Dawn believes that the imperial propaganda of the US has not achieved its aim, since it presumes that the dominated are like the Americans, or it assumes that both sides should borrow, in Woessner's terms, "Cartesian, doubting subjects" (ibid). However, I believe that in fact, it is the reverse. Dawn states that the Vietnamese apprehend the voice of the father (*Dusk*, 33), and this father, that is to say, the US, should be robust. Thus, it can be said that both novellas and *Waiting for the Barbarians* describe patriarchy.

In "The Vietnam Project," the relationship between the US and the Vietnamese is referred to as paternal, which can stand for the idea of patriarchy in the novel. This is suggested in a section in Dawn's report entitled "Programming *the father-voice*" (*Dusk*, 33; emphasis added), where he writes about B52s and the relationship between the two sides of the war is referred to as such: "The voice of the father utters itself appropriately out of the sky. The Vietnamese call it 'the whispering death' when it speaks from the B-52's" (ibid.). Then this father is depicted as the symbol of authority: "The Father is authority, infallibility, ubiquity. He does not persuade, he commands" (ibid.), and the voice of the father is compared to the voice of a leader in totalitarian states. In his project, Dawn writes that the Vietnamese merely grasp this "father-voice" and that America must adhere to this status, showing perseverance in fulfilling this role of the father (*Dusk*, 38–39). It is for the same reason that Dawn recommends the bombardments, or in his own words, looks "forward to Phase V and the *return of total air-war*" (*Dusk*, 44; emphasis added).

The rationale for such advice is that, in Dawn's eyes, the US as the father should remain robust and forceful.

This role of the father can also be applied in relation to "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee." As a colonial agent, Jacobus compares his rule to that of a father, assuming the role of a leader who commands, and whose orders need to be obeyed. I shall discuss the idea of patriarchy in *Waiting for the Barbarians* in relation to the Magistrate's sexualisation of the nomad girl. Finally, patriarchy is present in the *Disgrace*, where the main scenes of sexual violence involve patriarchy and abuse of power by men.

After writing the above-mentioned sentences, Dawn's physical and psychological health deteriorates:

> I am in a bad way as I write these words. My health is poor. I have a treacherous wife, an unhappy home, unsympathetic superiors. I suffer from headaches. I sleep badly. I am eating myself out. If I knew how to take holidays perhaps, I would take one. But I see things and *I have a duty* toward history that cannot wait. What I say is in pieces. I am sorry. But we can do it. It is my *duty* to point out our *duty*. I sit in libraries and see things. I am in an honorable line of bookish men who have sat in libraries and had visions of great clarity. I name no names. You must listen. I speak with the voice of things to come. (*Dusk*, 46; emphases added)

We see that before his health begins to decline, he commences writing his projects and continues working on it until he is on the verge of physical and mental collapse. The ethical point here is that Dawn assumes that he has a duty and according to his reasoning he should fulfil his duty regardless of its consequences even if his recommendation would cost the lives of many Vietnamese. However, the question remains that is reasoning and fulfilling one's duty especially in such circumstances enough? From the ethical point of view, I should say no. Many war crimes against humanity have been defended by the perpetrators reasoning that they had a duty, that they just followed orders. As Woessner (2010, 232) has pointed out, Dawn's "overdeveloped sense of duty (to knowledge, to country, to history), is his undoing." A fruitful comparison would be between his sense of duty and the sense of duty of those Nazis who were involved in the 'Final Solution'. One of the principal organisers of that tragedy was Adolf Eichmann whose sense of duty propelled him to commit the atrocities. To Woessner, Eichmann was "the good Kantian who [like Dawn] only carried out his duties, even if it meant sending Jews to their Deaths," and similarly, Dawn is hyperrational in his reasoning (ibid.). In fact, such a line of reasoning would turn anyone into a cruel or savage person, which Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno (1972, XI) call "a new kind of barbarism." Even when he

somehow acknowledges his accountability, Dawn neither turns against the imperial system nor does he show any remorse for being associated with it. As Woessner (2010, 232) puts it, like the empire he works for, he just "declines toward the inevitable fall." In the second part of the novel, Jacobus reasons that he needs to punish the natives.

Similarly, the imperial agents, as I discuss in the next chapter, are fulfilling their duty based on their rationalisation and thoughts. They follow a duty-based ethics even when fulfilling one's duty would have disadvantages and could have catastrophic results. I should mention one point here. In both parts of *Dusklands,* the protagonists do not make reparation to become better people. They neither make atonement nor show signs of penance for their deeds. However, in *Waiting for the Barbarians,* the Magistrate knows that he is doing wrong; hence, he is conscience-stricken. However, despite his condemnation of the tyrannies of the Empire, he does not turn against the system, and this makes him a complicated character. In the words of Woessner (2010, 233), the Magistrate has a character who does have "doubts about the imperial power unleashed by the victory of Enlightenment;" however, we witness no such doubts in the narrative of Dawn and Jacobus Coetzee. In this section, I have shown Dawn's complicity and discussed how he stands for the pro-war group during the Vietnam War. His complicity was also discussed through his technological and cultural advice to the imperial troops and moreover according to his acts based on racialisation. In the next section, I shall analyse another aspect of his complicity, which is his treatment of a series of photos.

2.5 Complicity: Visualisation, gender and physical violence

In this section, I focus on Dawn's narrative and his treatment of a series of photos that show scenes of sexual and physical violence and explore how his visual act accounts for his advocacy and complicity in the war crimes. This is also an instance of acknowledged emphasis on male pathology, which we witness in the next two novels in the case of The Magistrate and Lurie. In this part of the novel, the actual gender voice manifests itself in the sexual violence against women by the American troops and Dawn's fantasies about sexualised women. With regard to the sexualisation of women, we should note that sexual violence is the result of the imperial military operation in Vietnam and the attempt to conquer this territory by the US. In "The Vietnam Project," according to Dawn's *confession*, violence can be perceived as US policy in Vietnam:

> Our nightmare was that since whatever we reached for slipped like smoke through our fingers, we did not exist; that since whatever we embraced wilted,

> we were all that existed. We landed on the shores of Vietnam clutching our arms and pleading for someone to stand up without flinching to these probes of reality: if you will prove yourself, we shouted, you will prove us too.[…] But like everything else they withered before us. […] If they had walked toward us singing through the bullets we would have knelt and worshipped; but the bullets knocked them over and they died as we had feared. […] We forced ourselves deeper than we had ever gone before into their women; but when we came back we were still alone, and the women like stones. (*Dusk*, 27)

This violence ends up in the sexual violation of women, and this is what we see in the next part of the novel as well, that is to say, penetration into a foreign territory, which coincides with violence and sexual abuse of women. It is due to the sexual violence against women that Head (1997d, 34) calls the presentation of imperial violence in Jacobus's narrative phallocentric.

Before dealing with the photos, I must say that, like the gender-based violence in *Disgrace* and in Jacobus's narrative, here, in Dawn's narrative, the commodification of women manifests itself. It is suggested when Dawn is talking about his wife, Marilyn, as "the swimwear model I married" (*Dusk*, 63). Thus, Head (1997d, 31) argues that Dawn has reduced his wife "to the fetishistic sexual icon of Western con-sumerism, and her name Marilyn reinforces this with its echo of Marilyn Monroe."[18]

Dawn's cold-hearted advocacy of the army's aggression is suggested in his behaviour towards a series of photos he carries in his briefcase. Here, I build my argument upon Head (1997d, 32) in that "[t]he matter of visual control is an obvious additional component of the colonizing [imperial] identity." That is to say, Dawn is one of the oppressors, hence an accountable accomplice. Here, I shall show that Dawn's visual control, through the photos, shows his imperial identity and violent domination. The photos also show that he gains pleasure from the scenes of violence and the sexualisation of women. Visual power is present also when Jacobus talks about the power of blue eyes, as I shall explore. The photos are a series of 24 curated pictures, depicting the extreme violence that the American forces had inflicted upon the Vietnamese, including scenes of sexual violence against Vietnamese women. Fredric Jameson (1991, 10) argues that "the waning of affect" is a characteristic of postmodernism. In this case, he argues that in postmodernism, feelings "are now free-floating and impersonal and tend to be dominated by a peculiar kind of euphoria" (Jameson 1991, 16). Poyner (2009, 27–28) applies this argument to the photos and argues that Dawn's treatment of them is an example of postmodernism

[18] Susan VanZanten Gallagher (1991, 70) has also highlighted this issue.

and an example of “the waning of affect.” The following excerpt supports Poyner’s claim:

> One morning when my sprits have been low and nothing has come, I have always had the stabilizing knowledge that, unfolded from their wrappings and exposed, these pictures could be relied on to give my imagination the slight electric impulse that is all it needs to set it free again. (*Dusk,* 20)

Dawn’s treatment of the photos, Attwell (1998, 38) argues, is an attempt to get beyond the surface and to establish a “direct reciprocity.” However, my reading of the photos is quite different. I analyse Dawn’s treatment of the photos in line with imperial domination. While I agree with Attwell that Dawn tries to get beyond the surface, I argue that he aims at domination, and the photos offer a kind of exploration, and I believe that this domination alludes to US control over the Vietnamese.

Similar to his military counterparts who have imposed their domination on the tortured, Dawn tries to impose his domination through the photos. He contemplates a photo of a Vietnamese prisoner in a cage. Watching the caged person, he thinks:

> I close my eyes and pass my fingertips over the cool, odorless surface of the print. Evenings are quiet here in the suburbs. I concentrate myself. Everywhere its surface is the same. The glint in the eye, which in a moment luckily never to arrive will through the camera look into my eyes, is bland and opaque under my fingers, *yielding no passage* into the interior of this obscure but indubitable man. I keep exploring. *Under the persistent pressure* of my imagination, acute and morbid in the night, *it may yet yield*. (*Dusk,* 25–26; emphases added)

In Dawn’s eyes the photo is a symbol of a typical Vietnamese, a would-be dominated object that will not yield its mysteries, yet he will persist with pressure until it succumbs. Here, both the photo and accordingly the Vietnamese in the photo present a scene of Western domination. Dawn assumes that under his pressure the man in the picture may yield and come under his control. Dawn’s compulsion to overcome the resistance of the man stands against the defiance of the Vietnamese against the invasion of their country. His treatment of these photos is a kind of exploration. Dawn states that he has “an exploring temperament,” and announces: “Had I lived two hundred years ago I would have had a continent to explore, to map, to open to colonisation” (*Dusk*, 50). Now, there is no continent to explore, but by scrutinising the photos he may explore another unexplored terrain. This idea of explorations manifests itself in “The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee,” too. It takes place two hundred years before the Vietnam War. Like Dawn, Jacobus asserts: “I am an

explorer. My essence is to open what is closed, to bring light to what is dark" (*Dusk*, 164).

The other photos depict scenes of sexual as well as physical violence. The narrator says he has a photo of an American sergeant "in the 1st Air Cavalry, copulating with a Vietnamese woman" (*Dusk,* 20), and Dawn gives these photos the caption, "Father Makes Merry with Children" (*Dusk*, 13). Dawn is aroused by these photos and gets sexual pleasure from them. In other words, we witness the notion of troubling sexual fantasies of the other that I mentioned earlier in this dissertation. So, although he has sex with his wife, he admits that sexual pleasure from watching the Vietnamese girls is more pleasurable than having sex with his wife. That is to says, he fantasises about sex using the photos. The reason for this is that the Vietnamese are other and exotic, and he would like to exert his domination over them. In the words of Jolly (1996, 115; emphasis added), in so doing, Dawn's narrative "shows the Sadean propensity to destroy that which he marks as 'other'." In Dawn's Sadean fantasy, as Jolly (1996, 114) puts it, "the other to be violated in the attempt at mastery is defined as female." Domination of the body of the other and obtaining sexual pleasure from it is also visible in the narrative of Jacobus Coetzee. His ideals for sexual exploitation are the Bushman females and not the Dutch, and I shall discuss this issue in relation to the narrative of Jacobus Coetzee.

Such (sexual) obsession with the body of a subaltern female other, indicates a pathological strand in the male characters' psyche. In the case of Dawn, a voyeuristic and troubling examination of photos of sexual violence can be seen, and through these photos, he obsessively tries to reveal the secrets of the other. Obsession can be discussed also in the case of the Magistrate's attempt to forcefully unpack the secrets of the other, the so-called Barbarian girl, as he studies the marks on her face when he bathes her. The Magistrate and Dawn are haunted by their zeal for unmasking the secret of the body of the other. In both cases we witness pathological gendered infatuation with the body of the subaltern female other. Importantly, the female bodies remain impenetrable and indecipherable to the violators. I shall discuss this theme of infatuation that I mentioned above in *Disgrace*. Lurie is not able to recognise his abuse of power. Furthermore, he does not view his sexualisation of Melanie as rape.

The sexual violence in the photos alludes to similar realities in the invasion of Vietnam, when Vietnamese women were gang-raped, murdered – and photographed. In one instance, as Claude Cookman (2007, 156) writes, Captain Ernest Medina's men sexually exploited Vietnamese women at My Lai in 1968, and this incident was photographed (Brownmiller 1993, 24). Thus, Coetzee throws light on the atrocities committed on women during the war. On the one hand, the so-called strongholds of the enemy, the villages as Dawn states, are attacked indiscriminately with

unconventional bombs, while on the other hand, captured women are sexually exploited, which highlights the suffering of the women in times of war.

In the novel, sexual exploitation of the victims seems to be harsh; the man in the photo is hefty, and he smiles as he exerts his strength over the woman. The woman in the picture is slim and quite young, so young that Dawn assumes that she may be a child (*Dusk,* 20): “It shows Clifford Loman, 6'2", 220 lb., onetime linebacker for the University of Houston, now a sergeant in 1st Air Cavalry, copulating with a Vietnamese woman. The woman is tiny and slim, possibly even a child.” The fact that a hefty military person rapes a young girl, possibly a child, in front of a camera implies that sexual violence was rampant in the occupation of Vietnam, but it also it stands for the subjugation of the so-called enemy. However, this scene is not merely a matter of sexual abuse; it shows the commodification of women, that is, woman as objects, a widespread phenomenon in the colonial era. I shall return to the commodification of women in Chapter 4.

I interpret the scenes of sexualisation of the oppressed women at the hands of US military personnel as trophies that signify the victory of the imperial power. As Poyner (2009, 18) reminds us, “theorists of anti-colonial nationalism have abundantly demonstrated” that women in the countries occupied by imperial powers have been perceived in this way, that is to say, stranded in the war zones in the fight between the “the revolutionary nationalists” and the imperial powers, sexually abused and rendered as a sign of “colonists triumph.” Hence, Poyner’s argument can be aptly applied to the photo of the Vietnamese woman and the American soldier. The Vietnamese are fighting back to reclaim their land and sovereignty, and the US tries to maintain control over them. In this struggle, women are caught up. To show the strength of the invaders and the defeat of the Vietnamese, the America soldier rapes the woman. Needless to say, from a feminist perspective one could analyse this scene further from a patriarchal standpoint, but I conclude my discussion of sexual violence, noting that in neither part of the novel are the culprits brought to justice. Neither the troopers guilty of rape nor Dawn feel remorse.

Sexual violence in *Dusklands* is also depicted in the second part of the novel when, as a part of Jacobus’s retribution on native South Africans in the Land of Namaqua,[19] women are raped. In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, sexual harassment is also shown at the hand of the Magistrate. I explore sexual abuse further in detail in Chapter 4.

The dichotomy between weak enemy and strong military personnel who can prove their sexuality in fighting with this so-called enemy can be found in Hallin’s words. Hallin is a renowned political communications scholar and the author of the

[19] Namaqua (or Namakwa) is the Khoikhoi name for Nama Khoi people’s land in northern South Africa and southern Namibia.

first scholarly study of the news coverage on Vietnam in his book, *The Uncensored War: The Media and Vietnam* (1986). During the Vietnam War, the US Army was portrayed as a group of tough people who are very strong and able to annihilate the weaker enemy. In what Hallin (1986, 142–47) defines as a national endeavour, the media coverage during the US battle for domination in Vietnam highlighted that "war is an American tradition," reminding Americans of the frontier period; this was done to make terrible things look good and to distort the audience's attitude towards the war, that "war is manly," giving men the opportunity to demonstrate their sexuality, toughness, and professionalism; "winning is what counts"; "war is rational." That is why in Dawn's photo the American soldier is hefty, he is manly, and he is showing his strength. The aim is to belittle the enemy to accentuate the might of the empire and its representatives and to show that, as a result of the power discrepancy between the two sides of the conflict, the enemy would be defeated easily.

Moreover, as in the novel where the idea of the otherness of the Vietnamese paves the way for their harsh treatment, the TV coverage of the Vietnam War dehumanises the Vietnamese as other to the American public. Referring to the televised coverage of the Vietnamese, Hallin (1986, 158) writes that it "dehumanized the enemy, drained him of all recognizable emotions and motives and thus banished him not only from the political sphere, but from human society itself. The North Vietnamese and Vietcong were 'fanatical', 'savage', 'half crazed'." This negative depiction can account for their mistreatment – given a false identity and defined as the other, their violent treatment becomes justified. Manifestations of such mistreatment are mirrored in the second series of the photos that Dawn carries with him. In *Wating for the Barbarians*, then, the Empire labels the nomads as the other and this makes them vulnerable to the most brutal acts.

The second series of pictures depicts physical violence against the Vietnamese. With these, Dawn's animalistic views towards the Vietnamese and their families are revealed. This depiction calls into mind Bhabha's (1994, 72) interpretation of Fanon, that the animalistic depiction of natives by colonial and imperial agents serves as a medium for their domination: it is a result of designating the other with such fabricated identities as the "terrifying stereotypes of savagery, cannibalism, lust and anarchy" that open the royal roads to the colonisers. Needless to say that violence is an inseparable part of colonial expansion. Drawing on Bhabha's argument, one could assert that by referring to the enemy of the state as animals, Dawn and his ilk are setting the stage for brutality and for the bringing of the Vietnamese under American control. This is suggested when he mentions two American officers, Berry and Wilson, who are strong, violent, and smiling as they hold decapitated heads in their hands. The narrator says that in the picture: "Propped on the ground before him Wilson holds the severed head of a man. Berry has two, which he holds by the hair.

The heads are Vietnamese, taken from corpses or near-corpses" (*Dusk,* 23). The significance of these photos is that the smiling faces of the men holding the severed heads conveys the message that the American military in Vietnam does not sympathise with the pain and suffering of the other. Moreover, as with Dawn's contemplation of the extermination of the enemy, Berry and Wilson's pose stands for the brutality of the US troops engaged in the battle, suggests the obliteration of the enemy and that the heads "are trophies: the Annamese tiger having been exterminated, there remain only men and certain hardy lesser mammals" (*Dusk,* 23–24).

In fact, the behaviour of both Dawn and Jacobus can be defined in the light of an explanation given by Jessica Benjamin's (1980, 50) definition of a sadist. According to her, a sadist is a person who is incapable of accepting the paradox of mutual independence and perceives "dependency on another's recognition of himself as threat to himself." The sadist's mechanism for gaining recognition of his independence is achieved by the violation of another. This can be applied to both Dawn and Jacobus. They enjoy watching the suffering of the other. They perceived the other as a threat to their domination. The Vietnamese are a threat to the Americans, Jacobus's servant's disobedience is perceived as a threat against his domination.

The reason why the imperial army could be so brutal towards its enemy is twofold. On the one hand, based on the disturbed vison discussed earlier in this dissertation the enemy are seen as less than human, and on the other hand, they are considered a menace to the empire: "We have justified the elimination of enemy villages by calling them armed strongholds" (*Dusk,* 34). It is this fabricated identity, composed of otherness and the supposed posing of a threat, which sets the stage for the natives' inhumane treatment.

Dawn's photos have also another significance: they make the reader familiar with his discursive practice, and this is in line of my theoretical framework (Foucault, Bhabha, Said), according to which there is no transcendent 'true nature' of individuals outside the dominant discourse. We witness a discursive practice that is based on Dawn's affiliation with imperial power. That is to say, it suggests that, like his military counterparts, Dawn advocates violence against the so-called enemy and is heedless of their suffering, rather he giggles at their grievances. He imagines crying women coming to claim the bodies of their slain loved ones in a "handcart bearing a coffin or even a man-size plastic bag" (*Dusk,* 24); worse, he mocks the grief of these women. He says:

> I find something *ridiculous* about a severed head. One's heartstrings may be tugged by photographs of weeping women come to claim the bodies of their slain; a handcart bearing a coffin or even a man-size plastic bag may have its

> elemental dignity; but can one say the same of a *mother* with her *son's head* in a sack, carrying it off *like a small purchase* from the supermarket? I *giggle*. (*Dusk,* 24; emphases added)

Dawn also gives a funny title to the photo of the American soldier having sex with a Vietnamese woman. He says that he had "given the picture the provisional title 'Father Makes Merry with Children' and assigned it in a place in Section 7" (*Dusk,* 20). In fact, like the American army, he has no respect for the West's others' pain and in so doing he is complicit in the violence. His dehumanising response to the images of bru-tality of his countrymen inflicted on the Vietnamese pinpoints his culpability. Some American personnel, that is, those in the novel whom Dawn talks about, kill, torture, and rape because they lack concern for their victims' pain. Similarly, Dawn's equa-nimity towards the atrocities imposed on the Vietnamese is suggested by mocking their grief. According to Foucault, the objects of discourse are constructed by the discourse itself, and this is something similar to that which Coetzee's fiction suggests.

Dawn is obsessed with the photos. He is so fond of the torture and sexually abused women scenes that he takes the photos with him, and he does not do so out of the necessity of his job. He carries them with him in his briefcase, which suggests that he has a passion for violence and sexualisation. He enjoys watching torture scenes and pain, and his enjoyment of inflicted pain is what Bhabha (1994, 41), in his interpretation of Fanon, argues is the madness of imperial agents. This madness and delight from punishment becomes clear also in the next part of the novel and in my following chapter, too. It seems that Eugene Dawn, Jacobus Coetzee, and Colonel Joll are mad; they enjoy inflicting pain and cannot understand that the native people are human and deserve humane treatment. They all are imperial agents, striving to develop imperial domination and their pathology is related not only to patriarchy, but to colonial/imperial expansion. Hence, these portrayals of male characters who seem to be sadistic, and the absence of humane treatment in their character can be viewed in a holistic framework where such behaviour suggests the characters' participation in gendered violence.

Referring to the way in which Dawn becomes obsessed with the photos and his mockery of the grief of the mothers bringing back the head of their sons, Head (1997d, 32) writes: "The photographs are his obsession, and they offer a distillation of imperialist violence." I argue that his obsession with the photos heralds imperial violence and could be an incipient sign of his mental instability, and evidence of his interest in torturing gaining pleasure from it, and subsequently his culpability. This is suggested when he says: "On evenings when the sober edge of reality is sharpest, […] I find my hand creeping toward the briefcase at the foot of my desk as toward the bed of my existence but also, I shall admit, as toward an encounter

full of *delicious shame*” (*Dusk,* 23; emphasis added). These photos give his imagination “the slight electric impulse” which stimulates his exploration (*Dusk*, 20.) Watching and enjoying scenes of torture and sexual violence can be evidence of his involvement and complicity in the brutalities, since in this way he confirms the way Americans mistreat the Vietnamese. Affirming this, Ng (2016, 422) argues that the viewer of violence, like Dawn, could be complicit in the original act of violence.

All in all, the reason that Dawn has been employed is that sheer violence seems to be abortive in spreading imperial domination, and I argue that the novel depicts a technique for holding control over the Vietnamese; in this respect, it depicts Dawn’s complicity. The novel makes particular reference to a critical point in the Vietnam War and to the Hudson Institute report. Dawn and the US army pursue the same object. As we progressed, we noticed no punishment against the culprits, and we did not hear them being conscience-stricken. In the next section, I shall investigate gender-based violence and complicity while extending imperial domination in “The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee.”

2.6 Stereotypes, complicity and violence in “The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee”

In this section, I analyse gender and physical violence that mostly happen when Jacobus tries to revitalise his domination, which symbolically stands for reviving the Dutch colonisers’ domination. As in the previous section, the perpetrator, in this case Jacobus, is neither brought to court nor given any disciplinary punishment. Furthermore, he does not have a guilty conscience. In the contrary, Jacobus enjoys violence and recommends the sexualisation of native women. Utilising the ideas of Said, Bhabha, Fanon, and Spivak, I shall discuss his tyrannies. I also analyse Jacobus’ narrative and draw a parallel between his and that of the European colonisers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I believe that the combination of fact and fiction in *Dusklands* can be viewed as a way in which Coetzee distances the stories from realism yet at the same time confesses to his historical guilt. In this way, the novel belongs to the confessional genre. One should note that when I mention that Coetzee feels guilt, it does not mean that Coetzee has committed the crimes that cause guilt. It is this ‘subjective guilt’ I analyse in my dissertation. It is guilt felt even if one has not committed the crimes they feel guilty of. van Heerden (2010, 46) calls this “subjective guilt,” while “objective guilt (guilt in the legal sense)” means remorse for actual liability for crimes.

In the narrative of Jacobus, we see that the natives are viewed and described from his perspective. We do not hear anything from the natives; the oppressed have no voice (cf. Spivak 2006). Similarly, in the narratives of the early European travellers

which will be discussed in the next section, we see that the natives are depicted from the perspective of the Europeans, based on their own standards and knowledge which cannot be construed as true (see Said 1978, 30). In *Waiting for the Barbarians,* we do not hear anything from the natives either. The reasoning behind devoting a section to explore Jacobus's narrative to that of European colonial travellers' becomes clearer when we note that Coetzee (1988b, 29) calls the European travel writer a "spokesman of colonialism," one who played a pivotal role in depicting the natives in the way that they perceived the South Africans. My analysis challenges the colonial depictions of native Africans made in the eighteenth century.

My analysis shows that Jacobus's colonial discursive practice subverts his narration, in the sense that unlike his depiction of the natives as wild, it is actually *he* who is the real savage. In other words, the otherness of the other is deconstructed.

Significantly, in Jacobus's narrative, stereotypes, the view from above, and the distinction between himself and the natives, between the dominated and their oppressors, can be analysed. Such a discourse is colonial and, as I shall explore, abandons the natives to violence and sexualisation. In relation to colonial discourse, Bhabha (1994, 67) writes that it is "a form of discourse crucial to the binding of a range of differences and discriminations that informs the discursive and political practices of racial and cultural hierarchization." I shall discuss such discrimination in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" and also in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. The natives in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" are referred to as savages and animals, which, according to Bhabha's argument (1994, 70), serves as a means for dominating them. Building upon Bhabha (1994, 86) who argues that representing the dominated from the standpoint of colonisers is partial, unethical, and unreal, I argue that rendering the natives as wild cannot be construed as true.

This distinction regarding Jacobus's narrative between himself and the settlement on the one hand and the natives on the other, calls to mind Said's (1978, 2–3) argument that a range of Western people including the colonial and imperial agents believed in the distinction between the West and its other, the Orient. It is due to this discrepancy between the other and their so-called masters that the natives are depicted as people who deserve mistreatment. For the same reason, in both Vietnam and South Africa as depicted in the novel, there is no voice with which the dominated can express themselves. In both novellas, the dominated are depicted, to borrow Coetzee's (1984, 9) term, from "above." Thus, one might say that Coetzee always looks at things from the point of view of the (white, male) oppressor, even if he is profoundly critical of that oppressor. We are always with Jacobus, Dawn, the Magistrate, Lurie, etc. The narrative is always focused on them. However, we should note that Coetzee cannot be held guilty of 'othering' as he is depicting the suffering of the other, and the way they are treated unfairly; that the natives have been silent and their depiction is Eurocentric, similar to what we see in the colonial travel

writing of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries to the Cape Colony, which I shall discuss in a later section.

This view from above was reality during the colonisation of South Africa and during the Vietnam War. In the former, the natives and their culture were presented through white colonial travellers. Since the white travellers considered themselves, their culture, and their traditions as the epitome of civilisation, they criticised those of the South Africans. In the case of Vietnam, as mentioned earlier, the Vietnamese were presented to the Americans through the lens of the American media that belittled the enemy. Coetzee (1984, 9) himself maintains that in reading travel narratives, he "followed the fortunes of the Hottentots in a history written not by them but for them, from above, by travellers and missionaries, not excluding my remote ancestor Jacobus Coetzee." Accordingly, in the fictional world, in "The Vietnam Project," our access to the Vietnamese is through Eugene Dawn, himself an American, and in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," as the title suggests, our access to the South Africans is through Jacobus, a Dutch settler, depicting the native people negatively.

In the latter narrative, we have a white man who narrates his views of black people and observations "from above." In analysing the aforementioned view that I shall discuss later in this section, I build my argument upon Fanon's ideas. Since I consider the narrator to be a colonial agent, it will make sense if I begin by asking, how do blacks look in the eyes of the colonisers, how do colonisers view the black people? How does Jacobus view them? To preliminarily answer this question, let me quote Fanon's (1967, 110–12) important reflection about the image of the black man in the white mans' eyes:

> I had to meet the white man's eyes. An unfamiliar weight burdened me. In the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema […]. I was battered down by tom-toms, cannibalism, intellectual deficiency, fetishism, racial defects […]. I took myself far off from my own presence […]. What else could it be for me but an amputation, an excision, a haemorrhage that spattered my whole body with black blood?

In the colonial white man's eye, the black people were viewed as the primitive other. We shall see that Jacobus' deprecatory attitudes and narratives towards the native bear resemblance to Fanon's, and we see that nowhere in the narrative do we hear anything from the natives.

I argue further that such racist thoughts concerning the native South Africans, as manifested in Jacobus, are rooted in stereotypes. One could ask, what is a racial stereotype? Michael Pickering (2004, 98) describes them as follows:

> Stereotypes are different from other forms of generalized representation because they are never used to refer to the particular person […]. They exist in order to deny that sort of connection and are used instead to classify someone only in terms of the symbolic abbreviations associated with their group or category. The particularity of any one person is eclipsed when a stereotype is used to describe or designate them.

Jacobus's view towards the natives is informed by stereotypes. While he has a high opinion of himself, he uses such terms as 'animal' and 'indolent' with regard to the natives. Furthermore, in his narrative native women are rendered as archetypes for sexualisation. Stereotypes also appear in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, where both Colonel Joll and the Magistrate consider the Empire to be the epitome of civilisation and the nomads to be uncivilised barbarians. That is to say, these imperial agents see all of the natives as the same, labelling them in derogatory terms, and as a threat to the Empire. In this respect, the novel alludes to Hegel and Fanon's description of Negroes. The Bushmen are described as animals both physically and spiritually. They are compared with baboons and dogs:

> *The Bushman* is a different creature, a *wild animal with an animal's soul*. Sometimes in the lambing season baboons come down from the mountains and to please their appetite *savage* the ewes, bite the snouts off the lambs, tear the dogs' throats open if they interfere. Then you have to walk around the veld killing your own flock, a hundred lambs at a time. *Bushmen have the same nature*. If they have a grudge against a farmer they come in the night, drive off as many head as they can eat, and *mutilate* the rest, cut pieces out of their flesh, stab their eyes, cut the tendons of their legs. (*Dusk,* 88–89; emphases added)

Moreover, when Jacobus talks about the Hottentot, it seems that he imagines no history for them. He states: "The Hottentot is locked into the present [without any history]. He does not care where he comes from or where he is going" (*Dusk*, 58). Similar rhetoric about Africa is found in Hegel's (2001 [1837], 109–11, 117; emphases added) Introduction to *The Philosophy of History*:

> Africa proper, as far as History goes back, has remained – for all purposes of connection with the rest of the World – shut up; it is the Gold-land compressed within itself – the land of childhood, which lying beyond the day of self-conscious history, is enveloped in the dark mantle of Night. [….] In Negro life the characteristic point is the fact that consciousness has not yet attained to the realization of any substantial objective existence – as for example, God, or Law – in which the interest of man's volition is involved and in which he realizes his

> own being […]; so that the Knowledge of an absolute Being, an Other and a Higher than his individual self, is entirely wanting. The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely *wild and untamed state*. *We must lay aside all thought of reverence and morality* – all that we call feeling – if we would rightly comprehend him; *there is nothing harmonious with humanity* to be found in this type of character. […] At this point we leave Africa, not to mention it again. *For it is no historical part of the World*; it has no movement or development to exhibit. […] What we properly understand by *Africa, is Unhistorical, Undeveloped Spirit*, still involved in the conditions of mere nature, and which had to be presented here only as on the threshold of the World's History.

Similar discourse is manifest in Jacobus's narrative. He denies the history of the native South Africans and attributes a false identity to them. Furthermore, in his view, as discussed earlier, the natives do not have religion, , or if they have, their religion is inferior to that of the colonisers, Christianity. In short, the natives are worthless. In Hegel's (2001, 113; emphasis added) view, when the Africans are enslaved, they turn into worthless things, that "it is an essential principle of slavery, that man has not yet attained a consciousness of his freedom, and consequently sinks down to *a mere Thing – an object of no value*." In other words, an identity is fabricated for the Africans and this then gives the grounds for their enslavement. This shows the role of language in creating identity for the dominated that I discussed in the previous section. Through language, a false barbarian identity is created also for the nomads in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. Jacobus compares Bushmen to baboons and believes that just as these animals are killed by human beings, Bushmen also deserve to be killed since they are not human, but rather they are a threat to human beings and their property. It is this fabricated identity which paves the way for their violent treatment: "Heartless as baboons as they are, and the only way to treat them is like beasts" (*Dusk,* 89).

This animalistic view towards the natives calls into mind Fanon's (1963, 170) statement with regard to the European colonial vision of Africa: "For colonialism, this vast continent was the haunt of savages, a country riddled with superstitions and fanaticism, destined for contempt, weighed down by the curse of God, a country of cannibals — in short, the Negro's country." Later in this chapter, I shall analyse further Jacobus's vision of the South Africans in line with Fanon's argument. In Jacobus's narrative regarding the natives, he speaks as if he is describing a technique for hunting animals. It is after the description of the hunting scenes and the comparison of the natives with animals that they are massacred. That is to say, there is a direct link between the hunting of the animals and the hunting of the oppressed. Similarly, in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, as I shall examine, the imperial agents talk

about the hunting of animals before embarking on the hunting and torturing of the nomads. Thus, it can be argued that talking of the animals acts as a trope for violent treatment of the dominated. I shall return to this idea in a later section in Chapter 3.

In the next section, I shall look into the idea of the commodification of women in Jacobus's narrative. In his narrative, native women are an archetype of sexual abuse by white men. That is to say, his mistreatment of the native women is based on patriar-chy, imperial power and gender oppression. In the same way that there is no punish-ment for the sexual abuse of the Vietnamese women in the first part of *Dusklands*, here, there is no punishment for Jacobus either. Unlike the Magistrate in the next chapter, who feels guilty, Jacobus recommends the sexual abuse of black women without any inner judgement or feeling of guilt. This recommendation as we shall see is based on power relations and patriarchy. It is worth recalling that such a recommen-dation happens in the light of colonial expansion. After all, as a colonial agent, Jacobus has delved into the mainland Cape Colony exploring the territory. As we see also in the next chapter, the commodification of black women happens during colo-nialism, and this idea is discussed in Chapter 4 with regard to the protagonist Lurie.

2.7 Gender-based violence in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee"

As I have mentioned, in this novel, I view the gender-based violence in Coetzee's oeuvre to be in the first phase of its depiction. As with the scenes of gender-based violence in "The Vietnam Project," here the perpetrator is a Western man who does not have a guilty conscience. In the next chapter, we see that the perpetrator feels guilty, and in Chapter 4, we see that retributive action is taken against the perpetrator. Here, however, there is not even lenient punishment for Jacobus. Similarly, in the first section of the novel we witness no punishment or sign of reparation. In my analysis of the "Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," I draw on Spivak and show that the scale of tyrannies in regard to native women is much harsher compared to that of native men, and this is due not only to the misuse of power but also patriarchy as exercised by white colonisers.

Spivak (2006, 30) talks about double oppression in the case of colonised women and notes: "If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as a female is even more deeply in shadow." I argue that in Coetzee's novel a hierarchy and double oppression can be conceived. In this hierarchy, there are two main categories: human and animal. Within the categories, another subdivision is present: that of men and women. So, at the top of this double hierarchy are human males, that is to say, the imperial agent, Jacobus, and other representatives of Western 'civilisation', such as the white male settlers. Below them

are white women. Lower, then, in the animal category, are native men and, lower still, at the bottom are black women. The native women suffer the same mistreatment as native men, but there are additional forms of oppression that concern especially native women. They are viewed both as animals and as commodity *subjected to sexual exploitation*. After all, slavery built on seeing others as objects of property. Jacobus's animistic and commodifying narrative towards women is suggested when he talks about how to obtain the maximum benefit from women through breeding, like cattle. In so doing, he speaks as if he were talking about animals: "If you want *profit out of women* you must make them *breed* you herders off the Hottentots (they do not breed off white men). But they have a very long cycle, three or four years, between children. So, their increase is slow" (*Dusk*, 93; emphasis added). Commodification in his narrative is suggested when he speaks as if women are a commodity to be treated according to the white man's will. He recommends separating women from the rest of the family and says that women should be forced to stay with the white settlers, locked and chained (ibid.). This notion highlights the double oppression of women – there is no such rhetoric in regard to men.

In line with the double oppression of colonised women that was discussed above, according to Jacobus, black women can be sexually exploited. He believes that sexual violation of black women is easy, since they live in abject conditions; they have no one to support them and their kinsmen cannot afford to protect them against intruders. Thus, Jacobus believes that they are ideal cases for sexual abuse at the hands of the whites. In Chapter 4, I shall look into sexual violence of women during the colonisation epoch. Suffice to say here that in talking about the Bushman women as objects at the hands of white men, who indulge their lust, the novel makes a clear reference to the sexual exploitation of women during colonialism. Jacobus says that

> a wild Bushman girl is *tied into nothing*, literally nothing. She may be alive but she is as good as dead. She has seen you kill the men who represented power to her, she has seen them shot down like dogs. You have become Power itself now and *she nothing*, *a rag you wipe yourself on and throw away.* She is completely disposable. She is something for nothing, free. She can kick and scream but she knows she is lost. That is the freedom she offers, the freedom of the abandoned. *She has no attachments*, not even the wellknown attachment to life. She has given up the ghost, *she is flooded in its stead with your will*. […] She is the ultimate love you have borne your own desires alienated in a foreign body and pegged out waiting for your pleasure. (*Dusk,* 94; emphases added)

With regard to Jacobus's attitudes towards bushman in this scene, Attwell (1998, 37) writes that they show his "self-assertion." While I agree that this can be self-

assertion, I argue further that it shows double oppression of the women under colonialism.

Building on Spivak's arguments, I assert that double oppression as manifest in Jacobus' s attitude can only be applied to subaltern women in colonial contexts, in this case South Africa. That is to say, Jacobus's thoughts are not applicable to white women. In contrast to what he says about black women, Dutch girls are affluent. A Dutch girl has many advantages and kin who support her; therefore, it is not plausible to abuse her sexually on similar grounds. In fact, the network of property and relatives around the Dutch girl makes her the repository of power and anyone who connects to the girl will be connected to power. Thus, the connected person is subjected to the power of the girl and may face restrictions. Jacobus says:

> Dutch girls *carry an aura of property* with them. They are first of all property themselves: they bring not only so many pounds of white flesh but also so many morgen of land and so many head of cattle and so many servants, and then an army of fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters. *You lose your freedom*. *By connecting yourself to the girl you connect yourself into a system of property relationships*. (ibid.; emphases added)

In fact, here Jacobus's racist attitudes are made manifest. He privileges Dutch women over the Bushman women. He cannot imagine sexual abuse of white women. It is not conceivable, since white Dutch women are powerful. In contrast, the depiction of a Bushman woman is that of a humiliated and powerless person who can be sexually abused.

Jacobus presents even more reasons for the subordination of Bushman women. In fact, his narrative and discursive practice manifest power according to the Foucauldian notion of power and discourse that discourse "decides, transmits and itself extends upon the effects of power" (Foucault 1980*,* 94). The discourse of the colonist agents with regard to white and black people is associated with power.

Jacobus says that white men stand for power. He states that a Bushman girl is aware of this fact. She has been humiliated at the hands of whites and has experienced their abuse of power. Moreover, her dignity and her human rights have been denied by white colonisers. This is depicted in Jacobus's remark that a Bushman girl signifies nothing, she is an object, the white man's property subjected to his master power; she knows how cruel the white men could be if she did not obey their commands. This makes her succumb to their lust. That is why Jacobus can say that the Bushman woman is held down, waiting for the pleasure of white men (*Dusk,* 94). For the same reason, he says about the Bushman girl's response to her white owner: "Her response to you is absolutely congruent with your will" (ibid.). In other words, she can be sexually exploited and then be thrown away like "a rag." Similarly,

during colonisation women were regarded as the property of the white colonisers. They had no will of their own since they were subjected to their owners' will.

Significantly, during the colonisation period many white men were interested in desiring exotic women.[20] One reason for desiring black women is that their bodies were different from those of Europeans and hence white colonisers found them fascinating. In the "Afterword" of *Dusklands*, S. J. Coetzee, Coetzee's father, says: "Their women, like those of ancient Egypt, were affected with a noticeable protrusion of the *labia minora,* but, knowing no better, regarded it as no blemish. A people of great interest, of great piquancy even, to the anthropologist" (*Dusk,* 181). In Chapter 4, I discuss these issues further in relation to the protagonist Lurie's history of desiring exotic women. Such desire has its roots in the colonial era, and the apartheid era aggravated the gender-based violence in South Africa.

Sexual violence in *Dusklands* happens while Jacobus strives to overpower the natives and punish them. As I mentioned in the introduction (in the research questions), gender-based violence should be seen in the light of colonial overpowering. Hence, to better understand the context of his violence, it would be pertinent to discuss it within the framework of punishment presented by Foucault, which I shall discuss in the next section.

2.8 A Foucauldian perspective on Jacobus's violent narrative

In this section, I argue that Jacobus's retributive act to revitalise his domination alludes to the second phase in Foucault's description of punishment. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1979b) discusses how methods of punishments have evolved up to the contemporary era when other disciplinary measures, not necessarily physical ones, have replaced the older methods. He investigated methods of punishments in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. Two major incidents highlight this period, first, the torture and execution of Robert-François Damiens as a regicide on 2 March 1752.[21] The second is amendments to the penal system that opted for the elimination of capital punishment. According to Foucault (1979b, 10), in 1837 amendments were introduced which aimed to substitute execution with imprisonment: "The disappearance of public executions marks therefore the decline of the spectacle"; moreover, it marks "a slackening of the hold on the body."[22]

[20] I shall return to this idea and discuss it in Chapter 4.

[21] The public beating of Damiens is reminiscent of the public beating of the so-called barbarians in the next chapter.

[22] For further discussion of the public torture of Damiens and the punishment reforms, see "The Body of the Condemned" in Foucault (1979b, 3–33).

Foucault (1979b, 14) believes that that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the spectacle of torture and capital punishment disappeared and "the theatrical representation of pain was excluded from punishment. The age of sobriety in punishment had begun. By 1830–1848, public executions, preceded by torture, had almost entirely disappeared." However, Foucault is perceptive when he notes that even prison entails some sorts of physical pain as the captive might not be able to have his preferred food. Also, sexual deprivation and solitary confinement are among the practices that can contribute to physical pain. However, Foucault (1979b, 16) reminds us that "a condemned man should suffer physically more than other men." In this way, Foucault sees "a trace of 'torture' in modern mechanisms of criminal justice – a trace that has not been entirely overcome, but which is enveloped, increasingly, by the noncorporal nature of the penal system" (ibid.). In the modern penal system, the soul is also considered.

The concept of crime itself has changed, and blasphemy, for example, is not usually considered a crime. Moreover, other factors are considered, such as desire and condition of the perpetrators and finally the judge is not alone in passing verdicts: "Rather throughout the penal procedure and the implementation of the sentence there swarms a whole series of subsidiary authorities" (Foucault 1979b, 30). Among people who help in administering justice there are psychological experts, educationalists, prison staff, police officers, and wardens who implement the punishment (ibid.) In short, it can be said that there are two kinds of administering justice, the old one that is based on violence and torture and the modern one that is not based on physical pain. The new method, which appeared initially in the nineteenth century with its use of sciences such as psychiatry and criminal anthropology, tries to control the human soul to discipline it (Foucault 1979b, 18). "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" and *Waiting for the Barbarians,* depicted the 'old' method of punishment.

Now, I shall look into how this old method of punishment appears and what its purpose is. Jacobus should not be viewed simply as an individual; rather, he stands for the Dutch colonisers. Thus, Jacobus's predestined authority over his black labourers represents the colonial domination of South Africa, and his brutalities stand for the callousness of the imperial powers. As Jacobus is the representative of the imperial system, there is a sense of commonality between the violence inflicted on the native South Africans and the violence in Vietnam, and in this respect my argument is in line with that of Knox-Shaw (1996, 117) when he writes: "It is, significantly, not with Eugene Dawn's deranged wandering but with an authoritative diagnosis of American hostilities in Vietnam that Jacobus Coetzee's extended meditation on violence coincides." I complement Shaw and other critics' interpretation of the novel in the sense that punishment here and in the next chapter could be read against the old method of punishment in Foucault's terms. Moreover,

the gender-based violence which happens while extending Jacobus's domination is considered in relation to the next novels, as a process during which the way in which gender-based violence is depicted during Coetzee's overuse of power undergoes changes.

Jacobus and his men embark on an expedition into the mainland Cape Colony. Jacobus's treatment of his black servants and his attitudes towards other black people illustrate his affiliation to power and patriarchy. In describing his relationship with them, one can discern a sense of superiority. Black people are referred to as children with him as the father. Here, we can draw a parallel with the Dawn/Vietnam portion of the novel. In other words, this reminds us of the paternalistic relationship between the Vietnamese and the US forces in Dawn's narrative, where the US forces are compared to a stern father. Jacobus is depicted as a guide who instructs his servants who must follow his instructions: "On the far side he is nothing to me and I probably nothing to him. On the near side mutual fear will drive us to our little comedies of man and man, prospector and guide, benefactor and beneficiary, victim and assassin, teacher and pupil, father and child" (*Dusk,* 125). The idea behind this is that the Africans need someone who plays the role of a father, who has mastery over them, who educates them, and these things lie within the realm of the colonisers' responsibilities, in this case with Jacobus.

Earlier, Jacobus says that he is "a domesticator of wilderness; a hero of enumeration" (*Dusk,* 123). As discussed earlier, in his view the wild includes both natural wilderness and the native people, since a number of times he refers to the natives as savages. On the one hand, a relation can be seen between how the Western colonisers treat nature and on the other hand how they treat the dominated people. The South African poet and critic Watson (1986, 375–76) draws on René Descartes to explain the dualism of the colonisers' relationship to nature and to people as

> the colonizing project of the West was set in motion when this same man embarked upon his Cartesian project of separating subject from object, self from world in a dualism which privileged the first of the two terms and thereby assured his domination of nature and any other obstacle he might confront. […] Just as Western people conquer nature in an effort to conquer their own self-division, so they cannot desist from enslaving other human beings who necessarily confront them as that Other, alien and forever threatening.

Later in this section, Jacobus is seen as a kind of a conqueror of nature or, as he says, its "domesticator."

During his expedition into the land of the Namaqua, Jacobus's power is subverted. He has a high opinion of himself, assuming that he is a hero, a mighty explorer whom nobody can challenge. In the words of Head (1997d, 38), he is a

"god-like explorer." However, the natives refute this perception and poke fun at him, giggle at him, and call him "Long-Nose" (*Dusk*, 107). He has items such as "tobacco and copper and fireboxes and beads and other things as well" (*Dusk*, 108), as presents, as signs of friendliness but in the chaos caused by the Namaqua people, he is not able to deliver them, rather he loses them (*Dusk*, 106–08). After this skirmish, he is announced as mad (*Dusk*, 141), which reminds the insanity of Dawn. Accordingly, they expel Jacobus. After his banishment from the Namaqua village, Jacobus expects his servants to leave the village, too, and accompany him, but this does not happen. This is a turning point in the novella. Jacobus is enraged that his authority is undermined and decides to exact compensation for the damage to his domination. In what can be compared to the old model of punishment presented by Foucault, although Jacobus's pretext for punishment is trivial, he leaves and returns with his men and punishes the natives and his disobedient comrades physically, killing the companions who deserted him in favour of the Namaqua. The depiction of this scene of violence is important since it exemplifies the idea of bringing the oppressed under domination.

The otherness of the oppressed accounts for Jacobus's indifference towards their pain. In discussing this, I make use of Bhabha's (1994, 41) interpretation of Fanon's framework of indicating the "madness of racism" on the one hand and "the pleasure of pain" on the other – both utilised to maintain colonial/imperial rule. Racial bigotry shows itself in Jacobus's crimes, and his enjoyment springs from his assumption that he is revitalising his domination without concerning himself with the lives of the South Africans. Jacobus's narrative, as Gallagher (1991, 64) puts it, seems to expose the "self-aggrandizing appropriation of divine sanction." This is suggested when he says:

> On this day I would return as a storm-cloud casting the shadow of my justice over a small patch of the earth. [….] Who knows for what unimaginable crimes of the spirit they died, through me? God's judgement is just, irreprehensible, and incomprehensible. (*Dusk,* 157–65)

Jacobus strives to convey the message that although he has been disobeyed, he is still in full authority, his authority is pervasive, and it forces his disobedient companions to yield under it. He also maintains that the punishment he serves is a kind of pseudo-divine retribution, similar to Foucault's first phase of punishment I discussed above.

One dimension that plays a role in the violent treatment of the nomads is Jacobus's savagery. Drawing on Boehmer's (1995, 3) argument that postcolonial literature subverts the superiority of the colonisers and the colonist vision of the dominated, I argue that it is his discursive practice that suggests that the imperial

agents are themselves savage, and although they accuse the nomads of savagery, there is no evidence to that effect. In contrast to Jacobus's crimes and brutal acts, there is no evidence in his narrative that the nomads have any disdain for human life. Rather, it is Jacobus himself who, by dividing people into civilised and uncivilised, does not care about the lives of the other and shows reckless disregard for the agony of the people in the land of Namaqua. Hence, he *confesses* saying: "The Namaqua, I decided, were not true savages. Even I knew more about savagery than they. They could be dismissed" (*Dusk,* 152). Jacobus's uncivilised atrocities are recognised by Head (1997d, 38) when he writes that Jacobus's behaviour is "inimical to civilization."

I have analysed the physical and gender-based violence in Jacobus Coetzee's narrative and argued that in Jacobus's discursive practice natives are viewed from above. In the next section, I shall investigate the ways in which Jacobus's narrative bears resemblance to the narratives of the early colonial travellers to South Africa. To sum up, it can be said that *Dusklands*, despite its two apparently different settings constitutes a whole novel with the theme of gender-based violence while extending imperial domination and conquering foreign territories. As discussed, the gender-based violence here was in the first stage that I proposed within the selected works. That is to say, we did not witness any punishment or retributive measures against the perpetrators. They even did not feel guilty. I also argued that by depiction of the violence in the Cape Colony, which is a prelude to the violence in Vietnam, the novel situates the position of the author and the white South Africans in the contemporary South Africa and that the novel is in in the confessional genre.

2.9 "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" and colonial narratives of South Africa

As mentioned earlier, I do not consider Jacobus simply to be an individual traveller. Rather he is a *colonial* traveller. Based on this categorisation I build my analysis, arguing that his transgressions stand for the tyrannies of the imperial Dutch. Since this classification plays a key role in this chapter, simply claiming Jacobus to be a colonial traveller is insufficient. Therefore, I shall demonstrate in what ways his narrative bears close resemblance to those of other colonial travellers to Southern Africa in the seven-teenth and eighteenth centuries. In this section, I analyse the discourse of some of the historical descriptions of the other and their similarity to the narrative of Jacobus.

Two centuries before the brutal occupation of Vietnam, colonised Southern Africa experienced analogous violence at the hands of the European colonisers, namely the Dutch and the British. The sexual and physical violence in both South Africa and Vietnam, as I explore in this section, is similar in the sense that it was

committed by Westerners on non-Westerners, not seen as deserving human treatment. John Barrow's travels in the late 1790s and François Le Vaillant's accounts of Cape Colony in the 1780s provide us with horrifying images of the colonisation epoch. In Barrow's (1806, 96) account there are many instances of violence, especially against women. In one instance, he writes of a woman who had been whipped viciously while holding her baby. In his account, Le Vaillant (1796, 298–99) writes of a child who escapes from a massacre in a village, only to be shot dead by two whites in a struggle over who should own him. More than most, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) committed atrocities against native South Africans. Gallagher (1991, 56) writes about an occasion when a group of Dutch Commandoes encounter a group of Bushmen that

> some of the soldiers proved that if they were free to do as they pleased, they could be wanton and savage. Some of the most brutal ones seized the small children by the legs and crushed their heads against the stones. Others killed wounded women and cut off their long breasts, afterwards making themselves tobacco pouches from these as tokens of their heroism.

Such instances of brutal violence show how colonisers committed brutal crimes. Significantly, the second part of *Dusklands* alludes to the violence imposed on the native South Africans by the Dutch colonisers.

"The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" relies, at least to some extent, on Barrow's (1804 and 1806) and Le Vaillant's (1796) reports of the violent treatment of the natives in colonial South Africa by the colonial forces. Coetzee makes particular reference to reports by colonial authorities, as in the following excerpt that refers to Barrow's account mentioned above:

> A man, a sturdy Hottentot, began running after us clutching an enormous brown bundle to his chest. A Griqua in green jacket and scarlet cap came chasing after him waiving a sabre. Soundlessly the sabre fell on the man's shoulder. The bundle slid to the ground and began itself to run. It was a child, quite a big one. Why had the man been carrying it? The Griqua now chased the child. He tripped it and fell upon it. The Hottentot sat up holding his shoulder. He no longer seemed interested in the child. The Griqua was doing things to the child on the ground. It must be a girl child. (*Dusk*, 158)

In a manner very similar to the colonial travel writings discussed in this section, Jacobus considers the natives to be dirty, lazy, and uncivilised. Thus, the second part of the novel bears a close resemblance to, and is based on, the narratives of European

colonial travellers who travelled deep into South Africa. As Knox-Shaw (1996, 108; emphasis added) writes, Jacobus's journey to the land of Namaqua

> corresponds, if only in date, to a *fact-finding expedition* under the official command of Captain Hop but effectively led by Jacobus Coetzee, which retraced Coetzee's steps of the previous year. An uneventful though fairly detailed diary of this expedition, kept by Carel Frederik Brink, survives; and it is no surprise to find that J. M. Coetzee has made use of it in reconstructing the explorer's original progress.

I do not view Jacobus's expedition as merely a "fact-finding" one. Rather, I argue that his expedition alludes to the penetration of African lands by the colonisers and the way in which they kept the natives under their domination.

As Roger B. Beck (2000, 25) writes, brutalities erupted from the beginning of Dutch colonisers' encounters with native South Africans. Since the Dutch had advanced military technology, they had the upper hand, causing heavy casualties and damage on the natives, penetrating into their territory, and forcing them to withdraw from their lands. The white colonisers' blue eyes are used in the novel as a symbol for the colonisers, their colonial penetration into foreign lands and domination of native people; it is such visual colonial power that I discussed in relation to "The Vietnam Project." Acknowledging this, Jacobus comments: "The Hottentots knew nothing of penetration. For penetration you need blue eyes" (*Dusk,* 150). Domination, the power over the other is related to colour and power as Jacobus says:

> *Only the eyes have power*. The eyes are free, they reach out to the horizon all around. Nothing is hidden from the eyes. As the other senses grow numb or dumb my eyes flex and extend themselves. I become a spherical reflecting eye moving through the wilderness and ingesting it. Destroyer of the wilderness, I move through the land cutting a devouring path from horizon to horizon. There is nothing from which my eye turns, I am all that I see. Such loneliness! [...]. What is there that is not me? (*Dusk,* 121–22; emphases added)

What Jacobus means by freedom is destruction. It is through his own eyes that Jacobus reaches as far as he can, free to destroy everything in the wilderness.

However, not all kinds of eyes have a power to enable their owners with a licence to ravage the nature and people; only the blue eyes that stand for the colonisers bestow their owners with such power. Needless to say, in the words of Head (1997d, 37), what Jacobus says by blue eyes here is "colonization as total imposition, a god-like refashioning of everything in the image of the colonizer." Head (1997d, 37) maintains that the idea about blue eyes is a combination of Aryan domination and

visual control. For domination, the dominator needs to have power whereby he could conquer and subjugate the 'other'. In the novel, it is through his misuse of power that Jacobus wreaks havoc with both the native South Africans and the nature: "Destroyer of the wilderness, I move through the land cutting a devouring path from horizon to horizon" (*Dusk,* 121–22).

In the above-mentioned excerpt, it is in wilderness one can exercise power. Pippin (2010, 30) maintains that the excerpt entails a Cartesian subject "unable to reassure itself about its claims about the world or its position in the world without a violent assault on nature and others to realize its mere ideas." According to Pippin, this kind of power is needed to make colonial assertion successful (ibid.). Moreover, Jacobus's words align with Descartes's (1965, 119) notion of practical philosophy as a way to knowledge that renders humans "the masters and possessors of nature." Following Pippin, one could say that the power of colonialism and the so-called freedom to destroy the natives' land and force them to withdraw from their habitat is rooted in the fact that the colonisers used modern weaponry, hence they were more powerful. JanMohamed's (1985, 66) statement is worth quoting here when he comments on colonialists in general:

> The colonialist's military superiority ensures a complete projection of his self on the Other: exercising his assumed superiority, he destroys without any significant qualms the effectiveness of indigenous economic, social, political, legal, and moral systems and imposes his own versions of these structures on the Other.

As I explore in this section, the use of modern weaponry in the domination and the violent treatment of the natives is prominent in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee." For Jacobus and his men, the gun is of the utmost importance as it is with guns that they attack the land of Namaqua and massacre the natives. In the novel, there is no evidence that the natives use guns. This demonstrates the supremacy of Jacobus over the natives in terms of weapons. At one point he even praises the gun and comments on its role in his life. As a result, it is no surprise that his interaction with the world is through the medium of the gun: "The gun is our mediator with the world and therefore our savior. […] The gun saves us from the fear that all life is within us" (*Dusk,* 122). Thus, JanMohamed's argument presented above can be aptly applied to Jacobus. As a result of his enjoyment of modern weaponry, he dominates the natives and wreaks havoc among them. For the same reason, with the military supremacy of white colonisers, the Dutch East India Company has gained domination over the natives' lands and property. Thus, the natives had had no choice but to sell "their herds and flocks for trash" (*Dusk,* 170), a deception referred to as "a necessary loss of innocence" (ibid.).

In early European travel narratives, native South Africans are portrayed as negatively as possible. Often, they are depicted as people who are lazy, waste their time, are extremely dirty, and eat filthy food. As Coetzee (1988b, 22) writes, colonial narratives of European travellers to South Africa present the natives as people who are ugly and never wash, or if they do, they use animal fat for cleaning their bodies, and that "they wear skins, that they live in the meanest of huts, that male and female mix indiscriminately, that their speech is not like that of human beings."

For the most part, such narratives reflect the Eurocentric vison of the travellers in the sense that they measure the native African customs against those of the Europeans and find them inferior. The colonial travellers concluded that native South Africans did not follow the standard, that is, European, norms of human life. There are numerous reports condemning the natives as idle. In fact, colonial travellers were wrong in depicting the native South Africans as lazy since the source of such negative depiction is rooted in cultural difference and a lack of understanding of the native South African lifestyle. Referring to the colonial travellers' observation of the native South Africans in terms of diet, hygiene, strangeness of native language, and specially their perceived laziness, Head (1997d, 41) writes:

> Whatever appears so shockingly different to the European eye can only shock in this way because it offends a presupposition of commonality, an implied framework of samenesses. The travellers' accounts are based on an implicit set of (up to nineteen) categories, covering all aspects of European civilization, from economy and government to social customs and physical appearance.

Therefore, since the European colonial travellers were confronted with very different people in terms of skin colour, culture, and language, instead of accepting the differences, they embarked on criticising and downgrading them.

Practising a different religion also seems to play a role in depicting the natives as indolent. Discussing the issue of calling native South Africans idle, Head (1997d, 42) finds religious roots for the idea in the eyes of the colonial travellers, as the Europeans had a "Protestant inheritance." I argue that while religious differences do play a role, they cannot be the sole reason. Rather as discussed earlier, other factors play a pivotal role in this regard. Besides, it can be argued that the otherness of black people has had an impact on the discourse of colonialism. In other words, due to the differences discussed above, that is to say, disparity in religion, language, and culture, such a discourse involved dividing the world into hierarchical categories, such as the civilised and the uncivilised. The West, which stood for the standard of humanity and civilisation, and the non-West, in this case South African people, signifying the other that represented the uncivilised world. Whatever belongs to the

former group is the standard of measurement, and whatever stands outside this realm, other cultures and traditions, must conform to the European criteria.

In fact, in the negative depiction of the indigenous South Africans, one needs to consider not only cultural differences, but also the bigotry of European colonisers and the faults with their methods of investigation as well. For example, in regard to the assumed laziness many travellers describe, one reason seems to be that the natives did not want to cooperate with the travellers. Since the travellers expected cooperation, they labelled the resistant indigenous people lazy. They were also selective in gathering their data, and instead of doing a thorough investigation and considering the whole population; they focussed on particular groups of natives and generalised their findings to all natives.

With regard to the bigotry of the European colonial travellers, their narratives confirm the biased nature of the depiction of the indigenous people. In their discourse the civilised Europeans and the native South Africans were of different origins. These derogatory attitudes were confined neither to the Khoikhoi, nor to the early travel narratives. After the Cape Colony came under the control of colonial Britain in 1795, such discourse was a recurrent theme reported by British journalists and commentators of the time in South Africa. The reporters adhered to the idea of white supremacy and had negative attitudes towards the natives and expressed derogatory clichés about the indigenous people similar to those of the colonisers. Captain Robert Percival (1804, 84–85), a writer and an army officer, discusses in his book, *An Account of the Cape of Good Hope* "the peculiar indolence and want of vigour of the Hottentot character" and states that this is "an original bad quality." Similarly, Barrow (1806, 102) writes that indolence is the primary cause of the natives' ruin and refers to the so-called idleness as a disease. These negative depictions reverberate among the European colonisers.

In the commentaries by the early travellers, there are suggestions for ways to improve the lives of native South Africans. Needless to say, the solutions that they suggest including educating the natives and making them adapt to a European lifestyle. For example, William Burchell (1822, 109–10) admires the missionaries' persistence in their efforts and predicts that once the natives have been educated and taught to work, their handicap is resolved. Here we see that the ultimate solution is judged to be the instruction of South African people by those from the metropolis, or to put it another way, to civilise them. In these narratives, symptomatic parallels are drawn between indigenous people and animals. In 1652, the year of European settlement in the Cape, the Amsterdam publishing house of Jodocus Hondius (1952, 26–28), compiled a report based on travel accounts that describes the locals as follows:

> The local natives have *everything in common with the dumb cattle*, barring their human nature […. They] are handicapped in their speech, *clucking like turkey-cocks* or like the people of Alpine Germany who have developed goitre by drinking the hard snow-water.

In Hondius's report, the natives' habits of eating and sleeping are mocked. Furthermore, the report says that they smell bad: "They all smell fiercely, as can be noticed at a distance of more than twelve feet against the wind, and also give the appearance of never having washed" (ibid.). Jacobus's narrative bears a strong resemblance to these narratives of the early European colonisers. In this way, the novel makes a further confession to the crimes of the early colonial travellers. In brief, travellers mostly condemned two characteristics of the natives: their strong smell and their laziness.

Importantly, despite such negative depictions, in some cases the natives had been quite hospitable to the European travellers. However, this failed to change the Eurocentric attitudes of the travellers to the natives, and their hospitality was used against them. In other words, despite being treated hospitably and offered shelter, the colonial travellers adhered to the idea of whiteness as the symbol of civilisation.

In 1812, Burchell spent an evening among the native South African Bushmen. He says that he felt as if he were at home and for a moment forgot that he was among untutored men. However, although he says that they were happy and smiling, he describes them as "savages": "Had I never seen and known more of these savages than the occurrences of this day, and the pastimes of this evening, I should not have hesitated to declare them the happiest of mortals" (Burchell 1824, 66). Despite such experiences, the negative depictions were used to justify the domination of the South Africans. The colonised were perceived to be uncivilised and thus in need of reform, and this mission fell within the responsibilities of the so-called civilised European colonisers. As Coetzee (1988b, 31) puts it, "in order to justify its conquests, colonialism has to demonstrate that the colonist is a better steward of the earth than the native."

A parallel can be drawn between the above-mentioned narratives and "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee." Like the colonial travellers, instead of appreciating cultural differences, Jacobus shows disdain for the natives' culture and derides it. Cultural disrespect is suggested when he mocks their dance and compares it to the mating of doves:

> The dance drew its inspiration from the sexual preliminaries of the dove; the male fluffs out his feathers and pursues the female in a bobbing walk, the female trips a few inches ahead of him and pretends not to see. The dance prettily suggested this circling chase. (*Dusk,* 133)

Jacobus says that he has “always enjoyed watching coitus, whether of animals or of slaves” (ibid.). In other words, he is not able to understand and respect their culture, since it is different, so he looks down upon the culture of the natives. He wishes that they would “drop their pantomime and cavort in an honest sexual frenzy culminating in mass coitus” (ibid).

Head (2009, 40) calls Jacobus’s attitude towards the native dance “cultural imperialism.” In Head’s view, this is cultural imperialism since “The phallocentric view carries with it the desire to debase, and control, other forms of cultural expression” (ibid.). Indeed, Jacobus equates the dance of the Khoikhoi to that of animals and implies that they are slaves equated with animals. As mentioned earlier, dance is an important aspect of a people’s culture and abundant research has been done in this respect, so, by mocking their dance, he is disparaging the natives’ culture. The reason for such a negative depiction and disrespect is that their dance is different from the dance of the white Dutch; hence, it is at odds with European standards.

Like the travel narratives discussed above, Jacobus feels disgust for the lifestyle of the South African people. Based on his ‘knowledge’, he views native South Africans as indolent. However, his knowledge is not, to borrow Said’s (1978, 36) term, innocent. Jacobus assumes that they are lazy because they do not bother to produce their food by cultivation: “They cultivate no grain” (ibid.). They do not bother to provide Jacobus and his servants, who are their guests, with proper food: “What they offered in abundance, today of all days, was hippopotamus fat” (ibid.). In “Idleness in South Africa” Coetzee (1988b, 35) writes about the Immorality Act (1950) and the Mixed Marriages Act (1949), which he believes prohibited interracial marriage between white men and “brown women” to protect the former from being idle like the natives. Its practical effect according to Coetzee (ibid.) was

> to take away from white men the freedom to drop out of the ranks of the labouring class, take up with brown women, settle down to more or less idle, shiftless, improvident lives, and engender troops of ragged children of all hues, a process which, if allowed to accelerate, would in the end, they foresaw, spell the demise of White Christian civilisation at the tip of Africa.

Needless to say, this cliché of idleness denotes the racist ideology of apartheid. This racism, or, to borrow Head’s (1997d, 43) term, “racist mythology,” plays a vital role in *Dusklands*. After all, in both sections of the novel cultural imperialism can be discerned just as in the early colonial travellers’ narratives. Coetzee believes that such discourse is the cornerstone of apartheid ideology (ibid.).

Moreover, Jacobus holds similar attitudes towards the natives to those of the early colonial travellers, who assumed that the Hottentots did not care about their

sanitary conditions. He believes that all Hottentots smell bad. This is suggested when, before arriving at the land of Namaqua, he talks about the dirtiness of the Hottentots and their appalling smell and says they live among insects (*Dusk*, 111). Soap, a product that was quite common among Europeans of the time, seems to be something unknown to the natives.[23] According to Jacobus, "Hottentots know nothing of soap and shun water to the extent of tying their prepuces shut while swimming. Hence the noxious smell of their women's clefts" (*Dusk*, 127). Similar to Hondius's report referring to the odd smell of the indigenous South Africans, Jacobus says that they "smell fiercely" (Coetzee 1988b, 12). The bad smell is due to their lifestyle as they use a lot of animal fat and "spend a winter under canvas in the Roggeveld, the days too cold to leave the fire, the water frozen in the barrel, nothing to eat but mealcakes and slaughter-sheep," and anyone living that way would soon "carry the Hottentot smell with you, mutton fat and thornbush smoke" (*Dusk,* 88). Jacobus believes that it is not only Hottentots' bodies that smell bad, but also their clothing because it is different from the European style of clothing, not fit for human beings, so "African women were subjected to the civilising mission of cotton and soap" (McClintock 1995, 31). Should they change their attire according to the European style, they could be described as dressing up like people (*Dusk*, 88).

In "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," a feature that is the most significant indication of the difference between the two groups is their faith. In Jacobus's narrative a sense of teleology can be discerned. This is what Gallagher (1991, 64) views as Jacobus's understanding of his story "in terms of the Afrikaner myth of the Chosen People." The very beginning and the ending of his narrative give us some clues. Early in his narrative he states that "everywhere differences grow smaller as they come up and we go down" (*Dusk*, 57). He also compares the religion of the whites to that of the natives. Jacobus lives within European Puritan Christianity and does not show respect to the faith and beliefs of the natives. Significantly, he asserts that even if the indigenous people were converted to Christianity, they would still be different, since their mentality is different; thus, they would remain inferior to the whites. The reason is that he believes the Christianity of the Europeans is purer than that of the converted natives. This is suggested when Jacobus says: "The one gulf that divides us from the Hottentot is our Christianity. We are Christians, a folk with a destiny. They become Christians too, but their Christianity is an empty word" (*Dusk,* 88).

At the end, he narrates his revenge in the light of religion as if it were administered by God:

[23] For soap as a commodity, particularly in the African context and a Victorian fetish, that was the "first step towards lightening the White Man's Burden," see Anne McClintock (1995, 32).

> On this day I would return as a storm-cloud casting the shadow of my justice over a small patch of the earth. [….] Through their deaths I, who after they had expelled me had wandered the desert like a pallid symbol, again asserted my reality […] Who knows for what unimaginable crimes of the spirit they died, through me? God's judgement is just, irreprehensible, and incomprehensible. […] I am a tool in the hand of history. (*Dusk,* 157–65)

Such depictions set the stage for the annihilation of the natives.

Moreover, during colonisation the tyrannies of the white colonisers were justified by appeals to civilisation. In the novel, the violations of the empire's agents are justified on the same pretext. As Ng (2016, 427) puts it, Coetzee "demonstrates how easily nationalistic rhetoric uses paternalistic or civilising discourses in order to justify bloody murder and casual sadism." I have already discussed Jacobus's paternalistic attitude; however, unlike Ng, I believe that Jacobus's rhetoric is not nationalistic as such. There is no reference to any particular country or nation is his rhetoric and dis-course. Rather, it can be regarded as racist rhetoric. Jacobus considers himself a white, cultivated person who belongs to the civilised world. This is illustrated when after his banishment from the land of Namaqua, when he is departing to his home in the settlement, Jacobus says he is returning to civilisation (*Dusk,* 142). Moreover, the fact that he is among the indigenous people does not mean that he has assimilated to them; rather he believes that he remains distinct from them. At some points while he is among the Hottentots, he says that "I am among you but I am not of you" (*Dusk,* 143). Furthermore, in *Dusklands* the Hottentots are described as uncivilised beings who will acquire civilisation by contact with civilisation (*Dusk,* 100). In fact, Jacobus's discourse reflects those of the colonisers who believed that through their contact with the colonised, the whites have brought prosperity to the dominated people. As Gallagher (1991, 56) writes, John Philip, a member of "the London Missionary Society" notes that the missionaries have done a great job in "civilising the natives."

References to the improvement of the local culture via contact with the white colonisers as well as references to John Philip's statement above are also made in S. J. Coetzee's "Afterword," demonstrating a patronising attitude towards the culture of the natives. Here, the most prominent British missionary is specifically said to be John Philip, who proposes that the uncivilised people of the country had been civilised due to the missionary presence in the country (*Dusk*, 171). Moreover, John Philip says he had told S. J. Coetzee that "[w]hile our missionaries are everywhere *scattering the seeds of civilization, social order, and happiness*, they are by the most unexceptionable means *extending* British *interests*, British *influence*, and the British *Empire*" (ibid.; emphases added). S. J. Coetzee himself assumes that the arrival of the Dutch colonisers is in the interests of the people of the colony. He is pleased that

the culture of the Europeans has affected that of the natives: “We may indeed be thankful that in the intercourse of European and Hottentot, the exercise of cultural influence was wholly by the former upon the latter” (*Dusk,* 174). He expresses his delight that the so-called high culture has affected the so-called low culture of the South Africans and that the missionaries have improved the culture and civilisation of the natives. It is this discourse of otherness, civilised versus uncivilised, in Jacobus’ narrative, which entails the domination and violent treatment of the natives. Before raiding the natives, they had been abundantly depicted as negatively as possible by Jacobus, as discussed in the pages above.

In this chapter, we saw that misuse of power in the light of imperial/colonial power and patriarchy resulted in the “double oppression” of native women and other tyrannies. Thus, the two narratives in *Dusklands* can be analysed in relation to the narratives of the early colonial travellers, and I argue that together they constitute a form of confession to the crimes happen during imperial expansion and stand for the historical subjective guilt of the author. As discussed in this chapter, the representatives of the empire did not face any punishment nor had a guilty conscience. In the next chapter, we shall encounter the misuse of power, patriarchy and fantasising about the body of female other. However, we shall also see that although there is gender-based violence and we encounter scenes of physical violence, the Magistrate feels guilty and seeks to make reparation.

3 Torture, Complicity and Gender Oppression in *Waiting for the Barbarians*

> And some who have just returned from the border say
> there are no barbarians any longer.
> And now, what's going to happen to us without barbarians?
> They were, those people, a kind of solution.
>
> Cavafy (2000, 5–6)

The type of border in the Greek poet Constantine P. Cavafy's (1863–1933) poem "Waiting for the Barbarians" ("Περιμένοντας τους Βαρβάρους," 1904) – from which Coetzee borrowed the title for his novel poem –, is found also in Coetzee's third novel *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980). Cavafy's use of the word alludes to the downfall of the Greco-Roman world. Significantly, he was an Alexandrian Greek, with roots in the Greek community of Constantinople, moving between Egypt, England, and Con-stantinople. The Cavafian border could stand for the segregation between the so-called barbarians and the Empire, and we witness such segregation also in Coetzee's novel.

3.1 *Waiting for the Barbarians*, South Africa in the 1970s, and the idea of historical guilt

Waiting for the Barbarians (1980) brought Coetzee momentous international fame and success. The novel won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize. In the previous chapter I investigated the issue of complicity and gender-based violence articulated through affiliation with imperial system in the case of Eugene Dawn and "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," and we saw that there was neither punishment for the crimes nor any feeling of remorse. In *Wating for the Barbarians*, I continue discussing the issues of complicity and gender-based violence in the second phase of punishment.

I should say that at the time of writing this novel Coetzee was influenced by the debate over torture prevalent in the political system of the apartheid, a debate that reached its climax in the 1970s.[24] During this period, many writers wrote about torture, and international organisations expressed their concerns in reports and declarations on torture, including torture by the apartheid regime. However, torture was already an important tool for the apartheid regime much earlier. As Gallagher (1991, 112) puts it: "Ever since the National Party gained control in 1948, there have been accusations of state-sponsored torture in South Africa." The climax of the debate in the 1970s coincides with the writing of *Waiting for the Barbarians*, since Coetzee began writing the novel on a daily basis in 1977. Furthermore, in an interview Coetzee maintains that torture in political systems in South Africa has had an impact on the minds of the novelists in the country.

An important incident during this decade is the Soweto uprising and the death of Steve Biko. During the uprising, many South African cities and town witnessed widespread protests and demonstrations to which police forces responded violently. Many were killed and many others were arrested and tortured. As Mary Benson (1986, 190) notes,

> recorded deaths numbered some six hundred but were thought to be nearer a thousand – all but two of them black, and most of them school pupils shot by police. Nearly four thousand were injured; thousands more vanished into detention, some to spend five years in solitary confinement, some never to be seen by their parents again.

Some years before the uprising, the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) was pioneered by Steve Biko in 1969. The aim of the movement was to increase black South African self-awareness. It sought an awakening on the political, cultural, and social levels, rallying together different sectors of the society, among them students and scholars. After the regime had cracked down the uprising, prominent figures of the BCM were arrested.

Among those who were arrested was its charismatic leader Steve Biko, who was killed while in detention. As I shall explore later, the novel alludes to this incident. Since the public wanted to know the truth about Biko, the regime agreed to probe into his death. As Gallagher (1991, 114) puts it, "many South Africans were confronted with the moral enigma prompted by torture: how could anyone perform

[24] As I have indicated, the crimes of the colonisation and apartheid eras have made some white South Africans feel guilty.

such deeds on another human being?” Donald Woods[25] (1978, 179–80) mentions the experience of one Wendy Wood who participated in the investigation and her endeavour to figure out how a person could torture another person:

> These men displayed symptoms of extreme insularity. They are people whose upbringing has impressed upon them the divine right to retain power, and in that sense they are innocent men – incapable of thinking or acting differently. On top of that they have gravitated to an occupation which has given them all the scope they need to express their rigid personalities. They have been protected for years by the laws of the country. They have been able to carry out all their imaginative torture practices quite undisturbed in cells and rooms all over the country with tacit official sanction, and they have been given tremendous status by the government as the men who ‘protect the State from subversion’. To all this, add the sort of personalities which enjoy inflicting pain on their fellow humans, and we see that they are men with diminished responsibility, victims of a collective mutated psyche, and – with the power they wield – very dangerous people.

The controversy and debate over Biko’s death pinpointed to the rule of the country in torture and killing of the detainees under the apartheid reign. The report *Amnesty for Terrorism* (1978, 80) indicates that many detainees in the year 1978 were tortured gruesomely while being questioned. Moreover, the *Amnesty for Terrorism* (1978, 62) report states that according to the official figures from the government between 1963 and 1978, 30 people died in custody. There were many struggles for the better treatment of political prisoners and a call for an enquiry on state-sponsored torture, and the *Amnesty for Terrorism* (1978, 76) report announced “a worldwide campaign for the release of prisoners of conscience, the repeal of discriminatory and repressive legislation and an end to the use of torture in South Africa.” Christopher John Robert Dugard, better known as John Dugard, a prominent South African professor of international law demanded “a full-scale judicial enquiry into methods of interrogation used by the security police,” claiming that “magistrates had consistently declined to examine methods of interrogation” (*Survey of Race Relations* 1979, 148). The scandal of state-sponsored torture and deaths in detention spread all over the world. Literature played a key role addressing such atrocities, echoing the plight of Africans. In a poem called “In Detention,” Christopher van Wyk has written about interrogation and death:

[25] Donald Woods was placed under house arrest in 1978. He was Biko’s friend and editor of the *Daily Despatch*. He had to flee the country in disguise and seek refuge in the UK. Thanks to Damon Tringham for this acute observation.

He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself while washing
He slipped from the ninth floor
He hung from the ninth floor
He slipped on the ninth floor while washing
He fell from a piece of soap while slipping
He hung from the ninth floor
He washed from the ninth floor while slipping
He hung from a piece of soap while washing

(qtd in Coetzee 1992a, 362)

Novelists also fictionalized torture and state-sponsored violence. A year after the death of Biko, Brink began to write the novel *'n Droë wit seisoen* and it was published in 1979 It is a story of a teacher who becomes cognizant of corruption in his country and discovers that a black friend of his has been unfairly detained and is then subsequently killed in detention. Its English translation, *A Dry White Season*, was published the same year. Other fictions that have addressed state-sanctioned torture after the Soweto uprising include: Sipho Sepamla*, A Ride on the Whirlwind* (1981) and Mongane Wally Serote, *To Every Birth Its Blood* (1981) (qtd in Gallagher 1991, 118).

In the case of Coetzee, his own situation, preoccupation and writing can be read against the plight of the apartheid era that caused so much agony and suffering. At that time, in the 1970s, paranoia among the regime was at its climax due to several factors. According to Attwell (1993, 73–74), during this period a large and rebellious labour movement was underway, exacerbated by the recession that plagued the country. Above all, there was the Soweto uprising of 1976. Among other factors that nourished the paranoia was the aftermath of the collapse of the Portuguese government in Lisbon in 1976 that led to the fall of its African colonies, Mozambique and Angola. These countries witnessed guerrilla wars on South African borders. Moreover, according to Attwell (ibid.), during this period the civil war in Zimbabwe intensified and led to its independence by 1980. The apartheid regime's response to these conflicts was a mixture of tactics, since they believed that their domination was under diverse threats on not only the military but also political and cultural levels. In the words of A. J. Norval (1986, 51–53), the apartheid regime believed that the attack was a "total onslaught" and the spectrum of response of the apartheid regime called for a "total strategy." Accordingly, paranoia plays a role in the novel, too. As I shall

explore, the Empire in *Waiting for the Barbarians* assumes that there is going to be military attack by the so-called barbarians against imperial interests and that the Empire should respond appropriately by taking precautionary measures.

Waiting for the Barbarians was published when the debate over torture and was in full swing across many parts of the world and the timing of the publishing of the novel was an asset. Gallagher (1991, 134) notes that the time was right to write about torture in South Africa. Global interest and indignation over the conditions of the apartheid South Africa had increased. In 1981, American publishers more than ever, embarked on publishing both fictional and non-fictional books about South Africa (ibid.). In the same year, 1981 Edwin McDowell (1981, 26) writes in the *New York Times* that despite censorship in South Africa, many authors in the country have been prolific and that "American publishers continue to be attracted to books by South African writers and about the nation itself." When *Waiting for the Barbarians* was published it attracted critical acclaim and was awarded such prizes as the Central News Agency Literary Award (for the second time, earlier this prize was awarded to him for *In the Heart of the Country*), as well as the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize. Thus, Coetzee played a key role in making the world aware of the plight of the South Africans under apartheid and allowed the voice of his countrymen to be heard abroad. This novel also helped to promote the debate about torture on the international level. As Gallagher (1991, 134) puts it, *Waiting for the Barbarians* "contributed a powerful and moving voice to the international discourse on torture in the eighties."

Waiting for the Barbarians is timeless and placeless. Attridge (2004, 41) states that "the paradigm case of Coetzee's temporally and spatially unspecific fiction is *Waiting for the Barbarians*." One could ask, then, why is the Empire not specified and why do the characters not resemble apartheid authorities? I would say that there are two reasons. The first is that totalitarian regimes like the apartheid regime would not allow the publication of a novel that directly criticises the regime. Hence, the novel does not have an actual history, nor does it have a real geography. In this respect, the novel can be read as an allegory of the apartheid era.[26] This notion will make sense when we note that Coetzee has written about censorship. In *Giving Offence: Essays on Censorships* Coetzee (1996a) offers a comprehensive discussion of censorship from the vantage point of an author who has lived during the apartheid

[26] Coetzee is not alone is using allegory in his fictions for the apartheid era. Some other novelists have uses allegory for this purpose. For example, the South African writer Ivan Vladislavić in his two of the most prominent works *The Folly* (1994) and *The Restless Supermarket* (2001) uses this technique. *In Folly* while the setting is not specified it can be discerned to allude to South Africa. Certain brands of lager, furniture, braai grills and the like could denote South Africa.

era and who wrote works under its impact. In this book, Coetzee illustrates how authors in different historical periods have coped with censorship, figures like Osip Mandelstam, a prominent Russian poet and literary essayist whose many works were banned during the reign of Joseph Stalin, and Breyten Breytenbach, a prominent Afrikaner poet and apartheid critic. Perhaps it is to provide such background that Attridge (2004, 333) points out:

> Examination of the records of the South African government censors points to the fascinating possibility that enlightened academic advisors may have used the distance in space and time that characterizes many Coetzee novels as a way of preventing them from being banned – by resisting, that is, a localized allegorical reading.[27]

The second reason is Coetzee's perceived duty to show what is going on in the headquarters of the torturer and the detention centres in his country in a nuanced, not a realistic way.

We should note that during the post-apartheid era, obtaining truth played a role as well. To heal the rupture in the country, caused by the tyrannies of the apartheid, the TRC[28] aimed to obtain truth both from the torturers and the tortured, in a gentle and human way. Hence, Urquhart (2006, 6) compares Colonel Joll who obtains truth violently, to the apartheid era, and the Magistrate who obtains truth gently to the TRC. This comparison is fruitful. Like the Magistrate and Colonel Joll who seek truth in their own ways, the TRC and the apartheid apparatus, such as the notorious Security Police in Johannesburg, were seeking truth by their own approaches. There were a number of occasions that the TRC rejected the applications for amnesty of some apartheid officials since the committee believed that they were not telling the truth, but there were numerous other instances in which the TRC acknowledged the confessions of the authorities as truth and accepted their application.[29] However, I believe that since the TRC is not an accomplice in the crimes committed by the apartheid era, and that the Magistrate as I shall explore in this chapter is, the comparison between the Magistrate and the TRC could be to a certain extent problematic. We should note that truth should be obtained in moral ways not by immoral methods. Now a highly relevant question surfaces: Should we consider this novel solely within the South African context or has the novel a wider scope than that?

[27] For more information, refer to Peter D. McDonald (2004).

[28] I shall get back to the TRC and its role in *Disgrace* in the next chapter, since I believe that the novel makes particular reference to the TRC and challenges its efficiency.

[29] For more information on the people who were refused amnesty and on the reasons for their applications being rejected, refer to Troy Urquhart (2004).

3.2 Establishing the terrain: The context of apartheid South Africa or beyond?

Waiting for the Barbarians can be read against the Empire and totalitarians states in the past centuries up to the present. As Attwell (1993, 74) states, the Empire in the novel represents the continuation of imperial thinking since the eighteenth century. However, the fact that the novel does not specify the Empire, nor does it name the outpost, suggests that it can be read as an allegory of imperialism and totalitarian regimes. As evidence, we should note that the setting of the novel is said to be on the outpost of Empire. That is to say, the Empire in the novel is written without the definite article 'the'. As Head (2009, 48) comments, this omission "is one of the features that help cultivate the air of a universal allegory: 'Empire' seems to represent imperialism per se." However, for Attwell (1993, 74) there is a difference between this kind of global ethical stance and deliberately avoiding specifying the milieu of the novel. Attwell believes that the former "implies a humanist conception of a transcendent moral consciousness" and the latter entails Coetzee's stance as a white South African and his awareness of his immediate historical location. As Michael Valdez Moses (1992, 122) points out, it is tempting to read "the novel as an allegory of the self-critical South African liberal confronted with his own tacit complicity in the systematic denial of basic human rights to the majority of subjects who live under apartheid." He reiterates that in his view the novel is about "the arbitrariness of the law, of all human definitions of justice" (ibid). That is to say, the novel can be read both against South African apartheid and in a context out of the country.

Attwell (2015, 117) argues that the context of *Waiting for the Barbarian* is South Africa:

> The fictional translations of the political context are clear enough: the clampdown by the security detail (South Africa's BOSS, the Bureau of State Security, renamed the Third Bureau after Tsarist Russia), the torture chamber, and the effects of these on people of liberal conscience, represented by the magistrate.

Attwell (2015, 106) further discusses the apartheid crackdown on the Soweto uprising of 1976 and believes that *Waiting for the Barbarians* is a novel about "the failure to imagine a future." I do believe that under totalitarian regimes, like apartheid and the one depicted in the novel, citizens are not optimistic about their future as the repressive systems tyrannise them. I also agree that the novel refers to the events of South Africa under apartheid, such as the death of Steve Biko, especially when we note that the apartheid regime tried to hush up the reality about the death of Biko and the memory of Biko's tragedy. As Attridge (2004, 42) writes,

this was still fresh among people at the time of writing *Waiting for the Barbarians*. As I shall explore here, the novel alludes to Biko's death at a detention centre. Thus, the novel can be read against the apartheid era, further suggested when we note that the novel refers to the ideas of former Archbishop Desmond Tutu. The Magistrate's thoughts are revealing in this regard: "Truly, man was not made to live alone!" (*WB*, 87). This is an important line of thought that dates back to the ancient Greeks and was presented in the words of Tutu as well. According to Aristotle: man is a political or social animal which naturally seeks to live in the company of other people; his essence is to live with others. Humans can be happy when they are in the society of good people since to be in good spirits a human "needs friends" (discussed in van Heerden 2010, 44).

This line of thought is presented by Tutu (1999, 34–35). According to him in South Africa, "ubuntu," an African world view, involves understanding and realising that "my humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up" in others, that we belong in a "bundle of life." That is why we state: "A person is person through other people." We cannot say "I think therefore I am." Instead, we should state: "I am human because I belong. I participate I share." In other words: "We are made for community, for togetherness, for family […] [we] exist in a delicate network of interdependence." (154) Thus, according to Tutu (1999, 34), observing worldview, which was discussed above, people would be "generous, hospitable, friendly, caring and compassionate."

As was disused above, the novel was published at the climax of the debate about torture. Furthermore, the novel makes unmistakable references to events of that era, which I shall explore later, and uses specialised language that denotes turbulent times. For example, we encounter the words torture and interrogation over and over again. From the very beginning of the novel the reader is made aware that Colonel Joll "is here under the emergency powers, that is enough" (*WB*, 1), and this reminds the reader of the emergency state under the apartheid. Also, at some points Colonel Joll shows the Magistrate a letter that has been sealed by the Third Bureau. The decree reads that "hold these succeeding detainees *incommunicado* for my return" (*WB* 18; emphasis added). In spite of such references to the apartheid era, the novel has a loose setting and time. I argue that the context of the novel is indeed South Africa and apartheid but that it can also be read against totalitarian and imperial systems when they assume that torture and forced confession will secure their power, but instead causes moral individuals, those like the Magistrate, who are within the system to become conscience-stricken by the brutalities of the system of which they are a part.

In this latter respect, the novel has a wider scope than just South Africa. The narrative, as Attridge (2004, 42) points out, transcends time and place, and it is "universally relevant." In this way, I find the commendation by King Penguin

rewarding: "*Waiting for the Barbarians* is an allegory of oppressor and oppressed. Not just a man living through a crisis of conscience in an obscure place in remote times, the Magistrate is an analogue of all men living in complicity with regimes that ignore justice and decency" (qtd in Attridge 2004, 42). There are instances where some critics maintain that the context of the novel is not South Africa. As Robert Spencer (2014, 148) observes, that the fact that its cold wind blows from the north, indicates that the novel is about any empire and any colonial violence rather than about just apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, the Empire bears no name in the novel and the regime which Joll and the Magistrate work for is presented as simply the 'Empire'. This distinguishes it from what apartheid-era South Africa appears to be: minority rule within a country. The Empire stands for aggressive military rule over people *outside* the rulers' country. In other words, the novel has two aspects; while it can be read against the apartheid era, it can also be read generally against imperial and authoritarian regimes that crush any perceived threats with an iron fist, and capture and torture detainees. Thus, my argument is in line with Attridge's (2004, 44) statement that the novel simultaneously addresses some truths about the world and about the South Africa of 1970s.

Like the previous novel in which complicity plays a role, here complicity and a feeling of guilt play a pivotal role. In this novel, complicity and the feeling of guilt concerns the Magistrate. In this respect, too, it can be assumed that the Magistrate's complicity stands for the idea of historical guilt. Thus, complicity can be viewed in the context of South Africa, or else it can also be viewed in the light of the complicity of any agents in any totalitarian regime.

The idea of complicity and the guilt of the Magistrate has a trajectory. That is to say, these themes are developed as the Magistrate's knowledge and awareness deepen so that towards the end of the novel he has a better understanding of the situation and the Empire's misdemeanours at the outpost. Initially, he is at the service of the Empire, trying to enjoy his life and pretending not to hear and see the pain of the captives. Gradually, however, he becomes aware of the tyrannies of the Empire and notes that he is a part of it. In the early parts of the novel, the Magistrate is not seeking anything "more than a quiet life in quiet times […] serving out […] [his] days on this lazy frontier, waiting to retire" (*WB*, 8). However, later on he ends up being tortured and imprisoned. As Leist (2010, 206) puts it: "Having lived through the events of his own imprisonment, torture, and humiliation he [the Magistrate] achieves a new understanding." He understands what it means to be treated violently and being denied humanity. This change manifests on both the unconscious and conscious levels, as also his dreams suggest. Towards the end of the novel, he dreams of positive things, of "peace" (*WB*, 110) and of children "building a snowwoman" (*WB*, 167), while in the earlier part of the novel he has dreams of a reinforced fortress. It is, in fact, torture and the torture scenes that awaken his understanding of

the guilt of the system and himself. He first tries to deny his association with the Empire and states that he is different from his brutal colleagues and that he understands the natives, but he gradually becomes critical of the system. Nonetheless, some questions remain. Is he different from his merciless colleagues? Can he be exonerated from the guilt of the Empire? What about his sexual exploitation of the nomad girl whom he claims has helped? Is he still a coloniser or not? I shall develop these issues together with the torture of the Magistrate later in this chapter.

This novel, like the previous, can be seen as an allegory of darkness or evil that lurks inside all humans, that we can all be evil and cause suffering to humanity once we gain power. Bernard Levin, in his review of *Waiting for the Barbarians*, writes: “Mr. Coetzee sees the heart of darkness in all societies, and gradually it becomes clear that he is not dealing in politics at all but inquiring into the nature of the beast that lurks within each of us” (qtd in Attridge 2004, 32). Attridge (2004, 32) reminds us that Coetzee’s fiction, including *Waiting for the Barbarians*, can be read against abuse and conflicts in the modern world. Similar analyses can be found by critics in the work of other prominent authors and Coetzee’s predecessors Franz Kafka and Samuel Beckett. These abuses that Attridge talks about are committed by those who are in positions of power in totalitarian regime, like the Magistrate. In the case of the Magistrate, as with other characters in the novel, the notion of patriarchy can be discerned in his abuse of power and treatment of the female other. Since the Magistrate is viewed as a person in a position of power affiliated with the imperial system, it would be pertinent to compare to some extent the fictional Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* and the real magistrates during the colonisation epoch, which I will turn to next. Since in this novel the fabricated identity ‘barbarian’ is used to justify ill-treatment of the colonised, I shall also delve into the roots of this discriminatory word in the next section.

3.3 Real and fictional Magistrates: *Waiting for the Barbarians* and the roots of the word ‘barbarian’

As I mentioned earlier, in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, while there are similarities with the apartheid era, there are some distinctions as well. That is to say, there are certain references that could be said that the novel denotes the colonial era. In this respect it would fit better within the scope of the dissertation and the research question as there is a relation between colonial overpowering and gender-based violence. One of such references is the choice of the Magistrate. This decision to call the narrator ‘Magistrate’ is significant in the sense that there were such colonial officials during the colonial era that Coetzee fictionalises. Sarah Winter (2014, 270)

is astute in her analysis of the novel when she compares the Magistrate with magistrates of the white hegemony era:

> As Albie Sachs points out the annihilation of slavery in the Cape Colony ruled by Britain did not cause dramatic change in the position of former slaves. English Common Law was transmitted through judicial systems which laid the ground for the constitution of the modern South African system, among the typical features of this judicial system was the representation of a magistrate who executes some duties as those of the magistrate in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

So, in essence, after the abolition of slavery there were only superficial changes in the condition of the slaves and the tyrannised. One of these supposed changes was the arrival of magistrates comparable to the fictional Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians.* Winter's argument could refer to the accountability of either the real magistrates or the fictional Magistrate for the atrocities of colonial Britain. However, in my analysis I widen the scope and view the Magistrate's role not merely as an affiliate of colonial Britain, like Winter, but as a representative of the soft side of imperial/repressive systems, not just of one particular colonial power. Such figures are allied in the felonies committed by the Empire. Comparing the role of the fictional Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* with that of the magistrates during the colonial period, Winter (ibid.) writes: "It makes historical sense, then, that the legal system – the common law – imported into the colonial setting to administer its legal-ized imperial acquisition of territories and enslavement of native populations should be held responsible." By the same token, it makes sense then to hold responsible the fictional Magistrate, who represents the real one, for the atrocities of the Empire in the novel of which he is a part. That is to say, my aim is to show that the fictional Magistrate is equally guilty. Hence, he is also responsible for the torture he commits.

In another comparison between the real and the fictional magistrates, Susana Onega (2011, 208) writes that the Magistrate in the novel is "a white country magistrate," and further compares his role to that of high-ranking white colonisers after the Anglo–Boer War (Onega 2011, 210). This idea, the resemblance of the fictional soft Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* to real ones during the colonisation epoch is substantiated by Ivan Evans (2009, 89), who maintains that some white colonisers were soft on the native South Africans and abstained from force, and in so doing, their aim was to prolong imperial rule:

> It is significant that the state's "Native Policy" at this time [after the Anglo-Boer War] was informed by the ideology of benevolent paternalism and that the upper

> reaches of the civil service were dominated by liberal administrators. These men were wary of black opposition and were ideologically opposed to the sorts of overtly repressive controls that South Africa's farmers and white workers increasingly favoured. […] [They] declined to surrender authority to violent white citizens. Indeed, to the chagrin of farmers in particular, senior administrators even hesitated to utilize the full range of the powers they lawfully possessed to control Africans.

In a similar study, Paul Rich (1984, 382) maintains that the Magistrate exemplifies his real counterpart, an example of the "old school" of imperial officials, rather like some of the colonial officials in many parts of British and French Africa before independence and indeed like officials in the old Native Affairs Department (NAD) before and after the union of South Africa, who genuinely believed in their promotion of "'civilized' values." This is suggested when the Magistrate asserts: "All my life I have believed in civilized behaviour" (*WB*, 25).

So, the Magistrate did have real exemplars who, like him, were of soft nature, but actually aimed to maintain imperial rule. To achieve this goal, at a very superficial level they took the side of the dominated people to make them believe that they understood them. At the same time, they believed in the superiority of the colonisers over the colonised because they judged themselves to be civilised. In the same way, the Magistrate considers himself and his own demeanour as standard and civilised and views the nomads and their behaviour as barbarian and primitive. Thus, by fictionalising the administration of colonial judicial system represented by the Magistrate, Coetzee makes an astute comparison between the fictional and the real magistrates, implying that the Magistrate is an important medium through which domination is maintained, and hence accountable. Thus, the gender-based violence in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, which will be discussed in a due section, is to be seen in the light of colonial male power. Furthermore, I maintain that although the Magistrate tries to understand the captives, this does not acquit him of the guilt of the Empire since he is a member of that system, a cog in the machine. The purpose of torture is to safeguard the state against a perceived threat. Thus, the victims are given false identities to justify their torture. *Waiting for the Barbarians* fictionalizes this idea by labelling the poor nomads as barbarians who are a threat to the Empire.

Before embarking on an analysis of torture in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, a comment on the roots of the word *barbarian* and its significance in the novel is appropriate. The term 'barbarian' has commonplace usage in political discourse. As the literary scholar Markus Winkler (2015, 46) writes, daily news testifies that the concept of barbarism is widespread in today's political rhetoric but that its implications and its legitimacy are hardly ever questioned. While the term 'barbarian' is used (especially) in the rhetoric of contemporary right-wing politics, the history of

the term goes back well beyond the modern epoch. Its roots are in the ancient Greek word *barbaros* (*βάρβαρος*) which referred to people from outside the Greek settlements, foreigners whose language for the Greeks was incomprehensible and resembled stammering. In India, the Sanskrit word *barbara* (बर्बर) has similar semiotic uses.

In the Middle Ages, 'barbarian' indicated all heathens outside Christian Europe. By the breakup of Medieval Europe in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, there was a negative attitude toward the nations that were gradually dominated by European colonisers.[30] In fact, throughout history the term barbarian has been used predominantly to segregate self from the other, to envision a circle and to imagine anybody who is outside the circle to be inferior. Whenever necessary, this negative designation has been used to mobilise and to motivate the people of a 'civilised' nation to fight enemies. We see that, for example, the Greeks called invaders (who mostly came from the East) 'barbarians', as did the Romans or Germanic invaders. These negative depictions of the other, albeit in different eras and in different geographical situations, share a sense of commonality: that the uncivilised pose an imminent threat to the civilised and need therefore to be opposed.

The idea of civilised whites versus low-cultured others manifested itself during the era of white hegemony in South Africa as well, where the white settlers considered themselves to be advocates of civilisation against the perceived threat of the so-called barbaric black South Africans (Rich 1984, 367–68). We should not that while the word barbarian was not so commonplace during the colonisation of South Africa, there is certain exception in this regard, for example in the words of Le Vaillant. How-ever, the word 'barbarians' did make sense when used in the texts of the 1970 where it could segregate the blacks from the whites. As Attwell (1993, 75) puts it, this eigh-teenth-century vocabulary, that is 'barbarian', has uses for a novel written in 1970s in South Africa "where it was quite natural in official discourse to speak of "nations" – that is "mature" (i.e., barbarian) black nations – which could be allowed to develop as independent states in their own segregated Bantustans, in contrast to a white (civilized) nation, which could be left to its own devices." Attwell (ibid.) reminds us that the ideas in the phrases like "separate development" denote the racist's language of apartheid. In this respect, the novel can be said to allude to the apartheid era.

30 One should note that English representations of colonial encounters in the sixteenth century and the notion of 'barbarians' was not used very often in those texts, if at all. Those English writers used a discourse of savagery (sometimes) and paganism (almost invariably). In English the word 'barbarian' retains a specific association with the Roman Empire and its perimeters. See also Matthew Arnold's (1999) *Culture and Anarchy* in which it is used for the English landowning upper classes.

The duality between civilisation and barbarism can be seen also in Cavafy's poem "Waiting for the Barbarians." An Alexandrian Greek, Cavafy's use of the word al-ludes to the downfall of the Greco–Roman world. In the poem, people are brought to-gether under the imminent threat of the approaching barbarians – "The barbarians are due here today" – and this anticipation causes anxiety. Anxiety and anticipation lay the foundation also for the theme of the novel, as well as their consequence: torture.

The age-old opposition between civilisation and barbarism is manifest in Coetzee's novel. Calling nomads 'barbarians' serves as a pretext to mobilise the army, to hunt down and to torture the nomads. Cavafy's poem is built around the use of 'the barbarians' as a discursive threat: 'we' stick together because of the idea of barbarians. In the novel, the poor nomads had been living their lives by their own standards. The advent of the Empire has had an impact on their livelihood and the demography of the area. The setting is explained by the narrator so that "what was once an outpost and then a fort on the frontier has grown into an agricultural settlement, a town of three thousand souls" (*WB*, 5). The identity of the people of the outpost and the so-called barbarians are not clear. We know that the outpost is near the border and that it is multi-ethnic, with people from all over the Empire as well as indigenous people. There are also nomads, the so-called barbarians, who are more like the indigenous people of the region and live in the wastelands. According to Richard Begam (1992, 424) we cannot ascribe a certain ethnicity either to the nomads or the Empire agents:

> There is nothing about blackness or whiteness in *Waiting for the Barbarians.* The Magistrate and the girl could as well be Russian and Kirghiz, or Han and Mongol, or Turk and Arab, or Arab and Berber. […] To decide that humanity falls 'naturally' into three divisions, white, black, and yellow, or into two, men and women, means lapsing straight back into the Discourse of the Cape, or a version of it.

The nomads had neither adapted to the values of the Empire nor converted to Christianity. Thus, the stage was set for their oppression. These pretexts by the Empire to justify its violence in the colony cannot, however, serve as legitimate grounds for the military operation. Therefore, the Empire had to fabricate an enemy depicted as 'barbarians', who are uncivilised and who would commit barbaric acts. Since the threat could not be removed by a single military excursion to secure imperial interests and to safeguard the civilians against the threat of the so-called barbarians, the Empire needed to establish the permanent presence of its army and agents. Specifically, the occupation of the outpost by the Empire had consequences for the nomads, among which is the infliction of pain. Spencer (2008, 178) observes

that torture originates from “the general acceptance that the West’s others do not merit the moral and legal status of human beings.”

In this novel, torture is twofold and plays a key role. Coetzee elaborates on the issue of mental and physical torture by the imperial agents, whether benevolent or harsh. Through these two characters, the novel establishes the two-sidedness of the torture. This two-sidedness can be discussed in exerting either mental suffering by a benevolent person or physical pain by a cruel person. The United Nations (1984) captures this two-fold quality in its definition of torture. In the terms of the *Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment* it reads that

> the term torture means any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions.

Despite such explicit international decrees, as Michael Richardson (2016, 2) comments, “[t]orture proves a slippery concept, especially for law.” Throughout the ages, torture has been a regular practice of human societies to maintain control, and even today particularly totalitarian states endorse forms of torture that are in their interest, contrary to international jurisdiction.

The gradual change in the views on the use of torture (especially as a legally justified tool for governments) for acquiring information or confessions and for inflicting punishment or intimidating others began to take critical shape in the 18th century. The Italian Enlightenment criminologist Cesare Bonesana di Beccaria (1738–1794) was one of the first scholars to conceptualise torture (and death penalty) as a crime, which Bonesana di Beccaria (1872, 59) sees as a practice upheld by tradition: “The torture of a criminal, during the course of his trial, is a cruelty, consecrated by custom in most nations.” Furthermore, Bonesana di Beccaria sees torture as futile as it is in excess of the required punishment if the suspect is found guilty, or else inflicts pain on an innocent person. His conclusion on torture is, then, that

> it is confounding all relations […] that pain should be the test of truth, as if truth resided *in the muscles and fibres* of a wretch in torture. By this method, *the*

> *robust will escape, and the feeble be condemned*. These are the inconveniencies of this pretended test of truth, worthy only of a cannibal; and which the Romans, in many respects barbarous, and whose savage virtue has been too much admired, reserved for the slaves alone. (ibid.; emphases added)

Bonesana di Beccaria's comment on truth written on the body – "in the muscles and fibres" – is an ironic view of the torturers' mind-set, emphasising the corporality of torture. The comparison of torture to the practices of cannibals further highlights its unacceptability.

The power of the novel is not that it agrees with declarations against torture such as the UN's but that as a literary achievement it makes us *feel* what torture is *like* – for its victims and perpetrators alike. In the following section, 3.4, I explore how torture is used to deter the enemy of the Empire, and the ways the Empire justifies its long-term domination and territorial expansion in the dominated area. We shall see that the Magistrate tries to distance himself from the Empire and exonerate himself from its guilt, yet the matter is not that simple as he is an accomplice. The idea of him distancing himself from the guilt of the Empire and in particular his complicity is further developed later, in section 3.5, where I probe into two sides of the imperial systems that pursue the same objective and we see that the Magistrate is a perpetrator although he does not fully admit as much to himself. In section 3.6, I discuss his complicity regarding mental torture and gender-based violence, and in 3.7 I conclude that the Magistrate and Colonel Joll are cut from the same cloth, they are two sides of the same coin.

3.4 Coetzee's Barbarians: Atrocity and complicity

Even today, the use of torture to prolong the rule of tyrants is widespread, especially in the form of state terror. Amnesty International reports that state officials in 141 countries have used torture between 2009–2013 to keep their rule and to eliminate their enemy ("Torture" online). In other words, three quarters of the countries in the world have witnessed torture within the last decade.

Torture as a theme found its way long ago into creative literature in modern times. From Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo* (1904) to George Orwell's *1984* (1949), and from Michael Ondaatje's *Anil's Ghost* (2000) to Janette Turner Hospital's *Orpheus Lost* (2007), writers have grappled with this extremely painful topic. Richardson (2016, 8) has studied the effects of torture and its representation and argues that "literary witnessing is possible and necessary for both the eyewitness and the bystander." In accordance with this stance, Coetzee (1992a, 363) maintains that "torture has exerted a dark fascination on many other South African authors,"

himself included. This is indeed the case with *Waiting for the Barbarians*, which deals with this contradictory and contested topic.

In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the rumours about so-called barbarian attacks and the emergency regulations bring Colonel Joll and the troops of the imperial Civil Guard, the “Third Bureau” – the “unsleeping guardian of the Empire” (*WB,* 20) – to the outpost managed by the sympathetic representative of the Empire, the Magistrate. The Magistrate seems to have a *laissez-fair* approach towards the people of the outpost and the so-called barbarians. He is the narrator of novel and can be viewed as a cog in the wheel, this wheel being the imperial machine. Hence, in this sense he bears a resemblance to the character of Dawn. However, as I mentioned earlier, while in we do not witness any failings in Dawn’s loyalty to the imperial system, here the Magistrate’s faith and loyalty declines. Moreover, like Dawn, in the Magistrate’s character, complicity plays a pivotal role, and this is a strong ethical point. In other words, the Magistrate shows that people are contaminated by their proximity to power. As the novel develops, he also becomes more aware of the tyrannies of the system he is serving, and this causes him excruciating ambivalence and feeling of guilt as I shall discuss in this chapter.

The novel contrasts three groups of people against each other: there are, first, the local citizens – subjects of the Empire – of the outpost, second, there are the soldiers of the imperial army who have been recruited “from all over the Empire” (*WB*, 143), and third, there are the ethnically distinct nomads, who do not belong to the Empire. By labelling the nomads ‘barbarian’ the Empire renders them as the other, open to ill-treatment. The treatment of the other by the imperial agents is distinctive from the treatment of the other discussed by Belgacem (2018, 28) and Boehmer (1995, 269), who write about the fascination, fear, and punishment of the other. As discussed earlier, they believed that colonisers have been both fascinated and fearful of the body of the other. However, in *Waiting for the Barbarians* with the exception of the barbarian girl we do not witness any fascination with the other as discussed by Boehmer and Belgacem. I also agree with Belgacem and Boehmer that fear plays a role in the punishment of the other in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, yet I argue that this fear is fabricated. In other words, I prefer to use the notion of ‘fabricated threat’ instead of fear in this context, because the other in the novel is neither fearsome nor a real threat but labelled as such to serve the specific purpose of the Empire. In the novel, with the exception of the discourse of the harsh side of the Empire, there is no evidence that the native nomads are dangerous. As I shall demonstrate, this depiction of the nomads simply cannot be construed as true.

Bhabha mentions some characteristics of colonial texts that address the impact of imperial power on the dominated nations and the way the oppressed are rendered as the other. Such texts also relate to the fear of empire with regard to the oppressed (Bhabha 1994, 72–73). Consequently, it can be argued that such a discourse paves

the ground for the domination of the latter, or to use Bhabha's terms, such a fetish opens royal roads for colonisers in dominating nations (ibid.) Needless to say, establishing such roads entails violence and torture of the natives. To open such roads, as discussed in the previous chapter, involves, as Bhabha (1994, 70) puts it, rendering the oppressed through discourse as other "on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration." Drawing on Bhabha, I analyse this fabricated fear and illustrate how it serves the imperial goal. In addition to justifying the imperial presence and its violence, through language the local people's minds are modulated as we shall see in this chapter. Furthermore, attributing the nomads a derogatory label, such as 'barbarian', is certainly denigrating them.

Upon the arrival of the imperial army, their commander-in-chief, Joll, believes in responding to any perceived threat against the Empire with an iron fist. He states that there is a threat against the Empire. This depiction of the Third Bureau is important here as it refers to the Security Police in the apartheid era. He believes that there is a conspiracy against the Empire and that his duty is to discover it. In other words, he is paranoid. This can allude to the paranoia prevalent during the apartheid regime that I mentioned earlier in this chapter. Furthermore, the structure of the Third Bureau is important here as it references the apartheid-era South Africa. As Gallagher (1991, 120) reminds us: "Even the titles and structures of authority in the Empire remind us of South Africa." This can be understood from the way the Third Bureau in the novel treats the natives in a similar way to the Security Police in apartheid South Africa. The Third Bureau kicks and beat people with: "contempt for the regular police and for due process of law" (*WB,* 85). To discover the so-called conspiracy and to eliminate it, Joll believes that he needs to put the so-called enemy under physical pain to make them confess, and he considers torture to be a tool to save the Empire. The purpose of torture and confession is safeguarding the Empire. In this respect, my argument is in line with Urquhart (2006, 2) when she states that: "I see in the novel a pointed critique: the state's re-membering of the often-fragmentary evidence of oppression amounts not to justice in the reparative sense but rather to an expedient, a way to secure political legitimacy." However, despite such violence, as we shall see, the Empire fails in its mission.

The alleged danger is accentuated by the rumours that have been spreading from the capital:

> *Traders travelling safe routes had been attacked and plundered*. Stock thefts had increased in scale and audacity. A party of census officials had disappeared and been found buried in shallow graves. Shots had been fired at a provincial governor during a tour of inspection. There had been clashes with border patrols. The barbarian tribes were arming, the rumour went; *the Empire should take*

> *precautionary measures*, for there would certainly be war. (*WB,* 8; emphases added)

To further underscore the perceived danger of the barbarians, and the necessity of the imperial army's presence, it is also rumoured that the so-called barbarians attack at night, kill, destroy, rape and then withdraw. The Empire welcomes the insecurity and the so-called emergency state as it serves imperial interests. As Colonel Joll says, "the administration of justice is out of the hands of civilians and in the hands of the Bureau "(*WB*, 124). This means that civil law and administration will be out of the hands of the Magistrate as well and in fact a kind of lawlessness under the disguise of emergency will be observed in the outpost. As Hannah Arendt (1953, 384) writes, "the downfall of nations begins with the undermining of lawfulness, whether the laws are abused by the government in power, or the authority of their source becomes doubtful and questionable." The Magistrate realises the harmful effect of such orders and says that the Empire will not be capable of appropriate actions. As I mentioned above such orders and fear are of benefit to the Empire. It also leads the Third Bureau to hold control of the outpost, and both the Magistrate and his role are sidelined.

This exaggerated fear calls into mind Bhabha's notion of fear discussed above. It seems that the fear achieves its goal. Initially, people feel anxious, children scream "barbarians!" and they cannot be calmed. The rumours are so pervasive that when a girl is raped, her friends point an accusing finger at a barbarian man on the basis of his ugliness (*WB,* 123). However, before long it becomes clear that the negative (physical, psychological, and ideological) portrayal of the nomads has manipulated the attitudes towards them so much that the locals rely on the army – who had previously tyrannised the town and were frowned upon – and regard them as their saviour from the nomads and support the troops removing the perceived threat:

> *Now that they seem to be all that stands between us and destruction, these foreign soldiers are anxiously courted*. A committee of citizens makes a weekly levy to hold a feast for them, roasting whole sheep on spits, laying out gallons of rum. *The girls of the town are theirs for the taking* They are welcome to whatever they want *as long as they will stay and guard our lives*. (*WB,* 144; emphases added)

In conjunction with manipulating peoples' minds about the danger of the barbarians, the sexual abuse of women becomes more blatant, as the people let the soldiers sexual-ly abuse the girls. Here, we encounter an aspect of gender-based violence that involves the misuse of power by the use of force. Later in this chapter I shall discuss gender-based violence and misuse of power with regard to the Magistrate and the

nomad girl in detail. These themes will also be carefully discussed in the next chapter as well.

As a result of the manipulation of peoples' minds through language about the danger of the barbarians, the stage is set for the sexual abuse of women. Significantly, before spreading the news about the danger of the barbarians, the citizens are not willing to have the imperial army among them. However, the widespread rumours seem to be effective in changing people's minds:

> When they [the soldiers] were *first* quartered on the town *these soldiers*, strangers to our ways, conscripts from all over the Empire, *were welcomed coolly.* '*We don't need them here*,' people said […]. *They were denied credit in shops*, mothers locked their daughters away from them. *But after the barbarians made their appearance on our doorstep that attitude changed.* (*WB,* 143, 144; emphases added)

In this way, the presence of the imperial army becomes justified, and the townspeople begin to support it. People assume that in order to continue their lives normally, security is a prerequisite, and that it is the military who can safeguard them. Thus, the army needs to stay to defend the people. In this way, the Empire achieves its goal: people consider the imperial army to be a shield between themselves and the enemy; moreover, the stage is set for hunting down and torturing the barbarians. All the talk of the (perceived) violence and the so-called barbarians' attacks in the novel make the people of the outpost panic and leave the outpost. This scene refers to the situation of South Africa in 1970s and 1980s. According to Head (1997a, 76), some people in South Africa during this period abandoned the country for fear of violence and immigrated to developed countries.

This is not the only time that Coetzee writes about the danger of the enemy to justify military operations and to extend the domination of the West abroad. In *Diary of a Bad Year*, (2007, 31) under the title of "On Al Qaida" the unnamed author who identifies himself as "JC" talks about a TV documentary which purports to justify the military operation and the spread US domination, in particular in the Middle East, "for reasons of its own the US administration chooses to keep alive the myth of Al Qaida as a powerful secret terrorist organisation with cells all over the world." "JC" does not believe in the danger of the terrorist network as claimed by the US authorities and disavows such exaggerations:

> If there were indeed a devilish organization with agents all over the world, bent on demoralizing Western populations and destroying Western civilization, it would surely by now have poisoned water supplies all over the place, or shot

> down commercial aircraft, or spread noxious germs – acts of terrorism that are easy enough to bring off. (ibid.)

We see that with such propagation, as narrated by "JC," the US authorities have tried to exaggerate the danger of the enemy, perhaps to set the stage for a military presence and for establishing their authority, especially in the Middle East.

In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, when the stage is set and the army has established its presence, the troops are dispatched to eliminate the perceived threat. Joll leads an operation and captures some nomads, whom he labels "barbarians." Although these nomads lead a peaceful life, Joll depicts them as a danger to the Empire. This negative depiction serves as a justification for their persecution. In the words of Jolly (1996, 124), "Coetzee's Empire depends upon the operation of the imperialist Manichean opposition, whereby it can identify itself as just(ified) by identifying the barbarians as the enemy." While it is true that that the Empire, in order to perpetuate its existence, needs to identify the nomads as barbarians, it is not only a matter of justification or even coercion and obedience. Rather it is a combination of both intimidation and so-called compassion that works hand in hand towards a shared goal.

The colonists' discourse in the novel reminds us of Foucault's (1980*,* 94) idea that power affects discourse. Accordingly, the Magistrate's and Colonel Joll's discursive practice is affected by power. These characters are more powerful than the natives. Significantly, the Magistrate is the first-person narrator in the novel. That is to say, what we have is from a character who is affiliated with the imperial power. This is the case with the narrator in "The Vietnam Project," too. This argument holds true for Jacobus in "the Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" as well, as the narration is from Jacobus's perspective who oppresses those under his sway. Consequently, all these characters are affiliated with imperial power. In their eyes, the dominated are subordinated and are considered as the other. As Bhabha (1994, 67) points out, the discourse of colonialism involves discrimination and presents the colonisers and the colonised in hierarchical order.

In the colonialist discourse represented in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, prejudices manifest themselves in the rhetoric of both the Magistrate and Joll who consider themselves superior to the nomads. In the colonialists discourse represented in the novel it can be said that the Empire and the so-called barbarians are depicted in ranking order. The Empire and its agents are at the top, as the epitome of civilisation. At the bottom are the dominated nomads. Both the Magistrate and Colonel Joll have stereotypical attitudes towards the natives and assign them a fabricated and generalised identity with th discriminatory term, barbarian. This calls to mind the definition of stereotype that was mentioned in the previous chapter. According to Bhabha (1994, 67), such attitudes propelled the colonisers to subordinate the

colonised under their rule. Thus, after the nomads are discursively described as barbarian and the enemy of the Empire, they are attacked, arrested, interrogated and tortured. This depiction once more reminds us of Bhabha's (1994, 86) notion of the partiality of representation of the colonised by the colonisers. Hence, the depiction of the native people in the novel cannot be construed as objectively true – what we know of the people of the outpost is presented to us from the standpoint of a coloniser, the Magistrate. Bigotry towards the dominated people undermines the Magistrate's self-proclaimed sympathy towards the natives, as I explore in this chapter.

Although the discursive practice of Joll and the Magistrate applies the generalised and biased term 'barbarian' to the nomad people, they are not at all barbaric and do not constitute a threat. This is suggested already at the beginning of the novel when the Magistrate is taking Joll for a tour around the fort and they enter a room with two prisoners, an old man and a young boy. The Magistrate comments that there are no barbarians at the outpost, only poor tribal people, and at worst they may sometimes commit petty theft:

> These are the only prisoners we have taken for a long time […]. A coincidence: *normally we would not have any barbarians at all to show you. This so-called banditry does not amount to much. They steal a few sheep or cut out a pack-animal from a train*. Sometimes we raid them in return. They are mainly destitute tribespeople with tiny flocks of their own living along the river. (*WB*, 4; emphasis added)

The prisoners have been unfairly kept in custody. The army is planning an attack to terminate the threat against imperial domination for good, but the Magistrate does not believe that the nomads would pose a threat. Thus, he responds:

> I am sure it is only a rumor: they cannot seriously intend to do that. The people we call barbarians are nomads, they migrate between the lowlands and the uplands every year, that is their way of life. They will never permit themselves to be bottled up in the mountains. (*WB,* 53–54)

So, the natives are just ordinary nomads who lead a pastoral life. However, from the early pages of the novel it is obvious that the Colonel sees the nomads as barbarians and he has a plan for them, claiming that the Empire has "set procedures" (*WB*, 4) for dealing with the so-called barbarians. These procedures, as becomes clear later in the novel, are torture and interrogation to get the projected truth. The labelling of the nomads as barbarians is further subverted by the Magistrate who refers to the troops sent to defeat the barbarians and says: "These men have not been at war: at

worst they have been roaming the up-river country, hunting down unarmed sheep-herders, raping their women, pillaging their homes, scattering their flocks" (*WB,* 99). Thus, it is the army that has been barbaric, tyrannising the nomads.

The Magistrate criticizes Joll's operation. He thinks that the troops had not been fighting the enemy but just terrorising ordinary people, if anything, and "at best they have met no one at all – certainly not the gathered barbarian clans from whose fury the Third Bureau is engaged in protecting us" (*WB,* 99). Just as the Magistrate fears, the army had been threatening and exploiting the nomads, and he declares that the "pitiable prisoners" arrested by the troops are not the enemy (*WB,* 125). Joll, then, scolds the Magistrate for being naïve: "You are living in a world of the past. You think we are dealing with small groups of peaceful nomads. In fact, we are dealing with a well-organized enemy" (*WB,* 125).

As I discussed earlier in this section, shortly after the arrival of Joll, brutal treatment of the nomad people is triggered. This crackdown on the native could be seen as referring to the crackdown on the South Africans during the Soweto uprising that was discussed above. In that period during the apartheid era, as Attwell (1993, 74) puts it, the apartheid regime "shifts gear and becomes more blatantly terroristic." The 'shift of gear' here in the novel is suggested when in the first phase several barbarians are arrested, questioned and treated violently, and in the second when nomads are beaten publicly, which I shall discuss later in this chapter. In the first phase, while being questioned, a group of nomads are mistreated and tortured which leads to the death of a barbarian man. As is typical of totalitarian regimes, the imperial agents deny that he was murdered. The brief official report to the Magistrate proclaims:

> During the course of the interrogation contradictions became apparent in the prisoner's testimony. Confronted with these contradictions, the prisoner became enraged and attacked the investigating officer. A scuffle ensued during which the prisoner fell heavily against the wall. Efforts to revive him were unsuccessful. (*WB,* 6)

It seems that the Third Bureau is attempting to evade responsibility for the death of the detainee and twisting reality. As Gallagher (1991, 119) puts it: "The stilted syntax in which the only active subject is 'the prisoner' obscures the actions of the Security Police and hides their responsibility for the death." Furthermore, the textual context implies that the report is fabricated, distorting the conditions of the old man's death, even though his body is replete with signs of torture. This perception is corroborated when the Magistrate sees the corpse and witnesses the severe marks on the deceased: "The grey beard is caked with blood. The lips are crushed and drawn back, the teeth are broken. One eye is rolled back, the other eye-socket is a bloody hole" (*WB,* 7).

This reminds us of the notion of accidental death during the apartheid era. In "Into the Dark Chamber," Coetzee (1992a, 362) writes about the headquarters of the Security Police in Johannesburg during the apartheid era and states that large numbers of political prisoners were taken to this prison, and that many did not come out alive. Then he quotes Christopher Van Wyk's poem "Detention," which is about the death of prisoners while in custody, quoted earlier in this dissertation.

In such cases, the truth about the incidents was distorted by the authorities and they tried to make the public, the media and the world believe that the state had no role in the passing away of the prisoners. Rather the apartheid authorities opted to show that the deaths, to borrow Coetzee's (1992a, 362) phrase were "suicide and accidental." Thus, Coetzee believes that it is shameless of a state to commit such atrocities (ibid.). What exacerbates such atrocities was disguising the reality of the incident. Distorting the truth about the detainees is attested by Gallagher (1991, 119), who states that during the apartheid years, the regime did not keep official records of the prisoners. Importantly, the scene of accidental death that was discussed above, is not the only instance of distorting the truth and records in the novel. We see that similar to the apartheid era, the Third Bureau does not keep official records of the Magistrate's imprisonment. At some point after his torture and imprisonment, he assumes that he is awaiting a trial. Addressing Mandel, he says: "I am a prisoner awaiting trial" (*WB*, 137). However, to his surprise Mandel states he is free to go and states: "But you are not a prisoner. You are free to go as you please. […] How can you be a prisoner when *we have no record of you*. […] *We have no record of you*" (ibid.; emphases added). Furthermore, Gallagher (1991, 120) is perceptive in noticing a nuanced similarity between the novel and the apartheid era when she notes that: "The Magistrate's ill-treatment is meted out by a Warrant Officer holding the same ranked title as several men involved in Biko's death."

Accidental death and the distorting of reality, like that of Biko, can be discerned in the novel as well in regard to the death of the so-called barbarian man who was mentioned above. As discussed, the damage to the old man's body signifies torture, not accidental death, and the Magistrate casts doubt on the report. He says that the officials claim that the old man has taken his own life by hitting his head on the wall. In fact, the novel alludes to the role of torture and death of the captives in the "dark chambers" by alluding to Biko's death. As Attwell (1993, 74) puts it, the novel's response to the death of Biko and deaths of other detainees in a security dominated state is "remarkably direct given Coetzee's nonreferential commitments." Since the Magistrate is suspicious about the report, he asks a guard to hear his opinion of it. The guard does not seem to approve of the report. He remains silent and just looks at the Magistrate "warily" (*WB*, 7), implying that the report is fabricated. This incident marks the beginning of the torturing of the barbarians; worse is to come.

The old man's daughter is also tortured and partially loses her eyesight and is not able to walk properly. Although the girl has nothing to reveal she is tortured by Colonel Joll's men to confess. The torture leaves her traumatised. She tries to forget the torture scene, and it is difficult for her to talk about it. When the Magistrate takes her in to work around the house she recounts, upon his insistence, how her people had been tortured:

> I saw the marks where they had burned people. […] They did not burn me. *They said they would burn my eyes out*, but they did not. The man brought it [the hot poker] very close to my face and made me look at it. They held my eyelids open. *But I had nothing to tell them.* That was all. That was when the damage came. After that I could not see properly any more. There was a blur in the middle of everything I looked at; I could see only around the edges. It is difficult to explain. (*WB,* 44; emphases added)

This scene of the torture of the barbarian girl also shows the mistreatment of the barbarians at the hand of the Third Bureau. The brutal treatment of the nomads is also depicted when the narrator, in a manner invoking the confessional genre, states: "I will say nothing of the recent raids carried out on them, quite without justification, and followed by acts of wanton cruelty, *since the security of the Empire was at stake*, or so I am told. It will take years to patch up the damage done in those few days" (*WB,* 54; emphasis added). Furthermore, the nomads are driven off their pastures and forced to retreat to the mountainous areas (*WB,* 78).

The Empire also annexes the natives' lands, which has an effect on the lives of the nomads: "They want an end to the spread of settlements across their land. They want their land back, finally. They want to be free to move about with their flocks from pasture to pasture as they used to" (*WB,* 54). Similar acts of land-grabbing and repression of the locals were common during the colonisation era when, as the settlements developed, the colonisers unlawfully occupied the indigenous people's lands, by military force if necessary. I return to the issue of land ownership in Chapter 4.

Colonel Joll treats the so-called barbarians brutally, but the Magistrate presents himself as sympathetic toward the victims. He strongly objects to the mistreatment of the barbarians and takes in the barbarian girl mentioned above, tortured and partially blinded by the Third Bureau, and later on, during a hazardous journey, reunites her with her family which results in his imprisonment for treason.[31] I return

[31] Rosemary Jolly argues that the Magistrate′s returning of the girl to her people is a decisive point in the novel. Before this moment, he is an imperial agent. However, upon his return he is no longer in that position. Rather, he himself is a prisoner. For more discussion, refer to Jolly (1989).

to this issue later in this chapter. I think that the Magistrate's acts of shelter and helping her to rejoin her people can be seen as an act of repentance. However, while I believe that the Magistrate's philanthropic act can be a sign of penance, I argue that he has a conflicted[32] character in which expiation and penance are a part. That is to say, I argue that his relationship with the girl can be viewed in the light of the wider scope of his conflicted character and his affiliation with the imperial system.

In my analysis, Joll and the Magistrate, despite their differences, are two sides of the same coin – two sides of colonialism – and each of them is guilty. Hence, I propose that despite the soft nature of the Magistrate and despite the fact that at some points he takes sides with the nomads, for example by returning the barbarian girl to her family or by his objection to the public torture of nomad captives, he cannot be exonerated from the guilt of the Empire since he is in indeed involved in torture and interrogation in his own way. That is to say, he is accomplice. In committing the atrocities, Joll, a harsh coloniser, plays a key role and is involved in the physical torture of his victims. As I mentioned earlier, he believes the best way to protect the imperial borders is to treat the nomad people uncompromisingly; for him, torture is a practical means to terrorise people into obedience. In contrast to Joll's physical violence, the Magistrate is portrayed as a soft, allegedly benevolent coloniser, but he is also involved in the guilt of the Empire. This is apparent in his treatment, first, of the girl, to whom he offers shelter but on whom he exerts mental pain to find out the truth about the torture she had experienced, and second, of the barbarian captives, whom he interrogates to elicit the truth in order to secure the Empire. Furthermore, he sexualises the girl. For both Joll and the Magistrate, pain is a sign of the truth they consider written on the bodies of the people they interrogate and which they intend to interpret. Moreover, by interrogating the nomad captives, speaking to them softly and simultaneously warning them about the consequences of not collaborating with him, the Magistrate strives to discover any possible threat against the imperial system and to safeguard it.

In Joll's operation, several poor nomads are arrested to terrorise the citizens of the township into full obedience and teach them a lesson that any opposition, any attempt to subvert the power of the Empire, would lead to the citizens facing serious consequences, similar to those of the captured nomads who are punished publicly. Thus, the group of arrested nomads is brought to the city square. The noise from the square alerts the Magistrate to the army's return with the group, held in inhuman conditions – roped together, neck to neck, connected by a wire that goes through the flesh of each prisoner's hands and mouth, they are forced to kneel (*WB,* 103). Joll

[32] We should note that such conflict does not merely appear with regard to his relationship with the girl. When he criticises the misdeeds of the Empire at the outpost, he states that that "I am *unsound* as well as *old-fashioned*" (*WB*, 56; emphasis added).

writes "ENEMY" with chalk on the back of each prisoner, and then beats them cruelly:

> The soldiers use the stout green cane staves, bringing them down with the heavy slapping sounds of washing-paddles, raising red welts on the prisoners' backs and buttocks. [...] The black charcoal and ochre dust begins to run with sweat and blood. The game, I see, is to beat them till their backs are washed clean. (*WB,* 105)

The flogging goes on relentlessly until, ironically, the soldiers are exhausted. What happens next pushes the Magistrate to publicly shout out and strongly object in pro-test. The scenes of torture in the novel can be understood as referring to the apartheid era, too. In "Into the Dark Chamber," Coetzee (1992a, 362–63) indicates that *Waiting for the Barbarians* is about "the impact of the torture chamber on the life of a man of conscience" and talks about torture during the apartheid era. Importantly, Attwell (2020, 18) writes that such scenes in the novel shows "the impact of torture, as a feature of late apartheid, on self-respecting liberal intellectuals," represented here by the Magistrate. I think that this comparison is quite fruitful. Like any other totalitarian state, the apartheid regime's Bureau for State Security (Afrikaans: Buro vir Staats-veiligheid) used to detain people without any justification and torture them to obtain confessions. At that time, as Attwell (2020, 19) puts it: "Liberals objected in the press and in parliament, but with little effect." In this respect, the role of the liberal and their objections can be compared to the objection of the Magistrate to Colonel Joll and the Third Bureau at the torture scene. He objects, but in practical terms it has no effect.

At the torture scene, the tired soldiers offer the onlookers their canes to continue the beating. After one girl tentatively takes a cane and gives a blow to one of the prisoners, the crowd rushes to continue the beating. In this collectively shared complicity, the Magistrate is left alone, "one man who in his heart was not a barbarian" (*WB,* 115). This is an allusion to Kafka's short story "In the Penal Colony" in which torture, inscription and the so-called administration of justice play a key role in an unmanned colony.

Joll's torture of the nomads seeks, as Elaine Scarry (1985, 19–20; emphases added) points out, to deconstruct the prisoner's voice:

> Physical pain […] is *language-destroying*. Torture inflicts bodily pain that is itself language-destroying, but torture mimes […] this language-destroying capacity in its interrogation, the purpose of which is not to elicit needed information but visibly to *deconstruct the prisoner's voice*.

But one could ask what purpose could such deconstruction serve? And how is the Empire able to impose its version of truth? I argue that its purpose is to impose the torturers' version of truth on the prisoners, and then to use this version, that is to say the forced confession, against them to remove the so-called threat. In other words, such tyrannies are prompted by paranoia.

Although we, the readers, see there is no danger posed to the Empire, the Third Bureau is paranoid and presumes an existential threat. This alleged felony, not actually committed by the nomads, in turn exposes the prisoners to retribution. All such trans-gressions, although motivated by paranoia, are seen to be rooted in the fact that due to his affiliation with power, Joll views the nomads from above and as different from him, that is, non-human. This calls into mind Bhabha's (1994, 42) notion that imperial agents' vision of the oppressed is disturbed. The same holds true for the Magistrate, as he is involved in another form of torture. With regard to the second question concerning how the Empire is able to mandate its version of truth, I would say that it is due to power. The Empire is powerful, so dictates what it wants to and for the people. Leist (2010, 209) reminds us that the Empire's "power resides in the threat of torture but also in the power of communality, the simple fact that beliefs need social corroboration." It seems that in the novel there are no alternatives for communality in the Empire. If there were communities, they could confront and lessen the harm and might of the Third Bureau and the Empire. We should note that after Colonel Joll and his army, the most powerful person in the outpost is the Magistrate. However, he, too, is punished and is put in prison. He is not able to communicate with the people of the outpost[33] and unite them against the Empire, had he even wanted to do so.

In torturing to obtain the truth, one function of language is highlighted in Colonel Joll's discursive practice. He believes that "a certain tone enters the voice of a man who is telling the truth" (*WB*, 5). Besides, like the madness of the Empire, which was discussed with regard to Jacobus, here the madness of the Empire is made manifest. This madness expresses itself as sadism, which can be discerned in Joll and the Third Bureau's treatment of the natives. JanMohamed (1985, 66) discusses the colonialist desire to label natives as other: "If every desire is at base a desire to impose oneself on another and to be recognised by the other […] then the colonist situation provides an ideal context for the fulfilment of that fundamental drive." This definition resembles the sadistic acts and beliefs discussed in the previous chapter. Hence, the Empire using its military might forces its will upon the natives, rendering them as other, as barbarians. The colonisers and imperial agents are not able to view the oppressed as independent and see that they do not resemble the identity that the

[33] We should note that before his imprisonment he is not even able to communicate with the nomad girl.

colonisers ascribe to them. For the colonisers, the oppressed according to JanMohamed (1985, 67), are "recipient of the negative elements of the self that the European projects onto him."

Torturing and dehumanising of its captives is one of the primary characteristics of authoritarian systems. Spencer's (2008, 174) comment is worth mentioning here when he writes that the oppressive system in the novel has depicted some people as less than human to legitimise their torment:

> That the townspeople in Coetzee's scene titter and gawp at the gruesome spectacle in the square is testament to its success in denying the humanity of the 'barbarians' and in placing the barbarians' pain beyond the reach of their tormentors' moral imaginations. The act of torture in this case is a public one; it marks off a boundary between what is human and what is not in order to justify the infliction of pain and terror on defenceless bodies.

To set the stage for the public beating and to highlight the boundary between the Empire's agents and the captives, as I mentioned, Colonel Joll charcoals the word 'enemy' on their back, to give them a false identity. In this way, they are seen as the enemies of the Empire, not ordinary citizens, and this in turn categorises them as non-human. As Spencer (2008, 178) puts it, torture predominantly originates from "the general acceptance of the view that the West's 'others' do not merit the moral and legal status of human beings."[34] In the eyes of Joll and his colleagues, the barbarians do not deserve human treatment and so they are chained and beaten until they are bleeding. In Joll's and his men's eyes, at most, they are a bunch of insignificant troublemakers.

Foucault (1979b, 29) writes that the aim of torture is to reach to the soul, and he argues that punishment is a method that produces the soul. Foucault believes that soul is born out of method of punishment. In his interpretation of Foucault, Attwell (1993, 80) writes that pain "writes soulhood on the body." He also states that: "individuality is signified, constructed, precisely in order that it may be destroyed" (ibid.). In a similar vein, the Magistrate says, "pain is truth" (*WB,* 5). These lines of thought can be discerned in in the Magistrate's words after his punishment. The Magistrate says that Mandel "deals with my soul: every day he folds the flesh aside

[34] The torturing of the so-called enemy of the West is also discussed in *Diary of a Bad Year* in entries on "Guantanamo" and "Tony Blair." Here, Señor C narrates the inhuman treatment of those who have been arrested. Tony Blair and the US leaders in Washington are involved in the torturing and assassination of those who are deemed enemies. Disdain for the culture of the West's other is a recurrent theme in Coetzee's fiction. In *Dusklands* for instance, in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," Jacobus looks down upon the culture of the native South African people.

and exposes my soul to the light; he has probably seen many souls in the course of his working life" (*WB*, 129).

As the Magistrate witness the torture scene, this has a strong impact on his psyche and inner conscience. That is to say, viewing these scenes has definitely played a key role in opening up a new horizon to the Magistrate. He becomes more aware of the brutalities of the Empire. To him, the Empire is an evil and he should denounce it. As Woessner (2010, 233) puts it, what finally convinces the Magistrate that the Empire is nefarious is "an immediate and visceral reaction to bodily harm" in the torture scene. When the Colonel initiates torturing the captives, according to Woessner (ibid.) the Magistrate "can no longer turn a blind eye to the realities of the civilising mission." Thus, it seems that as long as the affair of the Empire includes administrative tasks, he does not criticise it, rather, despite sparing with Joll, the Magistrate fulfils his duty and cooperates with Joll; however, once the Empire embarks on the most gruesome acts of public corporal punishment, the Empire, in other words Colonel Joll and his men, are hauled over the coals by the Magistrate. Accordingly, the Magistrate becomes the target of physical punishment that dramatically adds to his awareness. He knows what tortures means. Thus, he yells: "From my throat comes the first mournful dry bellow, like the pouring of gravel. […] I bellow again and again, there is nothing I can do to stop it, the noise comes out of my body that knows itself damaged perhaps beyond repair and roars its fright" (*WB*, 132–33). His yelling reminds us of the yelling at a scene in William Faulkner's (1929, 395) *The Sound and The Fury* when Benji Compson bawls "the grave hopeless sound of all voiceless misery under the sun." This moment of torment is a pivotal moment in the novel, as the Magistrate is awakened more than before to the reality of the Empire.

It is from this moment that he becomes more humane and his language changes. As someone at the torture scene asserts, the Magistrate "is calling his barbarian friends […]. That is barbarian language you hear" (*WB*, 133). Significantly, it is in prison, upon returning from delivering the girl to her people, that he rehearses his past deeds and has a feeling of remorse: "*I should have never allowed* the gates of the town to be opened to the people who assert that there are higher considerations than those of decency" (*WB*, 88; emphasis added). In other words, his sense of ethics is wakened. In this awakening period, his discursive practice implies that the Colonel considers the nomads as other. Addressing Joll at the torture scene he shouts: "You would not use a hammer on a beast, not on a beast!" (*WB*, 117). At this moment of awareness, religious discourse is found in his narrative. At the torture scene, once again, addressing Joll he yells: "We are great miracle of creation! [...] Look at these men! [...] *Men*" (*WB*, 117). As Gallagher (1991, 131) puts it, here the Magistrate alludes to the "biblical rhetoric of the Afrikaners," and in fact he is citing Psalms. In the light of the religious discourse and moment of ethical awakening, he should

denounce the evil in Joll and eradicate it in himself. Thus, he asserts that "what has become important above all is that I should neither be contaminated by the atrocity that is about to be committed nor prison myself with impotent hatred of its perpetuators" (*WB*, 115). This line of awakening continues, and towards the end of the novel the Magistrate expresses his abhorrence of torture and denounces Colonel Joll. Furthermore, in the light of his ethical values and by his account he has a lesson For Joll. Addressing Joll he says: "I have a lesson […]. The crime that is latent in us we must inflict on ourselves […]. Not on others […]. I repeat the words" (*WB*, 160–61).

How does the Magistrate, as a soft imperial agent, then, compare with the ruthless Colonel Joll? Is he dissociated from the Empire? After all he has gained advantages through his connection with the Empire. We should note that as a man of Empire his lifestyle is different from the rudimentary and primitive style of the barbarians. The novel alludes to this as "pragmatic dicta" (*WB*, 43). With regard to the barbarian girl, we read: "She has a fondness for facts, I note, for pragmatic dicta; she dislikes fancy, questions; we are an ill-matched couple" (*WB*, 43; emphasis added). This difference that makes them incongruent is due to their social status that in turn results in their different lifestyles. Furthermore, we should note that complicity cannot be cleared away with rejection or denunciation. Coetzee states that "getting to the real self is a life's task" (qtd in Head 1997b, 148). That is to say, it is not a matter of mere denunciation and reprimanding.

Building upon this analysis, I argue that despite the reservations and objections he has to Joll's conduct, and despite his awakening, the Magistrate cannot claim impartiality in the affairs of the Empire, and in fact he is an accomplice to the tyrannies of the authoritarian system. He has helped sustain imperial rule, which I shall discuss in the next section. Furthermore, to illustrate his affiliation with the Empire, I shall examine his use of colonist discourse with regard to the people of the outpost, a use which is influenced by his position of power and bond with the imperial system. He views the natives from above, to him they are of lower culture and a threat as well.[35] I shall also examine whether it is possible for officials like him to atone for the tyrannies of the Empire in order to consider if it is possible to be a benevolent coloniser; are there benevolent and cruel colonisers? In the following, I analyse how the cruelties affect the Magistrate, and how he reacts to the incidents.

[35] I discussed this view from above in the previous chapter. The view from above is also to be discerned in the next chapter, where Lurie considers his Western culture to be superior to that of the blacks.

3.5 Complicity: The Magistrate as a benevolent coloniser

During the atrocities, then, the Magistrate's viewpoint appears different from Joll's. That is to say, his narrative and thoughts are represented as humane, and he seeks to vindicate himself from the tyrannies of the Empire. Although his most dramatic objection to Joll happens at the torture scene, and though this serves as a turning point for the Magistrate in then novel, his initial attempts to keep his distance from Joll already appear in his narrative from the beginning of the novel. One of the first instances in which the Magistrate tries to exonerate himself from imperial blame is when he is aware that torture is most likely taking place, and he denies hearing anything: "Of screaming which people afterwards claim to have heard from the granary, I hear nothing" (*WB,* 4–5). He attributes his ignorance to the immensity of the building and "the noise of life" in the fort (*WB,* 5). Yet even he himself is not convinced by his reasoning but concludes his thoughts in parentheses: "(At a certain point I begin to plead my own cause.)" (ibid.). In fact, he knows what is going on. He just claims ignorance. This is suggested when he says: "I am aware of what might be happening" (ibid.). At other instances, he takes practical measures to show his distance from the wrongdoings of the Empire. He openly condemns the mistreatment of the nomads by Colonel Joll and his men, for example when the first captives, are brought to the fort. Even though he knows that he is acting disrespectfully towards the Colonel, he considers Joll's conduct outrageous. Language plays a key role in exploring the mindset of the colonisers. Here, in the case of the fisherfolk, the role of their language and rendering them as a threat and painting them as other plays a role (*WB*, 18). In other words, since they speak differently from those of the Empire, they are prone to mistreatment, and this can be their guilt since the imperial army has not been able to understand their language. Hence, talking a different language is perceived as a sign of otherness. The role of mother tongue in exploring the colonisers' mindset is suggested with regard to the Magistrate and the so-called barbarian girl as well, and it hinders their relationship. In other words, speaking a different language renders the girl as other to the Magistrate, which I shall further discuss in a later section.

At some point even the Magistrate realises that his alliance with the Empire has ended. This is suggested when he says "that the false friendship between myself and the Bureau may be coming to an end" (*WB*, 84). He also states that "my alliance with the guardians of the Empire is over. I have set myself in opposition" (*WB*, 85). This is further affirmed when he seems to be happy at these thoughts and comments: "I have set myself in opposition, the bond is broken, I am a free man. Who should not smile?" (*WB*, 85). He is aware of the danger facing him. This is why he states: "What a dangerous joy! It should not be so easy to attain salvation" (ibid.). One of these possible dangers, it later appears, is imprisonment. In this respect, the Magistrate's

statements reminds us of Henry David Thoreau's (1999, 859) idea that "[u]nder a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is also a prison." The Magistrate's narrative is undermined by his own words. He believes that he is opposed to the Empire. However, according to him, in his opposition there is nothing significant. It is just a wish. The Magistrate thoughts are revealing in this regard. He states: "In my opposition there is nothing heroic – let me not for an instant forget that" (*WB*, 86). This shows conflict in his character.

The Magistrate's relationship to Joll and to his brutality and that of his men, as discussed, manifests itself in the torture scene on the city square. Here, he severely objects to the torture of the so-called barbarians. Moreover, when Joll depicts the barbarians as a threat that needs to be vanquished, the Magistrate argues that they are innocent. Rebuking Joll's operation, the Magistrate says: "*You* are the enemy, *you* have made the war, and you have given them all the martyrs they need – starting not now but a year ago when you committed your first filthy barbarities here! History will bear me out!" (*WB,* 125). Here, the Magistrate tries to differentiate between the Empire and the nomad and in so doing he swaps their traditional roles. That is to say, the Empire is illustrated as symbol of barbarism and the so-called barbarism as symbol of civilisation. The Magistrate proclaims that he is a "defender of the rule of law" (*WB*, 118) and Colonel Joll mocks him as "The One Just Man" (*WB*, 125). The Magistrate seeks to leave a legacy for posterity when he says that: "Let it at the very least be said, if it ever comes to be said, if there is ever anyone in some remote future interested to know the way we lived, that in this farthest outpost of the Empire of light there existed one man who in his heart was not a barbarian" (*WB,* 114). Depicting himself as the supporter of law, Colonel Joll repudiates the Magistrate's claim of being a supporter of the rule of law for succeeding generations and this reminds us of the conversation between Winston and O'Brien in Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

Predominantly, in his narrative the Magistrate considers the nomads to be barbari-ans and other, seeing himself as utterly different and maintaining that at least one per-son is not a barbarian in his heart – himself. Earlier, I talked about Hegel and the im-portance of enduring record of history and that history is made by writing. Joll wants to abuse his power. He will not provide any written record of the Magistrate's good intensions. He believes that the barbarians will not write either, since they cannot. Hence, there would be no record of the Magistrate's thoughts and actions in this regard. This reminds us of Hegel's notion of history and writing, when he comments that there may be people and nations with great adventures yet, there have no history since there are no written records. Here, Joll states that the barbarians cannot provide such accounts and he will not do it either. So, Colonel Joll's words entail the misuse of power: "You want to go down in history as a martyr, I suspect. But who is going to put you in the history books? These border troubles are of no

significance. […] People are not interested in the history of the back of beyond" (*WB*, 125).

The Magistrate considers the so-called barbarians as others who are insignificant and need not be respected, and similar to Joll who stresses their lack of writing capability, the Magistrate's narrative suggests the nomads have no respect for writing and have no knowledge of history:

> If the barbarians were to burst in now, I know, I would die in my bed as stupid and ignorant as a baby. And even more apposite would it be if I were caught in the pantry downstairs with a spoon in my hand and my mouth full of fig preserve filched from the last bottle on the shelf: then my head could be hacked off and tossed on to the pile of heads on the square outside still wearing a look of hurt and guilty surprise at this irruption of history into the static time of the oasis. To each his most fitting end. […] After which *the barbarians will wipe their backsides on the town archives*. […] No one can accept that an imperial army has been annihilated by men with bows and arrows and rusty old guns who live in tents and never wash and cannot read or write. (*WB* 143; emphases added)

The way the barbarians are said to use the archives alludes to the people who unlike the Empire and its agents, are illiterate, inferior to the Empire, and therefore deserve no respect. As Moses (1992, 117) writes: "The scatological touch in the Magistrate's dread vision, the barbarians wiping their backsides on the town archives, signals the arrival of a people who have no use for writing, and therefore can have no respect for, no knowledge of the history of Empire." In the words of the Magistrate, literacy appears essential in distinguishing between the barbarians and the Empire. As Moses (ibid.) points out, "the fundamental distinction between civilisation and barbarism is that between the lettered and the unlettered."

However, unlike the Magistrate's claim that the so-called barbarians are illiterate and deserve no respect, the slips he had found at the historical site (*WB*, 122) suggest that they had at least some knowledge of writing and possibly later on had lost that ability. In the Magistrate's belittling attitude towards the nomads their civilisation is inferior, and his own imperial civilisation is superior. The Magistrate says:

> Do I really look forward to the triumph of the barbarian way: intellectual torpor, slovenliness, tolerance of disease and death? If we were to disappear would the barbarians spend their afternoons excavating our ruins? Would they preserve our census rolls and our grain-merchants' ledgers in glass cases, or devote themselves to deciphering the script of our love-letters? (*WB*, 56)

The notion that writing plays a role in setting civilisation apart from barbarism is manifest in Hegel's *Philosophy of History*, based on his 1822 lecture. Hegel (2001 [1837], 76–77, emphases original) believes that what makes history relevant and sensible is writing and without it, there is no history as

> it is the State which first presents subject-matter that is not only *adapted* to the prose of History, but involves the production of such history in the very progress of its own being. […] The periods – whether we suppose them to be centuries or millennia – that were passed by nations before history was written among them […]are on that very account destitute of *objective* history, because they present no *subjective* history, no annals. We need not suppose that the records of such periods have accidentally perished; rather, because they were not possible, do we find them wanting. Only in a State cognisant of Laws, can distinct transactions take place, accompanied by such a clear consciousness of them as supplies the ability and suggests the necessity of an enduring record.

Here, we witness a complicated relationship between writing, history and the state. This reminds us of the relationship between the Magistrate and the Empire, which is also an intricate one. While he denounces it, he is also an accomplice in its atrocities.

It is clear that, like Colonel Joll, the Magistrate believes in the *existence* of the *barbarians.* This fabricated identity, prevalent in the discourse of the men of Empire, Joll and his like, seeks to rationalise the transgressions of the imperial system. It is worth mentioning that the way Colonel Joll interprets the relationship between the slips at the historical site and the Magistrate manifests paranoia in the mindset of the Empire. Joll believes that those buried historical objects could be cryptographs for contact between the Magistrate and the so-called barbarians. Here, the novel is likely referring to the paranoia of the apartheid regime, since it was highly paranoid towards the Africans and sought to dominate their identity. Head (1997a, 86) argues that one of the characteristics of the apartheid era was the repression of the South African identity and that "the concealment and misrepresentation of the traces of history is, of course, a seminal feature of apartheid mythology." This statement reinforces the allusion of the novel to the apartheid era.

Reading *Waiting for the Barbarians*, we understand that the Magistrate and the Third Bureau's representatives all have this negative outlook on the nomads (*WB,* 20). In the Magistrate's eyes, the nomads are also ugly (*WB*, 27). In contrast to his negative attitudes towards the natives, he has a high opinion of himself and considers himself to be a civilised person. Yet, in attempting to represent himself as different to Joll's troops, the Magistrate says that he has provided the people in custody with such amenities that they feel at home: "They are happy here; indeed, unless we chase them away, they may stay with us forever" (*WB,* 20). To depict himself

sympathetically, he says that life in custody is so pleasant for the prisoners that they may stay if they were not driven away (*WB,* 20). Thus, based solely on such a narrative, it can be said that the Magistrate is different from Joll, and that he understands the natives. This notion is then highlighted when he indeed helps the barbarians. However, a deeper analysis of his narrative and presenting some other critics' views in this regard throw greater light on the issue.

Some critics view the function of the Magistrate and Colonel Joll distinctly. For example, Minna Niemi (2017, 231) argues that the Magistrate represents the "civil law administration" and his method is referred to as a "law-preserving style." She further argues that the Magistrate's inner talks distance him from the "murderous ideology" of the Third Bureau (Niemi 2017, 232). Niemi believes that the Magistrate is waging an inner struggle with himself and tries to distance himself from the regime and "live with himself" (Niemi 2017, 233). Hence, based on Arendtian thoughts, Niemi (2017, 232–33) argues that although at some points the Magistrate understands his proximity to Joll, he is an asset to the barbarians and ultimately helps them. In other words, there are some good points and some bad in the Magistrate. Thus, he is a mediocre person who is neither part of the Empire nor the people. Niemi also believes that the Magistrate should think and act on his own terms. However, he does not act independently and according to his moral codes, and in this way asserts his proximity with Colonel Joll (Niemi 2017, 232). Hence, he is neither good nor bad; he is in between. This is why Niemi (2017, 231) says that through his characterisation of the Magistrate, Coetzee undermines the principles of resistance writing that is based on the "evil apartheid" and "morally good resistance." This is a third party or a third era that Niemi refers to as to as grey and is represented by the Magistrate. Hence, it can be said that in this respect, I share a sense of commonality with Niemi. As I mentioned earlier, I believe that this novel does not criticise apartheid in a realistic way. I also agree with Niemi that the Magistrate is an asset to the barbarians and at some points, as I shall explore, is imprisoned for helping a barbarian girl. Furthermore, he condemns the brutality of the Empire. Other critics, such as Watson (1986, 377), observe that the characters in some of Coetzee's fiction, including the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians,* are people who appear to be colonisers, but are not. Such criticisms are substantiated by the Magistrate when he denies that he is a coloniser:

> There is nothing to link me with torturers, people who sit waiting like beetles in dark cellars. How can I believe that a bed is anything but a bed, a woman's body anything but a site of joy? I must *assert my distance* from Colonel Joll! I will not suffer for his crimes. (*WB*, 44; emphasis added)

Nonetheless, a problem remains. Is he an accomplice and still a coloniser despite his philanthropic attitudes and actions? Is he actually allied with the Empire or not? Is he not involved in prolonging imperial domination? In my analysis, I shall look into his narrative further with regard to the Empire, and we shall see whether he is as dissociated from the Empire as he claims. Can he be acquitted of the tyrannies of the brutal system? Analysis of his narrative suggests that he adheres to the Empire despite his objections. Perhaps the following sentence would be a good starting point for discussing the Magistrate's narrative in this regard: "the false friendship between myself and the Bureau *may be* coming to an end" (*WB*, 84: emphasis added) one can see that he is not firm in announcing his dissociation with the Empire. He says, "may be," signifying some hesitation. The Magistrate's thoughts and feelings are important when we consider the torture scene at the square. While he himself is being tortured, he recollects the barbarian chief and remembers how he has been

> standing in front of the old man, screwing up my eyes against the wind, waiting for him to speak […]. The girl, with her black hair braided and hanging over her shoulder in barbarian fashion, sits on the horse behind him. Her head is bowed, she too is waiting for him to speak. I sigh. "What a pity," I think, "It is too late now." (*WB,* 131–32)

The girl's hair and clothing suggest ethnic distinctiveness marked physically and by custom. From the excerpt above we also understand that he compares his status to that of the captive barbarians. This is what Attwell (2015, 126) calls a revolution for the Magistrate. What he means is that from this moment on, due to the upheaval, the Magistrate is no longer associated with the Empire; rather, he bonds with the natives and is no longer a member of the imperial system. However, although this can be a turning point for the Magistrate, he is not fully dissociated from it. That is to say, he remains affiliated and loyal to it. Furthermore, despite his stance of *asserting his distance*, his behaviour otherwise suggests that he is indeed irreparably associated with the colonial system, as I shall explore later in this chapter.

Even before the public torture scene, the Magistrate's narrative suggests complicity. This sense of connivance and his resemblance to Colonel Joll can be found in the following scene when the Magistrate shelters the barbarian girl:

> The fire is lit. I draw the curtains, light the lamp. She refuses the stool, but yields up her sticks and kneels in the centre of the carpet.
>
> "This is not what you think it is," I say. The words come reluctantly. Can I really be *about to excuse myself*? Her lips are clenched shut, her ears too no doubt, she wants nothing of old men and their bleating consciences. I prowl around her, talking about our vagrancy ordinances, sick at myself. Her skin

> begins to glow in the warmth of the closed room. She tugs at her coat, opens her throat to the fire. *The distance between myself and her torturers, I realize, is negligible*; I shudder.
>
> "Show me your feet," I say in the new thick voice that seems to be mine. "Show me what they have done to your feet." (*WB*,29; emphases added)

This moment of reflexivity is important. The Magistrate *confesses* to his similarity to Joll, but it also foreshadows a series of events, which I shall explore in this chapter, in which the Magistrate imposes his will on the girl and forces her to reveal the truth about her experience of being tortured. In other words, the girl is tortured by the Magistrate. Curiosity about torture and the tortured here alludes to the torture during the apartheid era. As Gallagher (1991, 128) puts it: "The international discussion that thrives on delving into and exposing the crimes against humanity committed in South Africa also paradoxically thrives on the agony of the tortured." It is this enigmatic figure of those who are tortured that according to Gallagher has ignited "our moral outrage, scholarly writing and fashionable political writing" (ibid.) The Magistrate's curiosity with torture, which is made manifest in his curiosity about the signs of torture on the nomad girl's body will be further developed later in this dissertation.

Besides this curiosity, there are similarities between the Magistrate's and Joll's characters and attitudes towards the so-called barbarians. A careful analysis of the Magistrate's discursive practice reveals that it is affected by his bond with the imperial power. Moreover, such analysis divulges his real attitudes toward the prisoners to us and suggests that both the Magistrate and Joll are two sides of the same coin. In other words, using the notion of a dialectic of Empire we can see that the Magistrate and Joll are both an opposition and a partnership, both different and alike.

One of the first scenes that gives the impression of the similarities and affinity between Joll and the Magistrate is the hunting scene at the beginning of the novel which due to its role in revealing the attitudes of the participants is of utmost importance. We should note that hunting here it more a question about how you hunt, rather than hunting itself, since most of the natives are hunters themselves. In other words, the discussion of hunting between the Magistrate and Colonel Joll foreshadows the capturing of the barbarians. This is highlighted by Emanuela Tegla (2016, 35) who observes: "Hunting as a metaphor of catching barbarians or slaves goes back to ancient times." Furthermore, as Bernard Williams (1993, 107) points out about the ideology of slavery in ancient Greece, it was crucial "that the slaves were mostly barbarians, people who did not speak Greek," and "the skills involved in capturing people to be slaves are said by Aristotle to be 'a kind of hunting'." In this respect, hunting animals, which Colonel Joll and the Magistrate both talk about, refers (also) to the hunting of the barbarians and their feelings about them.

This position reminds us of the idea of hunting animals in *Dusklands* where Jacobus discloses his zeal for hunting animals, asserting that he had killed mountains of different kinds of animals. Thus, one could argue that the killing of animals at the hands of the imperial agents is comparable to the treatment of the dominated people at the hands of imperial powers in both *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians*. In other words, the hunting of animals as a metaphor for hunting native people is a recurrent theme in my analyses in these first two chapters. In "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" we saw that the coloniser, Jacobus, not only killed the animals, but hunted the nomads as well. In the text there is no evidence that nomads massacre the colonisers. This demonstrates that the empire's vision regarding the oppressed people cannot be construed as true. Using the hunting of animals as a trope for hunting the barbarians, a practice rooted in ancient times, suggests that they, Colonel Joll and the Magistrate, are pursuing the same objective – to remove the threat against the Empire.

Moreover, like his colleagues, the Magistrate has an insulting attitude toward the so-called barbarians. He views them from the vantage point of an imperial agent, even in his solitude. As a result, despite his initial sympathy towards the nomads, before long it becomes clear that he has discriminatory attitudes towards them. In fact, he adheres to the idea of hierarchy, and in his discursive practice, as l explore below, the Empire is the epitome of civilisation, and whatever does not bear the imperial stamp or its association, is uncivilised. Such a hierarchical discourse as pointed out by Bhabha (1994, 67) is part of the discourse of colonialism. The Magistrate refers to the nomads as dirty, coughing people who have a bad smell (*WB*, 21). In the previous chapter, I discussed how in the narrative of the colonisers, including Jacobus who is an allusion to a distant relative of the author, time and again the natives are said to smell fiercely, and I argued that in so doing, *Dusklands* alludes to the historical guilt of the author. In other words, a parallel can be drawn between the Magistrate's narrative here to that of Jacobus and early colonial travellers.

Analysing the Magistrate's narrative, we noticed that his ideal system of controlling a state is that of the Empire. This is suggested when he considers an alternative for the affairs in the outpost:

> It would be best if this obscure chapter in the history of the world were terminated at once, if these ugly people were obliterated from the face of the earth and we swore to make a new start, to run an empire in which there would be no more injustice, no more pain. (*WB,* 26)

The above examples allude not only to hierarchy but also to the Magistrate's role as an agent in service of the repressive imperial system. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, during the colonial era there were indeed such magistrates. Suffice here to

say that Rich (1984, 382) points out that "the Magistrate is an example of the old school of imperial officials during that era." These people genuinely believed their work to be the promotion of 'civilised' values, which the Magistrate reiterates: "All my life I have believed in civilized behaviour" (*WB*, 25).

Belittling the culture of the other was discussed in relation to "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee." This is also manifest in relation to the barbarians' culture in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. This is suggested when their culture is referred to as primitive. This is what Bhabha (1994, 67) refers to as derision. Deriding the culture of the other is rooted in the colonial era when the white colonisers considered the colonised culture to be inferior to that of the colonisers and scoffed at their traditions. On the one hand there is the Empire with its 'brilliant' culture and its men who consider themselves civilised, and on the other hand we have the so-called inferior culture of the nomads with its illiterate people who allegedly pose a threat. The Magistrate sees himself as a cultivated person, the best of all people. He has a high opinion of himself and considers himself sophisticated – the only person who is not a barbarian (*WB,* 114). Thus, although here he is thinking of the settlers and the soldiers, by default he considers the nomads as other. The categories of civilised and uncivilised, or the so-called barbaric dichotomy, as Rich puts it, was significant during the Victorian age. He argues that empires throughout history have sought a legitimising ethics to represent themselves as civilised and bring the culture of the colonised to the periphery (Rich 1984, 365–67) in order to spread imperial power. In the same way, both Joll and the Magistrate regard themselves and their culture as civilised and sneer at nomads and their culture, which is typical of cultural imperialism that we saw in the previous chapter. In the next chapter we shall see that Lurie perceives his culture to be superior over that of the blacks as well.

Significantly, at some points during his confrontation with Joll, the Magistrate's statements imply that he is party to the atrocities of his harsh counterpart, as there are some similarities between them. This is suggested when the Magistrate begins questioning Joll and tries to position himself in the role of the tortured, asking: "What if your prisoner is telling the truth […], yet finds he is not believed? *Is that not a terrible position*? Imagine: to be prepared to yield, to yield, to have nothing more to yield, to be broken, yet to be pressed to yield more" (*WB,* 5; emphasis added). Kelly Adams (2015, 170) points out that the Magistrate's query implies another position as the Magistrate is implicated in the violence:

> what it means is *he* is not believed by the collective "you," the readers to whom his thoughts are directed. The question that follows – "Is that not a terrible position"? – therefore articulates his own terrible position as complicitous in this torture as an agent of the Empire.

From this perspective, the Magistrate's concern is not as altruistic as it might seem. His further comment has a similar motive: "And what a responsibility for the interrogator! How do you ever know when a man has told you the truth?" (*WB,* 5). From this moment on, the Magistrate's view of himself changes when he realises his similarity to Joll and says that "who am I to assert my distance from him?" (*WB,* 5).

In fact, like his cruel counterpart, the Magistrate is complicit in the interrogation of the captured nomads. Using his own method, he is trying to discover any possible threats to imperial domination at the outpost. However, he does not physically torture the captives. Put another way, the Magistrate's complicity in not as blatant as that of Joll because of his ethics and difference from Joll. As Leist (2010, 207) puts it: "Because of his morals, he is unable to join in the torture openly […]. But, he feasts hiddenly on the cruelties effected by others." I believe that what Leist means by feasting on cruelties committed by other, are the moments in the novel where the Magistrate is obsessed with the signs of torture on the nomad girl with crippled feet and partial blindness. I shall return to this issue later in this chapter.

As I mentioned above, the Magistrate acts as an interrogator for the Empire. For example, when the old man is arrested, he pleads with the old man to confess and to tell the truth: "Father, listen to me. We have brought you here because we caught you after a stock-raid. You know that is a serious matter. You know you can be punished for it" (*WB*, 3).

Then he refers to Joll as a gentleman who wants to know the truth like the Magistrate, and reiterates that he needs to speak with him and tell him the truth: "Father, do you see *this gentleman*? *This gentleman* is visiting us from the capital. […] His work is to *find the truth*. That is all he does. He finds out the truth. If you do not speak to me you will have to speak to him. Do you understand?" (ibid.; emphases added). As the Magistrate persuades the old man to speak, he seems to work for the Empire, albeit with gentle measures. In other words, both the Magistrate and Joll endeavour to project their own version of truth. Similarly, when the officers find a boy in the square "wrapped in his blanket asleep," the Magistrate applies the same method in addressing the boy. He takes it for granted that the boy has tried to subvert the rule of the Empire and interrogates the boy to project his own version of the truth on the boy and discover the so-called threat. First, he tries to show that he is not a cruel person and tries to make the boy feel at ease: "I am not going to hurt you" (*WB*, 7), the Magistrate states. Then he tries to elicit the truth:

> Listen: you must tell the officer the truth. That is all he wants to hear from you – the truth. Once he is sure you are telling the truth [that you are involved in conspiracy against the rule of the Empire] he will not hurt you. But you must tell him everything you know. You must answer every question he asks you truthfully. (ibid.)

By reminding the boy of the horrifying image of massacre, the Magistrate tries to make sure that the boy is being truthful: “There is going to be killing. Kinsmen of yours are going to die, perhaps even your parents, your brothers and sisters. Do you really want that?” (*WB*, 11). The Magistrate is thus demanding that the old man and the boy reveal the secrets about possible threats against the ascendency of the Empire over the natives.

We should note that the people of the outpost have a doubtful and ambiguous relationship to the Empire, not ‘just’ one or the other. Likewise, we do not know if the old man cooperates with the Magistrate. Notwithstanding, the point lies in the way the Magistrate tries to elicit the truth, or a projection of his own version of it, which is discernible in his words. He believes it is a must to tell the truth, otherwise there might be pain. Although he seems to act out of benevolence, (*tell the truth so he will not hurt you*), he is not *ultimately* helping the natives. Rather he is maintaining imperial power with his interrogation. Here the Magistrate notices his complicity, that he is torturing the boy, and states: “I cannot pretend to be any better than a mother comforting a child between his father’s spells of wrath” (*WB*, 8), then *confessing*: “It has not escaped me that an interrogator can wear two masks, speak with two voices, one harsh, one seductive” (ibid.). Moreover, he does not use his authority to stop Joll. He asserts that they are identical, that there is no difference between himself and the torturers, despite his being sympathetic towards the oppressed.

In the next section, I delve into another aspect of his complicity which involves fantasy with the body of the female other. As discussed earlier, fantasy with the body of other can also be applied to Dawn who is obsessed with photos of the sexualisation of women and gets pleasure from looking at them. The Magistrate, then, is obsessed with the body of the other, which is a tabula of the marks of torture inscribed by the Empire. He strives to unmask the truth about the marks by imposing his will on her body. In so doing, he commits mental torture and moreover he commits gender-based violence. Given his philanthropic stances, these misdemeanours suggest conflict in his character.

3.6 Complicity: Mental torture and gender-based violence

The Magistrate’s conflicted character and his involvement in mental and gender-based violence is represented in his treatment of the nomad girl whom he takes in to protect and later on in the novel, after a hazardous journey, reunites with her family. While this can be a positive point for him, as evidence of helping the so-called barbarians and as a sign of expiation, the episode of sheltering the girl and delivering her deserve analysis. When the Magistrate is returning the girl with her family, he

notices her beauty and realises that she speaks “the pidgin of the frontier” (*WB*, 68). He wishes he had asked her to teach the language: “She could have spent those long empty evenings teaching me her tongue!” (*WB*, 68). However, he shows no interest in her language to communicate with her, to borrow Pippin’s (2010, 36) phrase as a “fellow subject.” The reason is that the language is other to him and hence the girl remains impenetrable to him.

This lack of interest and the inability to converse with her in her own language shows the limitation of such philanthropic act and the conflicted character of the Magistrate. Thus, at some point an intimate of the girl informs the Magistrate that the girl “could not understand you. She did not know what you wanted from her. […] Sometimes she would cry and cry and cry. You made her very unhappy. Did you know that?” (*WB,* 148). This does not come to the Magistrate as a surprise. The reason could be that he is aware that he has treated her from his position of power, and that his humane acts have always been under the shadow of his affiliation with that power. Moreover, had he tried to learn her native language and converse with her in her native tongue, the situation could had been different. Perhaps they could understand each other to some extent. Since they have not been able to understand each other, they are alien to one another. When she is about to leave, the Magistrate tries to understand her but in vain. They are alien: “This is the last time to look on her clearly face to face, to scrutinize the motions of my heart, to *try to understand who she really is* […]; *a stranger*; a visitor from strange parts now on her way home after a less than happy visit” (*WB*, 77; emphases added). It is for this reason, his inability to understand her, that the Magistrate states that “with this woman it is as if there is no interior, only a surface across which I hunt back and forth seeking entry” (*WB*, 46). In other words, the Magistrate confesses that the nomad girl’s body has remained abstruse to him.

The conflicted character of the Magistrate is suggested in his narrative towards the girl. Initially it can be discerned that he is humane towards her. At some points in the novel the Magistrate cogitates upon their relationship. He professes that that he has helped her for a good cause and his narrative implies that he would like to expiate the crimes of the Empire for which he works: “I wanted to do what was right, I wanted to *make reparation*: I will not deny this decent impulse, however mixed with more questionable motives: there must always be a place for *penance and reparation*” (*WB*, 88; emphases added). Here, among sexual desire, the Magistrate is trying to say that he is different, from the men of the Empire, that is, from those who tortured her. While they have tortured her and they have not done penance, the Magistrate has opted for reparation. The Magistrate also thinks that he loves the girl. But is the Magistrate humane and does he love the girl? Initially, in the same way as with the other captives, he tries to be kind to the girl. This is suggested when he says that the girl is his offspring, and offers his protection, “I gave the girl my protection,

offering in my equivocal way to be her father. But I came too late, after she had ceased to believe in fathers" (*WB*, 88).

Nonetheless, although the Magistrate offers the girl shelter, her living conditions worsen after she comes to live with him. That is to say, in spite of some critics' positive views, and in spite of the Magistrate's own thoughts on his relationship with the girl, I argue that claiming to offer shelter and protecting her cannot be interpreted as helping her. Such claims are undermined by the Magistrate's own narrative which suggests conflict in his character, that his relationship with the girl is complicated, and that she is oppressed at his hands. So, his ethical conduct in regard to the girl is questionable. We should note that the Magistrate feels guilty seeing what the Empire has done to the girl, and he knows that the source for the suffering of the girl and her kinsmen is the system for which he works. He shelters the girl in what can be interpreted as an act of reparation. It is also for expiation that he tries to reunite her with her family. He seeks atonement and wants to feel relief. His feeling of guilt account for his words at the end of the novel when the Colonel is defeated by the so-called barbarians and is about to abandon the outpost. The Magistrate's thoughts are important here while he tries to communicate with Joll: "The crime that is latent in us we must inflict on ourselves […]. Not on others" (*WB*, 160). This means that there is sense the Empire agents have committed a crime and his thoughts show signs of repentance and self-castigation.

This notwithstanding, the Magistrate's relationship with the girl is overshadowed by his affiliation with power. She is subjected to her, which is why it seems that she is being humiliated in his home. As Pippin (2010, 36) reminds us, in the case of the Magistrate and the girl "even gestures of pity and benevolence are inseparable from the relevant social positions they both occupy." What Pippin means is that the Magistrate enjoys a higher social rank, and this in turn gives him power; thus, there is power inequality here. As a result, the girl is not allowed to do anything freely. She is not only humiliated sexually but she is in custody: "Though my heart goes out to her, there is nothing I can do. Yet what humiliation for her! She cannot even leave the apartment without tottering and fumbling while she dresses. *She is as much a prisoner now as ever before.* I pat her hands and sink deeper into gloom" (*WB,* 59–60; emphasis added). This shows that even his humane behaviour is subjected to power. In fact, we cannot assume that she is alive. Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962, 75) astutely reminds us that "I cannot understand the function of the living body except by enacting it myself, and except in so far as I am a body which rises towards the world." Seen from this perspective, to be viewed as alive one must be able to have contact with the world and live freely and meet one's own needs as required. However, the girl is deprived of such possibilities. Thus, she cannot be assumed to be alive. This can account for the Magistrate's failure to have coitus with her, in the sense that she remains unreactive to him. For the same reason, one could argue that

the girl keeps silent against the Magistrate's insistence that she reveal the truth. As we shall see later in this section, the girl's silence makes her prone to torture at the hands of the Magistrate. All of this closely resembles the narrative of *Disgrace*. Due to the passivity of the victims to the oppressors, and also explicit violence in one incident of rape in *Disgrace*, one can say that we witness a sexualised power relationship.

Moreover, his narrative undermines his claim that he is compassionate to her. That is to say, here a hierarchical discourse is again manifest. On the one hand, he considers himself as the epitome of civilisation, and on the other compares the girl to an animal (*WB*, 37). Analysing his discursive practice further discloses the similarity of his narrative to that of Jacobus and moreover to the early European colonisers. He labels her with the fabricated identity of 'barbarian' and condemns her ethnicity. When he takes in the girl, the environment is new to her, but yet she adapts herself to it. However, he relates her adaptation to her ethnicity as a barbarian (*WB,* 60). Besides, since the physical appearance of the nomad people is different from the men of the Empire, like members of the Third Bureau, we notice the Magistrate says that the nomads are physically different and once more calls them *barbarians* (*WB,* 74). He also finds the girl revolting: "She smells of smoke, of stale clothing, of fish" (*WB*, 26). This reminds us of Jacobus Coetzee, who believed that the native South Africans smelled fiercely and this in turn alludes to the narrative of the early European colonial travellers to South Africa and the ideas of historical guilt of the author.

Interestingly, at some points, the Magistrate confesses his affinity with Colonel Joll with regard to his treatment of the girl. He realises that he has used the woman and has wanted to engrave himself on her as deeply as Joll has: "From the moment my steps paused and I stood before her at the barracks gate she must have felt a miasma of deceit closing about her: envy, pity, cruelty all masquerading as desire" (*WB*, 148). He sees his actions as "confusing and futile gestures of expiation" (ibid.) as he attempts to ease the guilt of his passive acceptance of the state's atrocities.

> on the surface, torture appears to be a kind of conversation in which physical and mental pain are used by one person to encourage another person to speak. The means of 'encouragement', of course, represent the *inequity of power* in the verbal and physical exchange between tortured and torturer.

Here we see the "inequity of power." On the one side there is the imperial Magistrate who offers shelter to the homeless girl. On the other side we have the girl, devastated and physically tortured at the hands of Joll and his men, and once more tortured at the hands of the Magistrate, this time mentally through his persistent questioning.

The questions disturb the girl and cause her mental pain. So, he takes his place on the side of her persecutors.

Foucault's notion of torture is worth mentioning here. Foucault (1979b, 25) reminds us that the body is "directly involved in a political field" and society. According to him the systems of punishment are "situated in a certain political economy" and in such a system it is "always the body that is at issue." He also states that power relations of a society "have an immediate hold upon it [the body]; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs" (ibid.). The Magistrate is engrossed by her body and insists on unmasking the truth about the signs of torture on the nomad girl's body. The Magistrate longs to read these signs, to find and understand the marks left on the body of the girl, to understand something of the truth about her experience as a victim of Empire. While in this process he commits torture, he also gains some truth, truth about his involvement in torture and complicity. As Urquhart (2006, 19; emphases added) puts it, his understanding of the pain that the girl has suffered by the Third Bureau allows "him to know something about the power of the government *he serves* and about the crimes for which he needs to be *redeemed*."

In this way, as Gallagher (1988, 283) writes, "Coetzee does enter the zone of torturer." The reason for Gallagher's argument is that the Magistrate puts the girl under pressure to disclose the truth about her torture. Since the girl defies his questions, the Magistrate asks, "what do I have to do to move you?" (*WB*, 47). Although the Magistrate realises that by his questioning he belongs to the realm of the oppressors he rejects his thoughts and states: "*No! No! No!* […] There is nothing to link me with the torturers" (ibid.).

Nonetheless, the fact that the Magistrate tries to elicit the truth is torture because he tries to go inside the girl's feelings, and he is determined to know what it is like to be tortured. I use the term penetrating on purpose to signify violation. The moment of his self-reflexivity when he cries at himself – *No! No! No!* – signifies that he is considering himself to be a torturer but simultaneously rejecting the idea. However, this rejection changes nothing, because he is determined enough to attain the truth and is in fact guilty of persecution.

We can see that the feelings and consent of the girl are ignored. Just the 'truth' would suffice. In the same way, Joll demands the truth regardless of the feelings and consent of the persons being questioned, not caring whether or not he is hurting them:

> I am speaking only of a special situation now, I am speaking of a situation in which I am probing for the truth, in which I have to exert pressure to find it. First I get lies, you see – this is what happens – first lies, then pressure, then more lies, then more pressure, then the break, then more pressure, then the truth. That is how you get the truth. Pain is truth; all else is subject to doubt. (*WB,* 5)

Like Joll, the Magistrate is going to persist, going to the last extremity until he elicits the truth. He says: "It has been growing more and more clear to me that until the marks on this girl's body are deciphered and understood I cannot let go of her" (*WB*, 33). As Leist (2010, 209) points out: "This strange acceptance […] of reaction toward the marks of torture as to a form of writing gives both us and the Magistrate a clue of perspective shared between the torturer and himself." Thus, he continuously interrogates the girl: "What did they do to you? [...] Why don't you want to tell me? […] Tell me [...] don't make a mystery of it" (*WB,* 34). The more the girl resists, the more the Magistrate insists on knowing the truth, and in this way, tortures her. The girl resents his interrogation and says: "You want to talk all the time!" (*WB,* 43).

The girl's resentment at the Magistrate's persistent interrogation is clear from her own words when she says that "you are always asking that question […]. I am tired of talking" (*WB*, 44). In fact, the Magistrate is seeking to decipher her. As Leist (2010, 209) puts it, all decoding is "bound to a shared system of decipherment." Can the Magistrate eventually grasp hold of this system? No, he only understands the system fractionally, he cannot forsake it or, to borrow Leist's (ibid.) term, "to stay outside." This is suggested when the Magistrate states:

> I think: "I wanted to live outside history. I wanted to live outside the history that Empire imposes on its subjects, even its lost subjects. I never wished it for the barbarians that they should have the history of Empire laid upon them. How can I believe that that is cause for shame?" (*WB*, 169)

The Magistrate's endeavour to understand the system is due to his interest in torture. That is why he perseveres in his attempts to decipher the codes on her body. Finally, under the Magistrate's persistent questioning, she partially reveals the truth about her torture. But he wants to know the truth in detail. He is not satisfied. He persists with his own torture:

> I take her face between my hands and stare into the dead centres of her eyes, from which twin reflections of myself stare solemnly back. 'And this?' I say, touching the worm-like sear in the corner. 'That is nothing. That is where the iron touched me. It made a little burn. It is not sore.' She pushes my hands away. 'What do you feel towards the men who did this?' She lies thinking a long time. Then she says, 'I am tired of talking.' (*WB*, 44)

However, he tries in vain. The girl is not willing to talk. Urquhart (2006, 13) argues that by trying to understand the girl's experience of torture, the Magistrate aims to dissociate himself from the guilt of the Empire to eradicate his complicity. According to Urquhart he seeks reparation:

> Coetzee's novel troubles the conflation of truth with justice. While the Magistrate wants his concern for the barbarians to serve as reparation, his actions do not repair the barbarian girl's eyes or feet. Instead, they serve as his penance: even if he is not forgiven by the barbarian girl, he can at least forgive himself for his own complicity in her torture and, by extension, the torture and murder of countless others.

As a matter of fact, while the Magistrate's aim, according to Urquhart holds true, I believe that his questioning of the girl annoys her, and she shows her resentment by rejecting his interrogation. So, I believe that forgiveness from the side of the girl would not be plausible here. Moreover, his questioning is due to his voyeuristic interest in interpreting the signs of torture on her body

A fruitful comparison for the Magistrate's inability to understand the body of the girl and the signs on her body, would be his inability to read the sign on the wall of the cell in which he is imprisoned. In fact, he tries to understand the oppressed here, but he cannot. He says: "Why are they in a row? Who put them there? Do they stand for anything?" (*WB*, 92). Then, he makes a realisation. He announces: "I realize how tiny I have allowed them to make my world, how I daily become more like a beast or a simple machine, a child's spinning-wheel, for example" (*WB*, 93). But he cannot. The reason is that the Empire has influenced him. It has narrowed his understanding in this regard. In the words of Urquhart (2006, 13), the Empire has confined him "by its language, its subject positions, its meaning."

The Magistrate's mind is so narrowed by the imperial influence that he can be viewed as being imprisoned. In such regulated frame of mind, he, as Leist (2010, 209) points out, has tried to read its "language and scheme," and by torturing the girl tried to achieve this goal, to no avail. Thus, what makes the Magistrate identical with the torturers is the fact that they all consider the girl, their victim, as the other. It is this otherness, according to Amnesty International, that plays a role in torturing the cap-tives. Amnesty International's (1975, 65) *Report on Torture* highlights "the refusal or inability of the torturer to recognize himself in the agony of his victim." This idea of otherness in inflicting pain on the other is emphasised by Barbara Eckstein (1989, 184; emphasis added) as well: "Beneath the rationalization of interrogation, what may well allow the torturer to tolerate or even ignore the prisoner's pain […] is an indoctri-nation in *otherness*, an atmosphere of otherness." The cornerstone for establishing otherness and consequently inflicting pain is the difference between the oppressor and the oppressed. This difference can be multifarious and in can manifest itself in terms of race, ethnicity and religion. As Amnesty International (1975, 65) points out, "if our education systems, newspaper, and politics teach us from the earliest days that the members of one race, or religion, or political belief are not to be regarded as humans like ourselves, then it will be

normal if we treat them inhumanely." In order to be able to inflict such pain, the perpetuators must have a position of power.

In *Waiting for the Barbarians* and in the two novellas of *Dusklands*, we see that those who commit torture, the American forces, Jacobus and the imperial agents, are more powerful than the oppressed, and since they assume the natives are different, they can torture them. Gallagher (1991, 129) reminds us that "modern South African society is founded on the notion of otherness." In the previous chapter, I analysed how native South Africans and the Vietnamese were perceived as different. Here, the difference of the so-called barbarians is also presented. They have different lifestyles and colour. We read that the nomad girl "has the straight *black eyebrows,* the glossy *black hair* of the barbarians" (*WB*, 27; emphasis added). In what reminds us of Jacobus's depiction of the Hottentots, and the description of the native South Africans in the European colonial travellers of the seventeenth century, the barbarians are described as people who eat different kinds of food than what is considered to be normal by the Magistrate. The nomads are also described as a people who lie in the gutter and are "lazy, immoral, filthy, stupid" (*WB*, 41).

For the Magistrate and Colonel Joll, the girl's body is the location of torture. In the words of Jolly (1996, 127), the Magistrate's fascination for the girl does not stem from a desire for her; rather, it is due to her body as a site of torture: "He worships the surface of her body, the skin, the site of the interaction between torturer and tortured." Thus, the Magistrate fetishizes the nomad girl (*WB*, 129). In the light of this argument, I look into the Magistrate's washing of her body and his feelings in this regard. In this process, he goes into rapture. He "falls asleep" (*WB*, 31) and is overcome with sleep "as if poleaxed" (*WB*, 33). He feels that he has fallen into oblivion only to "wake an hour or two later dizzy, confused, thirsty" (ibid.). Importantly, the Magistrate states that these feelings are "like death to me, or enchantment" (ibid.). and upon discovering the sign of torture on her body, his interest in her body as the location of torture is ignited. Such a view of the body calls into mind Foucault's (1979b, 42) notion of the penal system during the eighteenth century: "The body interrogated in torture constituted the point of application of the punishment and the locus of extortion of the truth." Although this definition can be in particular applied to Joll, it encompasses the Magistrate also – he is seeking truth and annoys the girl. Significantly, as Stef Creps (2007, 62) puts it, the girl's partially blinded eye and her damaged leg stimulate the Magistrate's hermeneutic interest. What Creps means is that the Magistrate's interest in the girl has its origin in torture. This is suggested when he notices signs of torture on the girl's body (*WB,* 33). This interest in inflicting pain calls into mind the concept of the "pleasure of pain" on the body of the other as stated by Bhabha (1994, 41). In fact, like Joll, the Magistrate engages in a quest for truth and in so doing he sees the girl's body as a site on which he can inflict pain in order to extract the truth. Creps (2007, 62) further points out:

> Both Joll and the magistrate […] turn the 'girl' into a text from which they believe the truth will originate, Joll through implanting the marks of torture upon her and reading the result as proof of her guilt, and the magistrate by attempting to possess the truth behind torture by reading the 'script' that Joll has 'written' on her body.

In so doing, they both commit crimes against the girl by denying her humanity. Here, a dichotomy or a hierarchy is imaginable, reminding us of Bhabha's (1994, 67) notion of the hierarchal discourse of colonialism. This ranking is based on the categories of human versus animal. They first assume that they have the authority to treat the natives violently as the oppressed are not human. Thus, Joll and the Magistrate see the girl as a means of satisfying their demands to elicit the truth. Like Joll, who believes that "the last truth is told in the last extremity" (*WB,* 105), the Magistrate believes that he must continue until the last point to obtain the truth from the girl. Hence, once again it becomes clear that both the Magistrate and Colonel Joll consider the girl as other. As Gallagher (1991, 130) puts it: "By focusing on the body, and the differences created by her torture, he [the Magistrate] has perpetuated the Otherness and put himself into the position of Colonel Joll." However, a dramatic shift in his behaviour and language happens when he himself falls victim and is tortured.

As I have discussed, the Magistrate is an accomplice. His complicity is suggested when he realises that he is also a culprit. Thus, he feels guilt and wonders how he can clean himself so that he can eradicate this feeling. Hence, he ponders how Joll eradi-cates the filth and guilt of torture after he has committed it. So, it can be said that self-critique plays a role in the Magistrate's evaluation of his complicity in the Empire's tyrannies. Pondering how Joll purifies himself, the Magistrate thinks as follows:

> Looking at him I wonder how he felt the very first time: did he, invited as an apprentice to twist the pincers or turn the screw or whatever it is they do, shudder even a little to know that at that instant he was trespassing into the forbidden? I find myself wondering too whether he has a private ritual of purification, carried out behind closed doors, to enable him to return and break bread with other men. (*WB*, 13)

The ethical point here is whether or not we can say that the Magistrate is altruistic. I think he is not. I would say that here the Magistrate ponders about Joll knowing that, like Joll, he, too, is guilty and wonders if Joll has a way to purify himself solely so that he can follow.

Furthermore, addressing Mandel, he enquires: “Do you find it easy to take food afterwards? I have imagined that one would want to wash one’s hands. But no ordinary washing would be enough, one would require priestly intervention, a ceremonial of cleansing, don’t you think?” (*WB*, 138), Thus, here while the Magistrate views both Joll and Mandel as culprits, or in Gallagher’s (1991, 126) terms believes that they are “types of Pilate,” I believe that he also would like to know how they clear themselves so that he can copy them, too.

This also means that in the Magistrate’s view the Colonel and his men are guilty. Hence, as an accomplice, if he knows how Joll eradicates the signs of guilt, he will do the same, clean the signs of guilt on his own part and expiate his sins. Thus, it is because of this wish to eradicate these signs that he wants to clean up the prison used by Joll. The Magistrates yells: “I want everything cleaned up! Soap and water! I want everything as it was before!” (*WB*, 26).

As discussed in the Introduction, one of the characteristics of postcolonial fiction is resistance to the colonial agents and their narrative. *Waiting for the Barbarians* shares this characteristic by depicting resistance to the oppressors. Apart from the fact that the Empire is brutal and the nomads are not, the resistance can be discussed with regard to Colonel Joll’s and the Magistrate’s treatment of the girl and the way she reacts. Joll has not been able to extract the truth from the barbarian girl, that is to say, she has resisted and made Joll seem helpless in this regard. Moreover, she resists the Magistrate’s pressure. In other words, the girl’s body triumphs over the Magistrate, making his endeavour to prevail over her body futile, too. Furthermore, in this way the Magistrate is rendered impotent in his relationship with the girl. The Magistrate’s impotence is further suggested when we note that he has not been able to penetrate her body, and he wonders why instead of sexual pleasure he goes into oblivion and notices how “blackness falls” (*WB*, 34), in his sexual relations with the girl. Thus, he casts doubts upon his own sexual potency. Gallagher (1988, 279) pinpoints the Magistrate’s incapability with regard to his failure to gain disclosure regarding the torture scene and his futile attempt to have a sexual relationship with the girl: “Narrated by the Magistrate, the novel is full of images of the impotency of writing, perhaps in acknowledgement of the pitfalls faced by an author who attempts to portray the world of torture.” This pitfall in narrating the torture has been caused by the barbarian girl’s resistance against the Magistrate’s will, resistance that has challenged his authority over the girl. The tyrants just can “hunt back and forth seeking entry” to no avail (*WB,* 46). A point worthy of mention here is the analogy between the relationship of the Magistrate with the nomad girl and a “little bird-woman” at the tavern. While the Magistrate exploits the latter sexually, he is impotent with regard to the former. This difference can be understood based upon what Barthes calls the writerly and the readerly text (qtd in Attwell 1993, 79). Attwell (1993, 79) shed light on this issue. At the inn the “little bird-woman” succumbs to

the agency of the Magistrate; however, the nomad girl is writerly and admits "no access to an imagined, fecund essence." In other words, the barbarian girl resists the agency of the Magistrate, and he is neither able to explore nor to penetrate her body. In the words of Attwell (ibid.), "her otherness cannot be domesticated."

As discussed above, the Magistrate fantasises about the body of the girl, going to extremes to decipher the signs of torture on the girl's body and in so doing he puts her under mental pressure. How could the Magistrate go to such extremes? I argued that the way that the Magistrate and Joll label the girl as a barbarian and equate her with animals paves the way for her mistreatment. This fabricated identity signifies that she is deprived of human rights. This point, the inhuman in the form of the human, is discussed in Giorgio Agamben's book, *The Open: Man and Animal*, where Agamben (2004, 37) argues that "the anthropological machine of the moderns" functions

> by animalizing the human, by isolating the nonhuman within the human […], that is, the animal separated within the human body itself. […] If, in the machine of the moderns, the outside is produced through the exclusion of an inside and the inhuman produced by animalizing the human, here the inside is obtained through the inclusion of an outside, and the non-man is produced by the humanization of an animal: the man-ape, the *enfant sauvage* or *Homo ferus*, but also and above all the slave, the barbarian, and the foreigner, as figures of an animal in human form.

In fact, Joll and the Magistrate view the barbarians as animals masquerading as human. Even if the appearance of the so-called barbarians is human-like, they remain animals in nature. That is why they can be violently treated and tortured to death. This animalistic view holds true for imperial agents in the previous chapter. Jacobus, as discussed, had an animalistic view towards the natives and was harsh towards them. Dawn, too, was brutal towards the native Vietnamese. Their vantage points are under the influence of imperialism/colonialism. They have learnt that the West's others do not merit humane treatment.

So, although the Magistrate sometimes tries to be sympathetic toward the girl, he and Joll, despite some differences in their attitudes, see her as a site from which they need to extract the truth. Interestingly, the (lack of?) difference between their treatment of the girl is apparent in the Magistrate's own words when he wonders "whether, when I lay head to foot with her, fondling and kissing those broken ankles, I was not in my heart of hearts regretting that I could not *engrave myself on her as deeply*" as Joll (*WB,* 148; emphasis added).

He confesses that there is no sharp contrast between his and Joll's attitudes toward the native people, in fact no contrast at all. They both just crush their victim

by putting her under pressure to draw out the truth. His understanding of the similarities in his treatment of her with that of Joll is further suggested when he assumes that his feelings are similar to those of a torturer: “Is this how her torturers felt hunting their secret, whatever they thought it was,” he wonders with a dawning consciousness of guilt (*WB,* 46). He contemplates on this while he reviews his attempts to penetrate into the girl’s psyche. Thus, he knows that he is torturing her and surmises that his feeling bears a resemblance to that of the torturers.

At times, he caresses and washes the girl’s feet. Washing of the body situates the novel within the contexts of liberal humanism in South Africa and alludes to a certain South African writer and an anti-apartheid activist. According to Attwell (1993, 81), the washing of the girl’s feet emphasises the Christian component of liberalism, alluding to Alan Paton: “The liberal Christian path to social justice through forgiveness and reconciliation has as its literary correlative the religious tragedy of [Paton’s] *Cry, the Beloved Country*.”[36] Importantly the Magistrate’s caressing of the girl’s body is a textbook example of sexual violation and indicates his erotic fantasy of the body of the female other which involves misuse of power.

In fact, one could say that not only does the Magistrate torture the girl, but he violates her privacy by sexually harassing her. Thus, his violation of the nomad girl is twofold: both her body and mind are disturbed. As Zygmunt Bauman (1993, 93) astutely states:

> Caress and physical assault (reaffirmation of alterity, and invasion of the body’s privacy) are *both* instances of touching and – as so many court cases have shown – notoriously difficult to distinguish from each other. The caress is the gesture of one body reaching towards another; already, from the start, in its inner ‘structure’, an act of *invasion*, let it be just tentative and explanatory. Being invited or welcome is not its necessary condition. Neither is its reciprocation and mutuality.

As a consequence, the Magistrate is guilty of invading the girl’s privacy as well as inflicting mental pain on her. Importantly, in caressing her, which is referred to as an intrusion, her consent does not matter and, in essence, caressing and assault are both sexual violations of another person, in this case a female other. As Attridge

[36] The purpose of alluding to liberal humanism in this context could be criticising its legacy. David Attwell (1993, 83) reminds us that by nuanced reference to Paton, *Waiting for the Barbarians* “repoliticizes and eroticizes it.” Moreover, in so doing, Coetzee displays “liberalism′s fetishization of victimhood” and reveals “it as a more humane but still essentially self-validation and dominating form of soul-formation” (ibid.).

(2004, 44) points out, the Magistrate has "a history of sexual exploitation (of women, of servants, of subordinate races)." This history refers to the history of desiring exotic concubines, that is, a sexual fantasy in connection with the misuse of power; one that we witness here and in the next chapter, in the mistreatment of the protagonist Lurie of his coloured student Melanie. As here, the power relation manifests itself in the acts of sexual abuse, as I shall explore. The act of subordination regarding the Magistrate and the nomad girl entails power inequality. In other words, power plays a role in the Magistrate's treatment of the girl, and his understanding of the girl is related to this power relation, which recalls the relation between power and knowledge as stated by Foucault and Said. According to Said (1978, 36), such knowledge is not innocent, that is to say, it cannot be construed as authentic since it is associated with imperial/colonial power. In the case of the Magistrate, as an imperial official he bonds with its power. He already assumes that the nomad girl is of lower rank, and she is therefore subjected to him, so he can treat her as he wishes. Since the girl is not willing to be molested and tortured, the Magistrate is guilty of invading the girl's privacy, torturing and interrogating both her and other barbarians.

References to gender-based violence in *Waiting for the Barbarians* suggest that in the occupation of foreign lands by imperial powers the sexual abuse of women has always been an issue. This is substantiated when we notice that this is not the first time that Coetzee alludes to such issues. In his first fictional work, *Dusklands*, Coetzee alludes to sexual violence against women at the hands of American troops in Vietnam and the rape of women during Jacobus Coetzee's punitive raid into the Land of Namaqua. *Disgrace*, too, pivots around the sexual abuse of women and colonialism. I shall return to this issue in Chapter 4 and discuss it in more detail.

3.7 Two sides of the same coin

In line with the evidence above, the Magistrate can be seen as an accomplice in the crimes of the imperial system. His complicity is further suggested when we notice that he can be viewed as the other side of colonialism. He has helped to sustain its domination through his cooperation with Joll. The Magistrate says: "I drink with him, I eat with him, I show him the sights, I *afford him every assistance* as his letter of commission requests, *and more*" (*WB,* 6; emphases added). He describes himself as "a country magistrate, a responsible official *in the service of the Empire*" (*WB,* 8; emphases added), confirming that he is an ally of the Empire. The principal difference is that he is soft, but Joll is tough. Thus, they constitute two sides of the same coin, two sides of the imperial repressive system. As the Magistrate states: "It has not escaped me that an interrogator can wear two masks, speak with two voices, one harsh, one seductive" (*WB,* 8). This dual role, the partnership of the soft and cruel sides, represented by the Magistrate and Joll respectively, is how the novel

suggests imperial domination is maintained. When Joll wants to attack and capture the barbarians, the narrator does not participate in the expedition; however, he provides them with the necessities for achieving their mission: “I supply the horses, carts, fodder and provisions for three weeks” (*WB,* 12). He also tells them how to find their way and warns them to watch the weather.

Based on the observations above, one could say that the Magistrate and Joll are doing their duty at the outpost to maintain imperial domination over the native people. Moreover, they share many commonalities despite their different approaches. The fact that imperialism has two faces, one harsh and the other soft, can be discerned even in the Magistrate’s own words. He states that it is possible to kill and bury all these bad-looking barbarians and thus be rid of them, which is an old method of imperial powers to treat dominated people. This is one face of the Empire. According to the Magistrate, the other face is revealed when he maintains that there is no need for Joll to be so harsh, and that there is another way for the new men of the empire to treat these people, that is, with benevolence. The Magistrate asserts that he belongs to the latter group:

> The new men of Empire are the ones who believe in fresh starts, new chapters, clean pages; […] I order that the prisoners be fed, that the doctor be called in to do what he can, that the barracks return to being a barracks, that arrangements be made to restore the prisoners to their former lives as soon as possible, as far as possible. (*WB,* 26)

He belongs to the new phase of imperialism, which is why he tries to improve the sanitary and living conditions for the prisoners. Old representatives of the Empire, as he announced earlier in the novel, treat their prisoners brutally. However, he says the “new men” of the Empire have new ways. That is why he depicts himself as different from the old members. In this way he avows that he belongs to the benevolent side of the Empire, although, like his brutal counterparts he has a derogatory attitude towards the so-called barbarians.

In other words, the Magistrate is a part of a system from which he has gained advantages. In fact, he seeks to beautify the repressive system, to achieve what Joll has not been able to do violently. It is in his role as a so-called sympathetic coloniser and also to expiate for his sense of guilt that he decides to deliver the girl back to her family, an action that results in his own imprisonment and torture. In fact, as Hania Nashef (2010, 25) notes, his relationship with the girl helps him develop a “certain character and understanding” and he becomes “sympathetic to a presence that is outside the confines of the empire.” The girl plays a key role in this. The Magistrate makes his plan, which involves going outside the territory defined by the Empire. According to Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (2004, 322): “We can be thrown into

a becoming by anything at all, by the most unexpected, most insignificant of things." Applying this to the Magistrate reuniting the girl with her family does not seem to be in the eyes of the Magistrate an issue that could turn the Empire against him, but for the Empire it is. That is why upon his return he is accused of conspiring with the enemy. Accordingly, in the eyes of the Empire, he turns from a friend and an affiliate to an enemy. So, one aspect his action of reuniting the girl with her family, besides his attempt at expiation, is also to endeavour to give colonisation and himself a humanitarian face and, at the same time, dissociate himself from the likes of Joll.

In short, although the Magistrate denies being Joll's ally and tries to be different, they have significant similarities. He is involved in the interrogation aimed at discovering and eliminating a threat against the interests of the Empire, and, like Joll he inflicts suffering on his victim. In other words, they are two sides of the same coin. In his introduction to Memmi's *the Colonizer and the Colonized,* Sartre (2003, 21–22) writes that

> there are neither good nor bad colonists: there are colonists. Among these, some reject their objective reality. Borne along by the colonist apparatus, they do every day in reality what they condemn in fantasy, for all their actions contribute to the maintenance of oppression.

This statement holds true for the Magistrate. Though the attempt is ineffective, he tries to deny that he is a part of the oppressive system. However, in the eyes of the dominat-ed people, the likes of the Magistrate are also viewed as colonisers and are accordingly blameworthy. Watson (1986, 378) discusses how colonised nations have a particular kind of attitude towards dissident colonisers. They view them as a continuum of the same generation and more or less guilty. He writes that they find themselves within a dominated nation "hamstrung and worse" (ibid.). In reality, the Magistrate and his like are accomplices in the brutality of the imperial system to which they belong.

All in all, being a benevolent coloniser does not absolve the Magistrate from the responsibility for colonial violence. He has helped to maintain the Empire and is involved in its tyrannies. Memmi (2003, 38–39) identifies benevolent colonisers as collectively responsible in his critique of colonial domination:

> To tell the truth, the style of a colonization does not depend upon one or a few generous or clear-thinking individuals. Colonial relations *do not stem from individual good will or actions*; they exist before his arrival or birth, and whether he accepts or rejects them matters little. […] No matter how he may reassure himself, "I have always been this way or that with the colonized," he suspects,

> even if he is in no way guilty as an individual, that he shares a *collective responsibility* by the fact of membership in a national oppressor group.

Although it can be inferred that the Magistrate is an individual with ethical challenges, we should note that he is part of the imperial system and adheres to it. Thus, in the same way as Memmi argues that the colonial conditions "do not stem from individual good will or actions," according to Sartre (2003, 21–22), the Magistrate is a colonist and bears responsibility for the crimes of the Empire. Hence, it can be said that Coetzee's novel challenges the efficacy or the ultimate rationale of the Magistrate's self-professed critical stance against his harsher colonial colleague. When the Magistrate indicts Joll for violence and torture, he responds by declaring the Magistrate to be naïve and a hypocrite – "Thus speaks the judge, the One Just Man" (*WB,* 114) – who is sneered at by the people.

Memmi (2003, 63–64) writes that having exposed the outrage of colonialism, the benevolent coloniser can no longer accept being a part of the oppressive group. In so doing, he may openly protest against the tyrannies. This is what happens to the Magistrate who is himself arrested and beaten by the Third Bureau. Having observed the tyrannies of the Third Bureau, he protests against them. However, according to Memmi's definition of a soft coloniser, the Magistrate is still a coloniser and complicit in the oppression of the colonised. In other words, we cannot assume that the Magistrate is a coloniser, yet he is a good person since at some points he has been compassionate towards the native people. One cannot draw a line to divide the colonisers into either bad or good based on their behaviour or treatment of the dominated people. In this way, it makes no difference whether the Magistrate considers himself as a part of the imperial system or not. The Magistrate himself *confesses* that he is the other side of colonialism: "I was the lie the Empire tells itself when times are easy, he the truth that the Empire tells itself when harsh winds blow. *Two sides of imperial rule*, no more no less" (*WB,* 148–49; emphasis added). In other words, the Magistrate makes a clean breast of the duality of the Empire, and this shows his ethical standing. After all, by referring to himself as the other side of the Empire, he is admitting his complicity as well.

Michail Marais (2013, 126) comments that the fact that the Magistrate is – from the very beginning of the novel to the end – recognised by his official title is evidence of his involvement in the imperial system. Furthermore, the fact that he repeatedly questions his actions and motives shows his involvement in a system based on tyranny.

To have a better understanding of how the Magistrate is involved in – and how loyal he is to – the imperial system we should note that his adherence to a system based on tyranny is maintained toward the end of the novel. His involvement and loyalty are palpable even after his release from prison and after his being tortured;

he still believes in the Empire as the epitome of civilisation. Objecting to the military operation, the Magistrate makes a query and wonders: "What is the used of the textbook military operation, sweeps and punitive raid into the enemy's heartland," after which he dreads that "we can be bled to death at home" (*WB*, 110). This is to say, his objection is not due to philanthropic reasons, but he is concerned about the destiny of the Empire and its personnel. We see that his affiliation with the Empire is so strong that even after Colonel Joll jails him, the Magistrate still believes in the stereotype of civilised versus barbarians and remains faithful to the imperial system. This is suggested when he considers a substitution for the Empire in the outposts. Even in this case, his ideal alternative is that of an empire. He wishes to "make a new start, to run an empire where there is no more injustice, no more pain" (*WB,* 26). We see that he is not detached from the Empire, remaining faithful to it, even though he is being cruelly tortured. Despite all this, the ideal world he imagines is an imperial one. Importantly, when the Magistrate comes out of the imperial citadel, he maintains that there is no worthy place outside of the Empire and states that "there is nothing for me outside the walls but to starve" (*WB,* 110). Neither the Empire in *Waiting for the Barbarians* nor Jacobus and Dawn in *Dusklands*, are sympathetic towards territories outside of Empire. After all, like Dawn, Jacobus considers himself as "a tool in the hands of history" (*Dusk*, 165). He views the remote parts of Africa where he ventures as dark places and assumes that he is the person to shed "light to what is dark" (*Dusk*. 164). As discussed in the previous chapter, the result of this civilisation mission was catastrophic for the native people whom he views as "people of limited beings" (ibid.).

Last but not least, to understand the role of the Magistrate and his involvement in a system based on tyranny, we should note that during the colonial and the apartheid eras, there were real magistrates who fulfilled administrative and judicial duties, like the Magistrate *in Waiting for the Barbarians*. In this sense, Coetzee was aware of the role of such real magistrates and fictionalised them in the character of the Magistrate. Significantly, the Magistrate states his judiciary and executive duties as follow: "I collect the tithes and taxes, administer the communal lands, see that the garrison is provided for, supervise the junior officers who are the only officers we have here, keep an eye on trade, preside over "the law-court twice a week" (*WB,* 8). These are the duties of the magistrates during the apartheid era as *South Africa 1983: Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa* lists:

> Appointed by the Minister of Justice, magistrates have both *judicial* and *administrativ*e powers; in most country districts they are the local representative of many State departments and perform such duties as granting and paying pensions, collecting revenue, and providing relief programs for farmers and children. Magistrates preside over both criminal and civil cases, and have

> jurisdiction over all offenses except treason and murder. (qtd in Gallagher 1991, 120; emphases added)

So, the fictional Magistrate had real-life counterparts; like him, they were of soft nature, but aimed to administer and maintain the empire's rule. To achieve this goal, they pretended to take the side of the dominated people and make them believe that they understood them. At the same time, they believed in the superiority of the colonisers over the colonised because they judged themselves to be civilised. In the same way, the Magistrate considers himself and his own demeanour as standard and civilised and views the nomads and their behaviour as barbarians and primitive people. In other words, by fictionalising the truth about the administration of colonial order through the judicial system, represented in the novel as the Magistrate, the novel makes an astute comparison between the fictional and the real magistrates, thereby alluding to the white hegemony of the apartheid era.

To sum up, *Waiting for the Barbarians* shows the complicity of the Magistrate in the tyrannies of the Empire in the confessional genre. This complicity stands for the idea of the historical guilt of the white South Africans in post-apartheid South Africa. The novel also depicts gender violence. Here, compared to the previous chapter, we see that the Magistrate feels guilty and tries to compensate for the crimes of the Empire by offering the nomad girl shelter and by returning her to her people. In this chapter, I have shown that the Magistrate has a conflicted character. While he feels guilty and tries to atone for his sin, at the same time he tortures the girl and commits gender-based violence. In brief, his narrative suggests he is the other side of colonialism.

In Chapters 2 and 3, I have focused on the way in which complicity and gender oppression have been depicted in the *Dusklands* and in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. In analysing these issues in Chapter 1, we observed no punishment. Furthermore, the perpetrators had no guilty conscience; Jacobus committed it as revenge while Dawn enjoyed and poked fun at the scenes of gender-based violence. However, in Chapter 3 the Magistrate seeks to compensate for his actions and those of the Empire and do penance. Also, gender-based violence coincides with imperial/colonial expansion in Chapters 2 and 3. The characters are powerful since they are affiliated with such systems. In Chapter 4, I shall analyse gender oppression as the heritage of the white supremacy era. This is to say, unlike the previous novels, gender-based violence does not coincide with imperial expansion, rather the setting is after the collapse of the white supremacy era. However, the legacy of that era creates problem in the novel. In the next chapter, as I shall explore, we enter a new era. So, we shall see that in the case of the protagonist Lurie, legislation and the legal apparatus punish him. I shall also look into the idea of historical guilt in the light of the sexualisation of the protagonist Lurie's daughter, Lucy, and the attack on her farm.

4 Gender Oppression, the Legacy of Colonialism and Apartheid in Coetzee's *Disgrace*

> In a society of masters and slaves, no one is free. The slave is not free, because he is not his own master; the master is not free, because he cannot do without the slave. […] At the heart of the unfreedom of the hereditary masters of South Africa is a failure of love.
>
> Coetzee (1992b, 96–97)

> The expansion of Europe was not only a matter of 'Christianity and commerce', it was also a matter of copulation and concubinage.
>
> Hyam (1990, 2)

Although the age of colonialism and apartheid has for the most part ended, its enduring effects are still with us. The era has left wounds in the former colonies that requires surgical analysis. The misuse of power by white colonisers, including predominantly sexual abuse of black women, was one of the many crimes committed during the colonial era.[37] The sexual abuse of women has resonated in the world of fiction. Coetzee is one of the many authors who deal with such issues.

In his most controversial book to date, the Booker Prize winning novel *Disgrace* (1999; references will be given parenthetically, preceded by *Dis*), Coetzee deals with such momentous issues as sexual violence and animal rights, as well as colonialism and its lasting effects on contemporary South Africa. Unlike *Waiting for the Barbarians*, which had no specific time and location, *Disgrace* is specific in this regard. It is set in post-apartheid South Africa. Set in Cape Town and in the Eastern province in the late 1990s, *Disgrace* depicts the rape of a black student, Melanie, by

[37] For discussion of the sexual violence of black women by white men and black men of white women and how the colonial British judiciary system discriminated against the perpetuators and took side with the whites and in effect helped plan the seeds of gender-based violence, refer to Scully (1995) and Thornberry (2010).

David Lurie, a white professor at Cape Technical University, and the gang rape of his daughter, Lucy, by three black men. Some critics and South African politicians have condemned the novel for presenting a bleak picture of the country and for depicting black men as rapists.

In this chapter, I analyse the novel with regard to colonialism and apartheid, and their legacy. I suggest that rape in the novel should not be viewed in isolation from the root causes that prompt such violations; rather, I analyse the violence in relation to an inextricable relationship between colonialism, apartheid, abuse of power and sexual violence. In other words, the novel suggests the roots of the problem need to be sought in centuries of domination and oppression. This point is highlighted when we note that, some whites have blamed the blacks for the widespread gender-based violence and have tried to create hysteria against them. On the other hand, due to the misdeeds of their ancestors, white South Africans are considered as culprits. That is to say, they are deemed by some to carry a historical guilt. Thus, the notion of historical guilt, which I analyse in relation to the white protagonist of the novel and her daughter, can refer to the whites in post-apartheid South Africa, as we shall see. Furthermore, the novel suggests that a new era has arrived, in which rape can be prosecuted and the power has shifted towards the blacks.

4.1 *Disgrace* and the Rainbow Nation

Disgrace (1999) is arguably the most prominent and studied work in Coetzee's oeuvre. It is also the most controversial of his works, and one of the most widely debated novels of the twentieth century. This novel, as Simone Drichel (2013, 266) puts it, has been in the foreground of literary criticism. Since the publication of the novel, the world has witnessed the proliferation of analyses of this novel by the literary establishment. These criticisms cover a range of critical thoughts, from feminism to animal rights, from Postcolonial Studies to intertextual analyses of South African and pastoral life.

Disgrace was published in the wake of the democratic elections of 1994, four years after Nelson Mandela was released from prison. When he was elected as the first president of South Africa, many expected that works of literature would contribute to the promotion of the "Rainbow Nation," which Mandela himself had put forward: friendship, peace and harmony between different ethnicities. To the dismay of the critics, politicians, journalists and those who believed in the Rainbow Nation, *Disgrace* was not of that category. They saw that the novel depicted the segregation of blacks and whites prevalent during colonialism and the apartheid era, when blacks were considered a potential danger to the whites and who could harm the 'civilised' whites physically and, more to the point here, who were potential rapists of white women.

While the concept of the Rainbow Nation remains a hopeful one, in reality South Africa has not yet achieved such an ideal. In post-apartheid South Africa, violence and rape remain serious issues. The situation in the country is so dire that rape has become the primary means of transmitting HIV/AIDS to young women and girls. In a study of violence against women, Lillian Artz writes:

> Violence against women [which roots in the colonization and the apartheid epoch] is still the most pervasive, yet least recognized – at least substantively – human rights abuse in South Africa. Every day women are murdered, physically and sexually assaulted, threatened and humiliated [...]. The social, cultural and political structures and institutions in countries like South Africa continue to openly support gender inequality, despite political rhetoric to the contrary. (qtd in Graham 2012, 132)

Significantly, media reports documenting high level of sexual violence in South Africa increased noticeably in the national press during the late 1990s. We should note that gender-based violence happens across the world not just in South Africa. However, what is important here, is the prevalence of gender-based violence in the country.

Antjie Krog (1999, 18–19) who is a prominent South African author and academic writes about the environment of violence in South Africa that her family particularly had experienced:

> My brother shakes his head. 'I don't know. I become aware of things in myself that I never knew were in me …' […]. 'Like feeling daily how my family and I become brutalized … like knowing that I am able to kill someone with my bare hands … I am learning to fight, to kill, to hate […].' […] 'When Mandela was talking about white and black morality, how whites only care when whites die, he should have added: blacks don't care if whites die … but what is worse, they also don't care if blacks die.'

Similarly, as Tegla (2016, 186) puts it, "gang rape, persistent, subtle forms of racism in both whites and blacks – are, unfortunately, not restricted to the fictional domain."[38] That is to say, widespread gender-based violence and black and white

[38] In fact, there have been age-old accusations against blacks as savages, as potential rapists that have survived to this day. As bell hooks (2004, xii) writes: "Seen as animals, brutes, natural born rapists, and murderers, black men have had no real dramatic say when it comes to the way they are represented. They have made few interventions on the stereotype [...]. At the center of the way black male selfhood is constructed in white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy is the image of the brute – untamed, uncivilized, unthinking and unfeeling."

segregation do exist in the country, they are not just in the imagination of authors, even though several authors have fictionalised and addressed these problems as is the case with *Disgrace*. It shows that the legacy of the past is still with us and affects society.

The fact that blacks in South Africa blame the whites for crimes suggests that the past still matters, highlighting Coetzee's work. The role of the past in contemporary South Africa is suggested in a conversation that Krog (1999, 19) had with a black friend. When Krog asks him about his opinion about stealing and how it can be considered an honour he replies:

> I don't know. But what I do know is that I grew up with the notion that stealing from the whites is actually not stealing. Way back, Africans had no concept of stealing other than taking cattle as a means of contesting power. But you whiteys came and accused us of stealing – while at the very same minute you were stealing everything from us![39]

That crime is commonplace in South Africa resonates in Lurie's thoughts after the gang rape of Lucy. We read in the novel that violence and rape "happens every day, every hour, every minute, he tells himself, in every quarter of the country" (*Dis,* 98).

In the real world, it is not only some blacks who have hatred for whites. Some whites still adhere to the idea of the superiority of the whites over the blacks, and this is not confined to South Africa. For example, Mayor of Toronto, Mel Lastman, made an obnoxious remark before travelling to Kenya in July 2001 to support Toronto's bid for the 2008 Olympics: "What the hell do I want to go to places like Mombasa. [...] I'm sort of scared about going there. [...] I just see myself in a pot of boiling water with all those natives dancing around me" (qtd in Stratton 2002, 93–94). The negative stereotypes are persistent and widespread, indeed.

Thus, if the wounds of the past were to be healed, the legacy of the past together with the roots of the problem would need to be identified and analysed – a part of which I carry out here in my analysis of *Disgrace*. In fact, the novel prompts us to grasp a holistic view of the political, social and historical situation of the context of the sexual violence in the novel; that they are not merely unrelated incidents of sexual harassment of women. It is within this holistic view that Lucy's silence about her rape is understandable. In so doing, it emphasizes that neither blacks nor whites are rapists by nature and addresses the roots of the problem in the white supremacy era. It shows that rape is a cross-racial phenomenon, establishing a relationship between tyrannies of the past and their burgeoning effects in the present. That is to say, while

[39] In *Age of Iron*, Coetzee (1990, 49) alludes to the roots of black aggression: "[W]ho made them so cruel? It is the whites that made them so cruel."

colonialism is viewed as having set the stage for rampant gender-based violence, it challenges such clichés as blacks as rapists of white women, or white men as rapists of black women. Referring to the impact of the tyrannies of the past and their influence in the present in the context of South Africa, Terry Bell and Dumisa Buhle Ntsebeza (2003, 345) write: "If the past is not dealt with, it will return to haunt us." Following this call, Coetzee is dealing with the past to avoid being haunted in the present.

The experiences of the past traumatise people, and many contemporary South Africans bear unconscious repressed memories of the past that continue to affect their behaviour. E. Ann Kaplan (2005, 106) is perceptive in her investigation of trauma when she writes that Nicolas Abraham's idea of the phantom is pertinent in postcolonial studies. She writes that "in transgenerational trauma subjects are haunted by tragedies affecting their parents, grandparents, or ancestors from far back without conscious knowledge" (ibid.).

Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok (1994, 173) define introjection as a process by which someone manages to get through a trauma or loss. A hindrance to successful introjection is a lack of exorcism of the past through talk and colloquy. This failure, they argue, paves the way for the existence of a phantom that is passed from parents to children, from generation to generation. This phantom, which predominantly acts in the unconscious, depicts the consequences of silence, and returns in order to "bear witness to the existence of the dead buried within the other" (Abraham and Torok 1994, 175). This theory can be applied to the context of colonisation, to the white colonisers and the dominated nations, in this case, the South Africa that has experienced centuries of oppression, and left its people traumatised. Furthermore, with the failure of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, there has not been any chance for proper introjection of the crimes of the past; moreover, bringing the culprits to justice has hampered reconciliation.

I argue that in *Disgrace*, Coetzee foregrounds such traumas and the repercussions of white misdemeanours in the colonial and the apartheid era. The novel makes people aware of the legacy of that era. Thus, it can be said that the novel sheds light on the buried materials in the unconscious of South Africans, which has affected their behaviour. On this account, instead of scolding one another, both blacks and whites should criticise the violent legacy of colonial era, especially the widespread gender oppression. In other words, I argue that on the one hand there is black peril in the novel, on the other there is a counter narrative, the white peril. By black peril I mean the threat of black rape or, in the words of Gareth Cornwell (1996, 441), "the threatened rape of white women by black men," which was prevalent in early twentieth century in South Africa. By white peril I mean what Sol Plaatje defines as the "hidden sexual exploitation of black [and coloured] women by white men which has existed for centuries" (qtd in Graham 2003, 437). Black peril will be

discussed in regard to the sexualisation of Lurie's daughter and white peril is discussed in regard to Lurie's sexual abuse of his coloured student Melanie.

Also, by mocking the TRC, as I shall discuss later in this section, the novel addresses its inefficacy and suggests that the assailants must be brought to justice. Since this has not been achieved, and since people have buried issues from a violent past in their memories, their behaviour might be affected. For example, they can be heartless. The heartlessness of people in contemporary South Africa resonates in *Disgrace*. In the novel, people do not have compassion towards each other, which makes life violent. Rosalind, Lurie's ex-wife, warns him that he should not expect support from her nor anybody else in the country: "Don't expect sympathy from me, David, and don't expect sympathy from anyone else either. No sympathy, no mercy, not in this day and age" (*Dis*, 44). Since the people are heartless, they can be hostile and hurt each other. Due to the violent past and segregation during the era of white hegemony, this hostility is more evident between racial groups. Thus, on the one hand, as a result of oppression of the blacks at the hands of the white colonisers, whites could be attacked by some blacks, on the other hand, some whites in contemporary South Africa still hold such ideas about the white colonisers as depicted in the novel. In fact, the first step towards reconciliation would be to make people aware of this problem and then solve it, since as long as people lack compassion for each other, violence is inevitable.[40]

As in *Disgrace*, in *The Age of Iron* the theme of repressed memories of the past is similarly manifest. In *The Age of Iron*, Mrs Curren seems to be annoyed with atrocities of the past. The memory has been passed to her by her parents; in other words, she has inherited it: "A crime was committed long ago. How long ago? I do not know. But longer than 1916, certainly. So long ago that I was born into it. It is part of my inheritance. It is part of me. I am part of it" (Coetzee 1990, 164). In the same way, in *Disgrace* the buried memories of the past have been passed from generation to generation, to Lurie and the rapists of his daughter, as I explore later in this chapter. The buried motives which cause the sexualisation of Lurie's student, Melanie, and the gang rape of Lucy, is what I call the dark legacy of colonialism in *Disgrace*. It is through colonialism and apartheid that the notion of historical guilt can be analysed in the novel as well. Thus, it is pertinent to emphasise that one of the messages of the novel is to encourage people not to be biased in their attitudes and to dismantle clichés.

Since, in the novel gender-based violence plays a key role it is pertinent to briefly address gender-based violence and the background to desiring women of colour by

[40] Mrs Curren in *Age of Iron* (1990) also talks about one of the sinister heralds of post-apartheid South Africa, which is a lack of the compassion and love that the people of the country should have for each other (see Tegla 2016, 191).

the colonial travellers to South Africa. After all, desiring coloured women becomes manifest in the characterisation of the protagonist, Lurie. Moreover, Coetzee himself has commented on the role of colonialism in escalating gender-based violence in South Africa.

4.2 Gender-based violence in South Africa and the background to desiring exotic concubines

On April 27, 1994, South Africans were able to participate in democratic elections and voted for the first time. This was a turning point for the country torn apart by white supremacy. Although the transition from a totalitarian regime to a democratic state was not expected to happen peacefully in a country with its different ethnic groups who had experienced years of repression, a surge in the amount of gender-based violence against women in the post-apartheid era in the late 1990s shocked the world. Statistics illustrate South Africa as having more sexual violence than any country not at war. Graham (2012, 3–4) writes that in 1996, the International Police Organization (Interpol) reported that among countries selected for a survey, South Africa had the highest number of sexual assaults. A similar result was confirmed by the Victims of Crime Survey in 1995. In contemporary South Africa, rape occurs on a daily basis. The gravity of the situation is clear in the words of Charlene Smith, a *Mail* and *Guardian* journalist and rape-survivor whose story was published in 1999. When she disclosed the provocative story of her rape to the public, it drew such a degree of attention that, as Graham (2003, 434) puts it, she was chosen as a "spokesperson for South Africa on the subject of sexual violence and its consequences." In a report written for the *Washington Post*, she states that rape has become the primary cause of women and young girls contracting HIV (ibid.).

While sexual violence remains a serious problem, it seems that some whites have been inclined to blame blacks for this problem and the media reinforced this. Covering cases of black rapes extensively, some whites and their media laid the blame on the blacks and sought to depict them as the sole culprits. Importantly, according to Graham (2003, 435) in 1999, the African National Congress (ANC) reported that whites and their media have continued to propagate negative depictions of black Africans. One occasion demonstrates well that some whites, by falsifying the truth, aimed to depict blacks as rapists, is the story of the publication of Doris Lessing's *The Grass Is Singing*. Graham (2003, 436–37) writes:

> In 1950, Doris Lessing's New York publisher, Alfred Knopf, told Lessing they would consider *The Grass Is Singing* for publication if she would change it to accommodate an explicit rape of the white female protagonist by Moses, a black man, "in accordance," as the publishers put it, "with the mores of the country."

> Lessing refused the attempted revision, claiming: “the whole point of *The Grass Is Singing* was the unspoken devious codes of behaviour of the whites.” When the novel came out in paperback, the writer was shocked to find on its front cover “a lurid picture of a blond cowering terrified while a big buck nigger […] stood over her, threatening her with a panga.”

This shows that some whites seek to accentuate the threat of blacks and depict them as rapists. Such racism seems to be successful in distorting the truth, in this case by choosing a controversial front cover without the consent of the author. Those looking at the book, even if they were not to read it, would get a certain impression from its cover. Some white media has striven to this end, covering cases of black rape sensationally. Charles van Onselen (1982, 50–52) argues that the purpose of such narratives has been to intensify hysteria and to bolster repressive legislation against the blacks in South Africa. As I shall discuss later in this section, *Disgrace* suggests that the media should remain neutral in depicting gender-based violence.

Although Onselen’s studies and depiction of blacks in the white media concerns the early twentieth century, negative depictions of blacks have been prevalent in the country in the rest of the century, too. As Graham (2003, 435) puts it, the Black Peril refers to the period of social hysteria that was common in South Africa from 1890–1914. However, analogous fears have been recurrent in the media and politics of the country afterwards and these anxieties reappeared in the transition period of the 1990s as well.

In contrast to what the white media propagates, white colonisers have had a long history of sexualisation of black and coloured women. According to Graham (2014, 220–23), European history of desiring ‘exotic’ women goes back centuries, as early as the sixteenth century, although desire for the exotic is not rare among humans, driven for example by the need for exogamous breeding patterns. ‘Exotic’ desire here implies a hierarchical discursive relationship toward the desired body (Huggan 2001, vii).

In discovering foreign lands, European colonisers lacked compassion for the colonised peoples. Moreover, they viewed Africa as a mysterious place, one that provoked their curiosity. According to Achilles Mbembe (2001, 3), in the minds of many Europeans, Africa was perceived as a monstrous place, “the very figure of the ‘strange’.” This is especially evident in the figure of Adamastor in Luís Vaz de Camões’s epic poem *Os Lusíadas* (1572), which celebrates the Portuguese imperial voyages, especially Vasco da Gama’s discovery of a sea passage to India in 1497–1498. The poem is replete with attempted ravishments as it depicts Portuguese imperial conquest (ibid.). Hints of such tendencies can be discerned in European travel expeditions as well. Referring to Anne McClintock, Graham (2012, 12) writes: “Noting Columbus’s observation that ‘the world was shaped like a woman’s breast’,

McClintock points out that early Europeans' narratives of exploitation were gendered and mapped as metaphysics of gender-based violence.

In fact, traces of Europeans desiring exotic women go back as far as the Middle Ages. Black women in particular seemed different and provocative to travellers. Benjamin Tudela, a Jewish traveller in twelfth-century Egypt, wrote about the sexuality and cohabitation of the blacks, and he associated blacks with concupiscence:

> There is a people […] who, like animals, eat of the herbs that grow on the banks of the Nile and in the fields. They go about naked and have not the intelligence of ordinary men. They cohabit with their sisters and any one they find. […] And these are the black slaves, the sons of Ham. (qtd in Gilman 2010, 16)

In the following centuries, white men sexualised and objectified black bodies, as suggested in the cartography of that era. As Peter Fryer points out, "the European idea of a monstrous African sexuality is evident in the 'naked figures of Africans on more than one fifteenth-century map'" (qtd in Graham 2012, 20). It seems that the European interest in the black woman's body reached its climax during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As Carmen Nocentelli Truett (2004, 5) writes: "The sixteenth and seventeenth century witnessed a widespread fascination – not to say obsession – with private parts and private practices of non-European [especially black] peoples." Noting Nocentelli Truett's argument about interest in the non-Europeans' bodies, Graham (2012, 21) writes that early instances of gender-based violence definitely "have been between colonizing men and colonized or slave women."

Eighteenth-century white travellers to Africa also saw black women's bodies differently to those of white women. For example, travellers to southern Africa, such as Le Vaillant and Barrow, were concerned with the sexuality and sexual organs of black women: "They have described the so-called 'Hottentot Apron', a hypertrophy of the labia and nymphae caused by manipulation of the genitalia and considered beautiful by the Hottentots and Bushmen as well as tribes in Basutoland and Dahomey" (Gilman 2010, 17). French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, describes black people as having a "lascivious, apelike sexual appetite" (Gilman 2010, 16). This line of interest continued in the nineteenth century among both the elite and the common people. For example, French naturalist and anthropologist Julien-Joseph Virey wrote about the sexuality of the black people in his article "Négre" in the multi-volume *Dictionnaire des sciences médicales* (1819, vol. 33, 398) as follows: "[T]he Negresses […] take voluptuousness to the point of lasciviousness hitherto unknown in our climates. The genitals of both sexes are also

more developed than those of the whites."[41] As Gilman comments: "In Virey's dictionary article, the 'Hottentot' woman is seen as the epitome of sexual lasciviousness" (in 2010, 17). In fact, a fascination with the black woman's body seemed to permeate society and captured the eyes of people in a way that equated black females with the buttocks. Sander Gilman (2010, 20) observes: "When the nineteenth century saw the black female, it saw her in terms of her buttocks, and saw represented by the buttocks all the anomalies of her genitalia." It is clear then that the Europeans of that time, even the scientists, objectified black women, rendering them vulnerable to exploitation.

I have argued that the roots of gender-based violence needs to be sought in the colonial era. There is yet another factor that played a pivotal role in fostering gender-based violence at that time – considering black women as white men's property. In colonial times, black women were regarded as commodities deprived of human dignity, to be purchased and sexually abused or to be paraded naked for their sexual attractiveness. A black South African woman, Saartjie Baartman – or, "The Hottentot Venus," – was exhibited naked on a tour across Europe in the early 1800s for her sexual attractiveness. Her body, especially her buttocks and sexual organs, looked so provocative and different from those of the Europeans that before her death, that according to Carlos A. Miranda and Suzette A. Spencer (2009, 913), Georges Cuvier "commissioned an artist to make a plaster modelling of her body." Even after her death, her sexuality was at the centre of attention, since, as Gilman (2010, 18) writes, after the autopsy of Baartman's body, Cuvier had given her genitals to the French Academy of Sciences, and those who paid a ticket to see her could see "the nature of the labia." Thus, she was dehumanised and objectified; people could go to see her and fantasise about her amputated sexual organs, as if they were mere objects.

Baartman was not the only African woman who was commodified by European colonisers. In a manner rather similar to Baartman, another Hottentot woman went on exhibition across Europe in 1829, and as Anne Fausto-Sterling puts it, some other Hottentot women "ended up on the comparative anatomists' dissection table" (qtd in Schiebinger 2000, 205).[42] Viewing black women as a commodity during the colonial era, deprived of human dignity and ideal for sex, is also a theme in *Dusklands*, as I discussed in chapter 2 under section 2.7. Furthermore, some specific cross-connections to *Dusklands* seem beneficial here. How does the depiction of gender-

[41] Translation by Joel Kuortti: "les nègresses qui portent la volupté jusqu'á des lascivités ignorées dans nos climats. Les organes génitaux de l'un et de l'autre sexe sont aussi plus développées que ceux les blancs."

[42] Saartjie Baartman's remains were returned to South Africa in 2002, after a long process, see Mehdi Ghasemi (2016, 81).

based violence in *Dusklands* compare with the representation of these issues in *Disgrace*? In *Dusklands* the assailant was a white colonial traveller in South Africa, and here the sexually abused woman is the offspring of the white colonisers. In other words, it is almost as if Lucy is paying for the crimes committed by Jacobus Coetzee and the likes (as well as her own father). As I shall explore, Lucy seems to pay for the crimes of the past and her assailants seem to have come to exact revenge. I shall return to this theme in a later section in this chapter.

The allure of black women's bodies had caught the eyes of the white colonisers, and they were regarded as the property of white men. Their will was subjected to that of the white colonisers, who assumed that they had the right to sexually exploit black women, depriving them of their subjectivity and agency. In this way, the colonisers played a pivotal role in the escalation of sexual violence in South Africa. The role of the colonisers in setting the stage for the forthcoming occasions of sexual violence is perceptively referred to by Coetzee (1996, 81–82) when he writes that colonialism "fractured the social and customary basis of legality, yet allowed some of the worst features of patriarchalism to survive, including the treatment of unattached (unowned) women as fair game, huntable creatures." The enslaved black women were totally deprived of human dignity, considered as commodities with no will of their own, like puppets in the hands of their owners.

The idea of ownership of enslaved women who could be sexualised can be seen by juxtaposing the Dutch abolitionist Baron R. W. van Hoëvell's words with those of Joost Coté's. van Hoëvell says that in slavery, "[t]he individual lacks any civil rights, is a creature without nationality or fatherland, […] has absolutely no will of his own; […] is and remains […] not a person but a thing, an object that one buys and that the owner may use as he will" (qtd in Coté 2014, 2, 372). While this depiction illuminates the living condition of both genders, the situation for women was worse, since slave owners assumed that enslaved black women could be sexually violated. This is corroborated by Coté (2014, 378), who argues that some colonisers viewed the colonised women as prostitutes by nature, which meant the women should be slaves, child-bearers and concubines. Thus, the motives behind the sexual abuse of women were twofold: sexualisation and the ownership of black women's bodies. Sexual violence against women was further exaggerated and institutionalised by the discriminatory laws enacted by the British colonial authorities; however, discussing such discriminatory laws goes beyond the scope of this dissertation.[43] It is the juxtaposition of these factors that created the rampant gender-based violence

[43] For a detailed discussion of the role of the discriminatory laws with regard to fostering gender-based violence in South Africa and the role of colonial judges in this, refer to Thornberry (2010) and Scully (1995).

in South Africa during the reign of the Dutch East India Company and the British colonial administration.

4.3 Critical reception of *Disgrace*

In the wake of the publication of *Disgrace*, there were many reactions to it, some critics condemned it for giving a negative account of post-apartheid South Africa. Negative criticism of *Disgrace* claimed that by drawing on the negative depiction of blacks, that is, drawing on the ubiquitous racist attitudes of whites towards blacks during the era *of* white supremacy, *Disgrace* reinforces the depiction of blacks as negatively as possible, as criminals and vandals who are the rapists of white women. Thus, the image of the country presented in the novel, in the view of such critics, is in sharp contrast to what is expected from post-apartheid-era literature: instead of sketching an inspiring image of the society, the novel produces a bleak one. Nobel Laureate Nadine Gordimer states that in the novel,

> there is not one black person who is a real human being […]. I find it difficult to believe, indeed more than difficult, having lived here all my life and being part of everything that has happened here, that the black family protects the rapist because he's one of them […]. If that's the only truth he could find in the post-apartheid South Africa, I regretted this very much for him. (qtd in Mardorossian 2011, 72)

Even the African National Congress protested against the novel, saying that the novel spread negative depictions of blacks. The ANC condemned the novel in its report to the Human Rights Commission's Inquiry into racism in the media. In the report, Minister of Public Enterprises Jeff Radebe quoted the former minister J. B. M. Hertzog's statement that "[t]he African is an 8-year-old child […], this faithless, immoral, uneducated, incapacitated, primitive child is *reported on* by eminent South African novelist JN Coetzee [sic] in his 1999 novel *Disgrace*" (qtd in Attwell 2002, 333–34).

The novel received further disapproval from some journalists. For example, writing in the *Sowetan,* Aggery Klaaste maintains that Coetzee's *Disgrace*'s "'substance is that of a typically disgruntled Afrikaner' and found 'the story of black men raping a white woman […] quite offensive'" (qtd in McDonald 2002, 325). Klaaste also claimed that Coetzee was "totally cynical" (ibid.).

It should be noted that not all critics found fault with *Disgrace*. Internationally it was a huge success, and Coetzee received the Nobel Prize in Literature four years after it was published. To give a sense of the scholarly criticism that the novel has attracted, I mention here some examples. Some critics, like Poyner (2009, 149), have paid attention to aspects of the novel in relation to the Truth and Reconciliation

Commission (TRC). She compares the discourse and treatment of Lurie at the committee of inquiry to those of the TRC and its truth-hearing sessions and writes that the discourse of the novel is similar to some other African novels that "call into question the viability of the TRC." Poyner (2009, 150) argues that *Disgrace* pinpoints the flaws of the TRC and the inefficiency of its measures: "Typically such narratives point up a key flaw of the process of the TRC: that discourses of truth and reconciliation are premised upon a Christianized, private ethics of confession and are therefore inequitable in the public sphere of the TRC."

Attwell (2015, 214–15) also explores how *Disgrace* depicts the TRC. He argues that the novel germinates from the seeds of this committee. Then, he goes further than criticising the TRC and argues that *Disgrace* alludes to Thomas Hardy's (2009) poem about the Titanic disaster, The Convergence of the Twain" (1915).[44] I argue that the novel refers to the TRC. I probe into this aspect of the novel in more detail later on; however, I am not concerned with the relation of *Disgrace* to Hardy's poem.

Other critics have paid attention to such issues as feminism, the rights of animals, or postcolonial questions. Janet Migoyan (2021, 3) analyses the economical and emotional mechanism of sexual violence in *Disgrace* and argues these mechanisms are fuelled by postcolonial hate and that post-apartheid South Africa faces challenges to reconcile the crimes committed during the whites' hegemony era. In her article "Postcolonial *Disgrace*: (White) Woman and (White) Guilt in the 'New' South Africa," Georgiana Horrell (2008, 17–18) traces the figure of the white woman in the context of South African texts and tries to read meanings that have been written on her body in *Disgrace*. Horrell (2008, 18) argues that the figure of white women in some post-apartheid South African literary texts which she has read, including *Disgrace*, is "etched textually with guilt" and that her 'place' in the 'system' would seem to be crucial to the effecting of reparation." Clarkson (2009, 111–20) argues that both Hardy and Coetzee have been inspired by Darwin's theory of evolution and that in both *Jude the Obscure* and *Disgrace* the ethical relationship between humans and animals is depicted. Thus, the sentiment of Jude, with regard to his relationship to other creatures, is compared to that of Lurie in *Disgrace* when he is expelled from his job and works at animal clinics, where he becomes compassionate towards animals.

Critics have also investigated the novel in terms of contextual analysis. The majority of the works in this regard "focus on the novel's engagement with South Africa's pastoral tradition, specifically the Afrikaans *plaasroman*" (Drichel 2013, 301). Among the acclamations it has received are the words of the Booker Prize judge Kaufman, who called it "a millennial book" because "it takes us through the

[44] For further discussion of the issue, refer to Attwell (2015, 214–20).

20th century into a new century in which the source of power is shifting away from Western Europe." He also states that "the novel is an allegory about what is happening to the human race in the post-colonial era" (Lyall 1999, A.4c).

In my approach, despite the condemnations that *Disgrace* received after its publication, I analyse the problem in relation to its roots, that is, colonisation and apartheid, and show that the novel depicts the legacy of that epoch. Furthermore, in a unique approach, I argue that sexual violence in the novel has entered a new phase. In this phase, unlike the previous novels studied in this dissertation, the incident of the rape of a coloured woman, Melanie, is protected by law and legislation. The case is brought to the committee of inquiry and the perpetuator is punished, which heralds the arrival of a new and a better era. Moreover, I address the media coverage of the incidents of sexual violence in the novel and argue that the novel prompted the media to remain impartial in their coverage of the incidents of sexual violence. I return to these issues later in this chapter.

The impact of the colonial era in fostering gender-based violence is highlighted in the novel when we note that its setting covers areas which used to be colonial Britain, that is, British South Africa, the area that had been a British colony from 1806 to 1910 when it became part of the Union of South Africa, a dominion and still partly ruled by Britain until the 1931 Statutes of Westminster. With this choice, as Peter D. McDonald (2002, 322) puts it, Coetzee "gave the story a historically significant *regional* setting – it takes place mainly in Cape Town and Grahamstown; that is, in key centres of what was the British 'Cape Colony'." The novel thus alludes to the role of colonial Britain in sexual violence, since during the colonial era sexual violence against women increased. To sum up, in post-apartheid South Africa, rape is widespread. It is not only blacks who commit it on the white women; whites also perpetrate it (Graham 2003, 434–35). In consequence, many women and young girls contract HIV. It is said that Coetzee's novels are responses to the realities within the South African society. For example, Attwell (2015, 217) argues that *Disgrace* is a bitter reflection of the situation in South Africa. He also argues that Coetzee himself at the time of writing the novels wondered "whether the realism he was writing was a result of insidious intimidation inherent in the South African material" (Attwell 2015, 216). Attwell (2015, 224) argues further that the South African context in *Disgrace* and *Waiting for the Barbarians* indicates Coetzee's concerns about the future of his home country. These concerns are, according to Attwell, both political and personal. As argued in the previous chapter, *Waiting for the Barbarians* is not explicitly about South Africa, and, unlike Attwell, I argue that *Disgrace* is not just about the author's concerns either. I argue that while the novel shows the situation in South Africa, it can be interpreted in the line of the argument in this chapter as well.

I argue that by depicting the sexual abuse of black women, that is, Lurie's exploitation of Soraya and Melanie, and the sexual abuse of a white woman, that is, Lurie's daughter Lucy at the hands of three black men, the novel alludes to the legacy of colonialism and apartheid in modern South Africa. On the one hand, Lurie's mistreatment of black women resembles the mistreatment of black women during the era of colonisation at the hands of white colonisers in the sense that he objectifies black women sexually. Thus, Lurie regards Melanie as his property, just like black women were regarded as commodities under colonialism. On the other hand, I argue that the attack on Lucy's farm has its roots in the tyrannies of whites during the colonial and apartheid eras. Lucy believes that whites in modern South Africa owe blacks a debt. Thus, she alludes to the possibility that the attackers might have come to collect a debt. In so doing, she refers to the crimes that her ancestors committed during colonisation and apartheid. Such transgressions in turn subjected white people in contemporary South Africa to attacks by blacks. The two eras, colonialism and contemporary South Africa, are inextricably linked. Lucy believes that her rape is the price she has to pay for the historical debt, which can be interpreted as historical guilt. It is also the price she has to pay for living on the farm. That is why she refuses to report her rape, as I explore shortly. Lurie believes that the history of wrongdoings, which is the history of colonisation, has prompted the attack. I shall discuss these issues further later in this chapter. To sum up, gender-based violence enters the third phase here and the roots of sexual violence in the novel need to be sought in the centuries of domination and oppression antecedent to the novel's events.

4.4 *Disgrace* and sexual violence

In Coetzee's post-apartheid novel *Disgrace*, David Lurie, a 52-year-old white Professor at Cape Technical University, seems to be interested in black women and sexually abuses them. As with the previous characters, Dawn and the Magistrate, the notion of sexual fantasy in connection with power can be discussed here. I shall discuss this in in connection with Lurie's sexual abuse of Melanie and the way in which he fantasises about sex with her and her sister. Moreover, like the early colonisers, who were interested in black women's bodies, Lurie has a history of desiring exotic women. He assumes that he can own and buy their bodies without taking responsibility for them. Significantly, Sol T. Plaatje observes: "Many white men in colonial South Africa exploited 'coloured concubines' without offering the women long-term security or caring whether or not they became pregnant" (qtd in Graham 2003, 437). At a very early point in the novel, he has intercourse with a woman, a prostitute named Soraya, who has a "honey-brown body, unmasked by sun" (*Dis*, 1). He knows how to solve the problem of his sexuality and in indulging

his sexual demands, his power is manifest. He has arranged their meetings and is satisfied with how the affair has been organised. He drives to visit Soraya on Thursdays at Windsor Mansions. The timetable for the sessions is also fixed: "Punctually at two p.m." (ibid.). All the things he does seem to be meticulously prearranged, and he is pleased with the arrangements since he finds Thursdays joyful: "In the desert of the week Thursday has become an oasis of *luxe et volupte*" (ibid.).[45] Since everything concerning his intercourse with Soraya proceeds as he wishes, he finds the relation-ship "entirely satisfactory" (ibid.) and a repository "of a moderate bliss" (*Dis*, 6).

Lurie's interest in an exotic woman's body is suggested in his treatment of one of his coloured students, Melanie. At one point, the narrator describes Lurie's thoughts on Melanie: "Strange Love! Yet from the quiver of Aphrodite, goddess of the foaming waves, no doubt about that" (*Dis,* 25). The narrator says further that Lurie's "heart lurches with desire" for Melanie (*Dis,* 20). Coetzee deliberately keeps the ethnic identity of Soraya and Melanie ambiguous. We can assume that "honey-brown" Soraya is not white but Melanie's identity as a member of the Cape Coloured community is not quite so clear. In his desire for black women, Lurie tries to perceive as being Melanie as black as possible. He deliberately changes the name Melanie to Melani, which is explained as meaning "the dark one" (*Dis*, 18; from ancient Greek 'mélās', μέλᾱς). The name of his daughter Lucy is also associated with light. Thus, we have a coloured woman whose name is associated with blackness and is raped by a white man, and we have a white woman whose name is associated with whiteness and is raped by black men. So, the first instance could stand for white peril and the second case for the black peril. As Graham (2003, 437) observes, "playing on tropes of blackness and light," the names of the two women denote the threat of black rape and white rape, which were prevalent during colonialism and apartheid.

Compared to his relationship with Soraya, Lurie's misuse of power is more strongly manifest in his sexualisation of Melanie. Misusing his power as Melanie's teacher, he sexually abuses her. As her teacher, he has access to her personal information, and he surreptitiously tracks down this information. Lurie's abuse of power is also suggested when the narrator says that "if she is behaving badly, he has behaved worse […], he is the one who leads, she the one who follows. Let him not forget that" (*Dis*, 28). It is his power that has enabled him to be the leader in his relationship with Melanie, and in fact she is subjected to him. Moreover, as Melanie's teacher, she trusts him. Thus, when he encounters Melanie on the street

[45] This is an allusion (for some reason described as "self-satisfied" by Emanuela Tegla [2016, 185]) to Charles Baudelaire's (n.d. [1857]) line – "Luxe, calme et volupté" (poem 49, l.14)) – in the poem "L'invitation au voyage" from *Les Fleurs du mal*, and subsequently to Claude Monet's painting "Luxe, calme et volupté" (1904).

and invites her to his home, she accepts the invitation. He speaks with Melanie from a position of power. Here again, Lurie assumes that she is subjected to his will and that she must obey him. At some point, when he asks Melanie to stay the night with him, she asks why she is supposed to stay, and Lurie replies: "Because you ought to" (*Dis*, 16). He would like to have intercourse with her even though she does not want it. However, when she wants to leave, he does not allow her to and rapes her. Lurie's way of treating Melanie has roots in the colonial era. Here, Lurie has a similar attitude toward Melanie as the white colonisers had to black women: he claims ownership over her and her beauty, and she does not have agency over it. In reply to Melanie's enquiry as to why she should stay, he says she has to share her beauty: "*A woman's beauty does not belong to her* alone. […] She has a duty to share it" (ibid.; emphasis added).

The idea of his ownership of Melanie is further suggested when Lurie watches her acting in a play and claims – somewhat incestuously, too, – her success as that of his own: "[W]hen they laugh at Melanie's lines he cannot resist a flush of pride. *Mine*! he would like to say, turning to them, as if she were his daughter" (*Dis*, 191). Thus, at his home, when he calls her with the aim to seduce her, for a moment he becomes hesitant to "let her go" (*Dis*, 18). Morally he knows that that "he ought to let her go" (ibid.); however, the notion that Melanie's beauty does not belong to her and that "she does not own herself" (*Dis*, 16) reverberates in Lurie's mind. Thus, he becomes determined to sexually exploit her. When Lurie wants to sexually abuse Melanie, she rejects him, but he imposes his will on her. She cannot do anything – she is like prey at the mercy of its predator. That is why the narrator says that it was "as though she had decided to go slack, die within herself for the duration, like a rabbit when the jaws of the fox close on its neck. So that everything done to her might be done, as it were, far away" (*Dis*, 25).

Here, she is repulsed by the situation, it is against her will. Initially she says "no, not now!" then, to make him let her go, she warns him that her cousin may come. By making such pretexts, and saying no, she aims to prevent him from having intercourse with her. In this sexual exploitation scene, Lurie is the hunter and Melanie is the hunted. The hunter has more power and exerts its will on its victim, and here Melanie is the victim, compared to a rabbit who falls prey to a fox. Lurie's misuse of power in his sexual abuse of women is further suggested when he refers to the conditions of a woman in such situation as someone who is dying while he is "exercising himself" on her (*Dis*, 9).

Lurie's thoughts and imagination are important as they suggest that he has raped her. After the intercourse, Melanie feels that Lurie has contaminated her, and she tries to get rid of the blemish imposed on her. The narrator says Lurie is sure that "Melanie is trying to clean herself of it, of him. Thus, he sees her running a bath, stepping into the water, eyes closed like a sleepwalker's" (*Dis*, 25). This makes sense

if we accept that he has ruined her. Through Melanie's reluctance before the rape, and her feelings afterwards, Lurie understands that he had violated her. Thus, Lurie imagines that by taking a shower, symbolically, she tries to remove the filth and shame that he has imposed on her. In so doing, she tries to return to purity. Thus, the sexualisation scene is described as "undesired to the core" for Melanie (*Dis*, 25). Moreover, after the rape, Melanie's hatred for Lurie is ignited. This becomes evident when Lurie goes to see Melanie in a play and her boyfriend announces that she cannot stand Lurie and recommends him to leave or "Melanie will spit in your eye if she sees you" (*Dis*, 194). Furthermore, as there had been no love in the relationship, for a moment a feeling of remorse comes over him: although he initially does not consider sexual abuse of Melanie as rape, rather as an affair, his thoughts later on suggest that he recognises that he has raped her and the intercourse is described as "[a] mistake, a huge mistake" (*Dis*, 25). Such an unconsented sexual act constitutes rape. Referring to seduction and the zeal of some men for the sexual abuse of young women, Søren Kierkegaard (2013, 70) writes: "This momentary enjoyment is a rape, even if not outwardly but nevertheless mentally, and in a rape, there is only imagined enjoyment; it is like a stolen kiss, something nondescript." In the case of Lurie, we see that the enjoyment is 'momentary', as later on Lurie understands that he had made a mistake, that his enjoyment is affected by his reflections. Moreover, Lurie's sexual abuse of Melanie is worse than a 'stolen kiss', it is intercourse to which she does not consent. Accordingly, Melanie's portrayed seduction is rape. In fact, in the three sexual abuse scenes it is in the second one that the word rape appears in the narrative. While in the first instance Melanie is "passive throughout" (*Dis*, 19), in the third she is "quick, and greedy for experience" (*Dis*, 29). However, in the second, the word rape is mentioned.

This rape has consequences for Lurie as I shall discuss later in this chapter, but significantly affects Melanie. After his sexual abuse of Melanie, Lurie is not initially aware of the devastating effects of his wrongdoing on her and invites the girl to attend the classes regularly like before. However, Melanie gazes at him in bewilderment. She is on the verge of saying: "*You have cut me off from everyone* […]. *You have made me bear your secret. I am no longer just a student. How can you speak to me like this?"* (*Dis*, 34).

Lurie is not only fascinated by Melanie's charm, but also enchanted by her sister's beauty, and he also fantasised about sex with her, which further suggests that he is enthralled by coloured women – that is, he sexualises and objectifies them. Lurie refers to Melanie's sister as "Desiree, the desired one" (*Dis*, 164). When he sees Melanie with her sister, "he gets to his knees" in front of them, "[w]ith careful ceremony […] and touches his forehead to the floor. […]. He raises his head. The two of them are still sitting there, frozen. He meets the mother's eyes, then the daughter's, and again the current leaps, the current of desire" (*Dis,* 173). Lurie also

imagines both of them, Melanie and her sister, in bed: "Fruits of the same tree […]. The two of them in the same bed: an experience fit for a king" (*Dis*, 164). In this way, he somehow acknowledges "the 'pain he has caused' and the '*long history of exploitation*' of which his abuse is a part (*Dis*, 53; emphasis added)," and it was these "two things Farodia Rassool, a key member of the university disciplinary committee, wished him to confess publicly" (McDonald 2002, 328).

Frustrated Professor Rassool, herself of Indian descent, tries to get Lurie to confess that in objectifying coloured women, he had caused pain to Melanie and had left her traumatised. His attitude toward Melanie and her sister can be situated in the wider context of colonisation, when black women were objectified. His misuse of power clearly alludes to the misuse of power during colonialism and the apartheid era. As Armstrong (1994, 35) puts it, due to misuse of power a culture of domination and aggression was cultivated in the apartheid years in which white men aggressively sexualised black women. Armstrong also argues that due to the same culture nourished by apartheid, white women also were sexualised by black men. In addition, I believe that we should consider the idea of patriarchy and domination of the body and the subjectivity of women's will to that of men – these issues can also be applied to the novel since, as discussed, Melanie's will was subjected to that of Lurie. Subsequently, we shall see that the black men dominate and impose their will on the body of Lurie's daughter. In this later case, the notion of historical guilt can be applied to the sexualisation of Lurie's daughter as well, which I discuss in a later section. In the light of the misuse of power during the era of white hegemony, we can understand why Lurie is compared to a king, and the women, Melanie and his sister, are depicted as if they were subjected to him, as ideal objects for his enjoyment. For the same reason, the "long history of exploitation" can refer to the long history of colonisation where black women were sexually exploited, or as Graham (2003, 438) puts it, it can also point to "abuses of power in the university that are as old as the academic profession." However, I argue that Graham's statement holds true for both kinds of abuse of power. After all it was during the colonisation era that women were regarded as the property of the whites.

Lurie's treatment of Melanie, and his attitude to her sister, evokes a history in which white colonisers found black women provocative. Similar to his ancestors, Lurie finds Melanie and her sister alluring. In what seems to be flirting with Melanie's sister, he tries to establish a relationship with her and to express his sexual desire for her by bowing in front of her. Furthermore, Lurie assumes that he has the authority to avail himself of the bodies of the women he sexually desires without taking responsibility for them or respecting and caring about their feelings. This has strong echoes in Plaatje's comment about sexually exploited black women during colonialism being left without long-term security by white men displaying no concern for their feelings (qtd in Graham 2003, 437). Lurie's lack of respect and

concern for Melanie is demonstrated when he rapes her. When he wants to carry her to the bedroom she struggles and is not willing, but nothing would stop him. Thus, the intercourse is illustrated as "undesired to the core" (*Dis*, 25). Nonetheless, Lurie does not try to compensate for his wrongdoing. In an act that can be interpreted as his lack of concern for the gravity of the situation or for the girl and her feelings, he avoids making the full apology which might have helped to heal the wounds he had caused.

We should note that racial mixing, which was outlawed under nineteenth-century imperialism, might earlier have been something much more ordinary. Moreover, according to Pamela Scully (1995, 335–59) in the nineteenth-century Cape Colony, colonial authorities were very tough on the blacks who raped white women and were determined to punish the offenders. However, they were reluctant to do so in the case of the rape of a black woman since they did not see the sexual exploitation of black women as rape. Such racist mistreatment was prevalent during apartheid as well. That is to say, the apartheid judicial system, similar to the Colonial Britain judicial administration, discriminated for or against rapists based on their colour. Heather Reganass, the director of the South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation Offenders, points out that "right up to the moratorium on the death penalty, no white man had ever been executed for rape, whereas the majority of people who were hanged in this country were actually hanged for raping white women. If a rape victim was black, it wasn't really seen as quite as serious as if she had been a white woman" (qtd in Armstrong 1994, 35).

Based on the above, it can be said that apartheid nourished the seeds of gender-based violence planted during the colonial era. It is not within the scope of this dissertation to discuss further the policies of the apartheid against women that have helped widespread gender-based violence. Suffice it here to mention an example to illustrate the scale of gender-based violence committed under apartheid and briefly allude to the negative role of apartheid on families and the educational system. According to Armstrong (1994, 38) the apartheid regime used horrible methods in the sexual abuse of women who participated in demonstrations against the regime. For example, according to Reganass, at least one in four women – and probably even half of the women – were raped during the Soweto uprising (qtd in Armstrong 1994, 36). Apart from committing rape and discrimination, apartheid nourished gender-based violence by affecting the families negatively. Rape involves abuse of power; thus, family and education can teach men not to abuse their power. Unfortunately, in this regard apartheid played a role in disintegrating the family, and as Heather points out:

> The erosion was engineered by the authorities when they broke down communities, and moved people, and tore them away, from their roots. We are

> harvesting today the apples of the trees planted by Verwoerd in 1948, when he created the apartheid system. You've got to start with young children teaching them to respect women, teaching them, teaching them to respect people, talking with them about violence. (qtd in Armstrong 1994, 39)

Hence, disintegrated families, insufficient education, a discriminatory judicial system, and a culture which motivated aggression prompted widespread gender-based violence in post-apartheid South Africa. It can be said that apartheid did not recognise the rape of black women as rape, and sometimes apartheid deliberately sexualised black women. Hence, in many cases in effect black women did not file lawsuits against their rapists since they knew that the apartheid judicial system would not administer justice. There were other secondary reasons for not complaining; however, I shall stop short of discussing these.

Such a racist mentality is manifested in Lurie's attitudes toward the sexual abuse of women. As we shall see later in this section, when his daughter Lucy, a white woman, is assaulted by black men he is very upset and encourages his daughter to seek legal recourse against the rapists. However, in the case of his sexual exploitation of Melanie, he is entirely insensitive and does not even consider it to be rape. He refers to it as an affair. As Carine Mardorossian (2011, 77–80) puts it:

> The singling out of one rape along with the normalization of the other, has everything to do with Lurie's racialized and racist perspective. […] That he identifies his daughter's violation as rape while being unable to recognize his own act as such exposes his sexism as well as his racism. The contrast in his response to each instance of sexual violence shows that it is his investment in racist ideology that allows him to do what his investment in sexist norms prevented him from doing earlier, namely, call rape, rape.

In other words, in Lurie's eyes sexual violation of coloured women like Melanie is not an offence. Instead, he views only the raping of white women as rape and as such to merit prosecution. In contrast to what he recommends to Lucy, Lurie never assumes Melanie has such rights to prosecute or sue him regarding her sexual abuse; even worse, he imagines that he has not hurt the girl and that that everything is fine with her. It can be said that Coetzee's possibly suspect creative decision was to have Lucy raped in a brutal way by intruders; however, as I have shown in my analysis, Coetzee is quite clear about the fact that the uncertainty is only in Lurie's own colonialist perspective.

One should note that the consequences of Melanie's sexual abuse are much more serious than those for Lucy. After the attack, Lucy seems to be coping with the matter and is motivated to start afresh and, unlike Melanie, does not suffer from depression.

In other words, despite the discrepancy between the damage to the mental condition of both victims, Lurie encourages Lucy to prosecute the assailants, but for Melanie, he tries to pretend that everything is normal. This attitude, as Mardorossian (2011, 80) puts it, “exposes him as a white anachronism of the colonial era.”

As a result of Lurie’s sexual abuse of Melanie, she falls into depression and abandons her studies. At some point, at what can be called *a milestone shift in comparison with the previous novels*, the girl and her father lodge a complaint with the university against Lurie. He is summoned to the university’s committee of inquiry, which resembles and seems to parody a hearing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and is asked to make a public apology. In the words of Drichel (2013, 275), this hearing in the novel is “a thinly veiled allegory of the many hearings conducted by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.” The TRC (1995–2003) was a secular governmental justice body whose chairman was Archbishop Desmond Tutu. It was, as Dominick LaCapra (2001, 45) puts it, “in its own way a trauma recovery center,” which aimed to heal the rift in the society caused by the apartheid system with its roots in ages of white hegemony and oppression. As Fanon (1963, 35) says, "decolonization is always a violent phenomenon.” Thus, it can be said that Tutu aims to avoid a violent process and promote instead “forgiving but not forgetting” (“Forgiving” 1996, 17).

The objective of the TRC was to provide the victims of the apartheid regime with an opportunity to relate the agonising truth about the atrocities they suffered. Forgiveness played a pivotal role in those sessions as well.[46] The motto of the TRC as suggested by its tittle was “Truth: the Road to Reconciliation.” Urquhart (2006, 1; emphasis original) states: “The singular *truth* here implies that an empirically verifiable truth can be found.” Hence, if we consider truth and roads, we can surmise that telling the truth was perceived to lead to reconciliation. However, the duty and aims of the TRC were beyond what were entailed by LaCapra and its motto. The TRC was affiliated with Justice Administration, and it was deemed to do justice. As Urquhart (ibid.) states: “The TRC is a part of South Africa’s Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, so one of its aims from the outset has been to achieve justice in South Africa. Exposing truth, it implies, brings not only reconciliation but also a sort of justice.” However, in practice it failed in administering this justice.

This part of the novel is a parody in the sense that it criticises the TRC for not seeking justice and retribution, implying that the TRC failed to meet the demands of the families of the victims and was not able to heal the wounds of the apartheid era.

[46] The title of Desmond Tutu’s memoir about his time at the TRC, *No Future without Forgiveness* emphasises, as Simone Drichel (2013, 153) puts it, that forgiveness was a key issue during the TRC hearings.

For many of those who were affected by apartheid violations, the TRC was supposed to be an opportunity to lodge complaints against the oppressors and to seek justice. However, to their dismay, during the TRC sessions the emphasis was on telling the truth, not on seeking justice. This caused resentment among the families. For example, the family of Steve Biko who was killed in custody by the apartheid regime objected, as Boehmer (2002, 345) puts it, to the amnesty for the perpetrators, and they "went on to seek conventional justice in a court of law for Biko's killers." This policy of the TRC was also denounced by the prominent South African politician professor Kadar Asmal, who asserted that reconciliation in the country is not plausible "without the imposition of social justice in favour of the oppressed" (ibid.). Although the committee of inquiry in *Disgrace* is not a criminal court, like the TRC it is not seeking justice for the rape of Melanie by Lurie. This is suggested when we note that they urge him to make a public apology and punitive measures are only taken when he refuses, and he gibes at their demand. Only at that point is he expelled from the University.

It is worth mentioning here that one could make a distinction between seeking truth as presented in the case of the committee of inquiry and Lurie on the one hand and Colonel Joll seeking truth on the other. In other words, in the case of Joll, seeking truth and torture can be viewed as an allegory of disclosing the colonisers' mindset. However, in the case of the committee it alludes to a deficiency in political affairs and organisations.

In the case of the committee of inquiry and Lurie, Foucault's (1979b, 128) ideas of punishments can be discussed. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault argues that the purpose of punishment, from the vantage point of the authorities of a nation, is to reinstate the "obedient subject" through power that "is exercised continually around and upon him." It seems that the committee of inquiry seeks to make the offenders, in this case Lurie, obedient, and normalise him. In the committee's task we notice "the problematisation of the criminal behind his crime, the concern with a punishment that is a correction, a therapy, a normalization, the division of the act of judgement between various authorities that are supposed to measure, assess, diagnose, cure, transform individuals" (Foucault 1979b, 227). According to Foucault, this "betrays the penetration of the disciplinary examination into the judicial inquisition" (Foucault 1979b, 66). Thus, Foucault (1979b, 304) believes that instead of focusing on the guilt pertaining to a crime, the committee of inquiry turns into a normalising tool. van Heerden (2010, 50) believes that if a committee of inquiry acts as normalising power, it "negates the distinction between public and private: the individual has no right to a private life and conscience but must subject himself to the judge and normalizing gaze of the examiners." Thus, when the committee of inquiry asked a defendant to confess, the person in question should fulfil this requirement and to avoid punishment agree to, in van Heerden's (ibid.)

term, the "Puritanical values" of the examiners. This is in contrast with the idea of *ubuntu* that was discussed earlier. Rather, as suggested in *Disgrace*, it is more like "Mao's China" (*Dis*, 66). In *Disgrace*, such ideas can be discussed. The committee of inquiry asks Lurie to make a confession and to conform to their demands. Lurie believes in the division between private and public sphere and believes that he should have his private sphere, which is in sharp contrast with the committee of inquiry. Hence, when Lucy asks her father why he did not satisfy the committee's demand, he says: "These are puritanical times. Private life is public business. Prurience is respectable, prurience and sentiment. They wanted a spectacle: breast beating, remorse, tears if possible. A TV show, in fact. I wouldn't oblige" (ibid.). One could ask, what is the problem with puritanism? As van Heerden (2010, 50) writes, the problem is that "its morality is overly simplistic and prohibitive and that it seeks to "normalize" individuals to this overtly restrictive code of behaviour by, for example, punishing sexual desire per se." In other words, other aspects of human beings such as humanitarian values and latent sensuality and animalism are neglected.

With the previous novel, I argued that punishment lies within the early model of punishment presented by Foucault. As we move to *Disgrace,* which is newer than the previous ones, we see that punishment regarding Lurie is not within the realm of the old method. Rather, it belongs to the newer method of punishment as illustrated by Foucault, and which I discussed in the previous chapter.

The session of the committee of inquiry is a turning point in the novel and in the selected works. For the first time, the assailant of a black or coloured woman is punished. He is summoned and accordingly expelled from his job. From this moment onwards, Lurie loses his power. In the next section, I shall analyse the shift of power in the novel. Suffice it to say here that, in Foucault's (1979a, 61–62) words, confession is "a ritual of discourse in which the speaking subject is also the subject of the statement"; furthermore,

> it is also a ritual that unfolds within a power relationship, for one does not confess without the presence (or virtual presence) of a partner who is not simply the interlocutor but the authority who requires the confession, prescribes and appreciates it, and intervenes in order to judge, punish, forgive, console, and reconcile; a ritual in which the truth is corroborated by the obstacles and resistances it has had to surmount in order to be formulated; and finally, a ritual in which the expression alone, independently of its external consequences, produces intrinsic modifications in the person who articulates it: it exonerates, redeems, and purifies him; it unburdens him of his wrongs, liberates him, and promises him salvation.

In Lurie's case, there is a superior power that demands confession, and that is the committee of inquiry , which consists of university staff who can take punitive action against him. Vice-Rector Aram Hakim, a member of the committee and one of Lurie's old friends says they want to see if there are "grounds for disciplinary measures" (*Dis,* 41), which suggests they have the power to enforce their will on Lurie. It is as a result of this power that, upon refusing to make confession, he is expelled. In Lurie's case, while one of Foucault's factors in making confession, the existence of a superior power, is present, the other factors are absent. For instance, we cannot identify the feelings of liberation and salvation stipulated by Foucault's definition of confession. In fact, since he does not make confession and apology, we cannot surmise what would happen had he made an apology.

After Lurie is ousted from his job he goes to Eastern Cape, to the city of Salem, where his daughter, Lucy, owns a smallholding. Here, Lucy is gang-raped by three black men, while Lurie is beaten and locked in the lavatory. Significantly, Lucy's rape involves the misuse of power, and this further suggests how access to power can contaminate people and turn them to evil. The black rapists are more powerful and impose their will on Lucy and Lurie and dominate her body. Moreover, one should note that the assailants are in South Africa. The aftermath of the racist political era, which treated blacks violently and discriminately, still affects society. Hence, one could say that the attackers' output, at least to a certain degree, is the results of their input. In other words, they acted violently since they society has shaped their character and psyche. As van Heerden (2010, 54) puts it, "we can assume that the evils of the old regime" play a role in the violent behaviour of the assailants. One should note that in the novel Coetzee does not write about the whereabouts of the attackers. Nor do we have any information about their psychosocial well-being. However, a hint is presented by Lurie, "It was *history speaking through them* […] *A history of wrong*" (*Dis*, 156; emphasis added). Writing of the features of the old South Africa, van Heerden (2010, 54) writes that issues such as "the physical assault of others, the disrespect and disregard for the property and persons of others, taking pleasure in inflicting pain and suffering on others" characterise old South Africa. However, the novel suggests that these problems continue to happen in contemporary South Africa as well: "it happens every day, every hour, every minute, in every quarter of the country" (*Dis*, 98) This can pinpoint a fault with the power of the state in contemporary South Africa as well, since, as the novel suggests, crime is commonplace in the country and the government and authorities cannot safeguard citizens and, as mentioned, people may risk their lives concerning trifling matters, such as some cigarettes (*Dis*, 98). In short, the problems root in the white supremacy era but are present in the post-apartheid era as well.

The two rape scenes are comparable in the sense that both of them involve abuse of power – though of different types –and in both cases the event of falling prey to

rape is compared to dying. In the attack on Lucy's farm this is suggested in Lucy's words when she compares her sexual violation to killing: "When you have sex with someone strange – when you trap her, hold her down, get her under you, put all your weight on her – isn't it a bit like *killing*?" (*Dis,* 158; emphasis added). Also, after their violation, both rape victims think they are not alive. In the case of Melanie, Lurie notices that "she had decided to go slack, *die within herself* for the duration" (*Dis,* 25; emphasis added) and that "kneeling over her, peeling off her clothes, […] her arms flop like the arms of a *dead* person" (*Dis*, 89; emphasis added). Significantly, after Lucy is raped, she states: "I am a *dead person* and I do not know yet what will bring me back to life" (*Dis*, 161; emphasis added). That is to say, they are subjected to the power of their attackers. I have already mentioned that the misuse of power has turned the attackers into evil characters. One should note that Lurie stops short labelling them as evil.[47] However, one can discern that the assailants in Elizabeth Costello's words have "the malicious cruelty in which Hitler and his cronies specialized" (*Elizabeth Costello*, 177).

Another parallel can be made between the attack on Lucy's farm, and Elizabeth Costello. As a teenager, a longshoreman attempts to sexualise Elizabeth. Since she resists his lust, the man hits her. Elizabeth notices that the longshoreman "liked her hurting […]; probably liked it more that he would have liked sex." We understand that this marks "her first brush with evil […] it was nothing less than that, evil, when the man's affront subsided and a steady glee in hurting her took its place" (*Elizabeth Costello,* 165). Similar to Elizabeth's assailant, the attackers on Lucy seem to revel in the pain that they have caused. Moreover, they seek subjugation (*Dis*, 159).[48] The attackers also steal some inexpensive items from Lucy's smallholdings such as "money, clothes, a television set, a CD player, a rifle with ammunition" (*Dis*, 108) and some other items of no financial value such as shoes and the like. This in turn parallels life in South Africa. In post-apartheid South Africa life sounds trivial; it has become so worthless that, according to Lurie, if you own anything, even if just trifling items such as a pair of shoes, it can cost people's lives in contemporary South Africa (*Dis*, 98). The inferiority of the thieves and criminals' motives for committing crime suggests a bleak depiction of South Africa, which is in contrast with the former archbishop Tutu's idea of "*ubuntu*" discussed earlier.

[47] Adriaan van Heerden (2010, 53) believes that Lurie's reason for steering away from characterising the attackers as evil is due to "some need for psychological self-preservation."

[48] Aristotle states that lack of shame sometimes shows a wicked character (qtd in van Heerden 2010, 63). Based on what Aristotle says, one could say that the fact that the assailants do not feel shame, rather they take pride in and enjoy what they have done, suggests that the attackers have wicked characters. In other words, that they are evil.

Like Melanie, Lucy tries to clean herself (*Dis*, 98). This implies a similarity between the two rape scenes and that they convey a message. The similarity suggests that both rapes have their roots in the whites' supremacy era. I have earlier discussed Lurie's sexual abuse of Melanie and the similarity it bears to the sexualisation of black and coloured women at the hands of their masters. Next, I shall move on to the black men's sexual abuse of Lucy.

Lucy's rape has roots in the colonisation epoch. Attwell (2015, 230) argues that there is "historical meaning of her being raped." What is this historical meaning, and what does the novel say to about it? I argue that the novel suggests that the rape can be interpreted as revenge, and it has been propelled by centuries of tyrannies at the hands of white colonisers. That is to say, it is a kind of retributive measure against Lurie and his daughter, who arguably carry historical guilt. A debtor–creditor analysis will shed some light on the issue. I discuss this concept later in this chapter. Importantly, Coetzee himself states that the purpose of rape in the novel is to expel the whites. He writes his views in his notes on *Disgrace*: "Rape should be seen as part of a project to drive whites off the land and out of the country" (qtd in Attwell 2015, 230). Although it is not clear how someone could have such views towards rape as Coetzee mentions, one can say that Coetzee himself had thought that Lucy's rape should be viewed in the light of white colonisers' historical crimes. In this interpretation, I agree with Coetzee as quoted in Attwell that rape is used as a medium for making the whites, in this case Lurie and his daughter leave the area.

In other words, Lucy's rape should not be viewed only as an ordinary rape at the hands of black men. There are several problematic points behind this incident. Why should a white family be targeted, why should a white woman be the victim, and why should the attackers be black? Why do they act so violently, set the home on fire, kill the animals and beat Lurie? The feeling of the intruders, after the attack, can be key in this regard. After the attack, they seem satisfied with what they have done. In other words, they seem to have targeted Lucy deliberately. Lurie believes that the rapists are happy with what they have done, and they must have had a reason, he thinks to himself:

> They do rape. He thinks of the three visitors driving away in the not-too-old Toyota, the back seat piled with household goods, their penises, their weapons, tucked warm and satisfied between their legs – purring is the word that comes to him. They must have *had every reason* to be pleased with their afternoon's work; *they must have felt happy* in their vocation. (*Dis*, 159; emphases added)

The reason, Lurie believes, is that they had taken revenge, and feelings of satisfaction can be discerned in their faces. In other words, to Lurie, Lucy seems to believe that her rape and her refusal to report it and bring her assailants to justice act as reparation

for her, and that she would be cleared of the guilt of the past and be able to live safely. This is why, addressing Lucy, he says: "Do you think what happened here was an exam: if you come through, you get a diploma and safe conduct in the future, or a sign to paint on the door-lintel that will make the plague pass you by?" (*Dis*, 112).

Lurie believes that history plays a key role in Lucy's rape (*Dis*, 156). That is to say, the attack is rooted in the white supremacy era. Significantly, for him, a history of wrong was speaking through Lucy's rapists. The past tyrannies had caused hatred among the black people towards the whites, and this hatred has been passed down from generation to generation. Now, with the demise of white supremacy, they have become victims of black attacks. As Tegla (2016, 189) writes: "The particularity of Lucy's rape consists also in its political, rather than sexual motivation: it is not a crime against her as an individual but against the race she belongs to."

Lurie is able to see further connections between the attack on the farm and the colonisation period. This is suggested when, during the attack, Lurie compares himself to an "Aunt Sally" (*Dis*, 95), a figurine of an old woman's head used in a traditional English game as the target to throw sticks at: an object of unreasonable and prejudiced attacks. In this game Aunt Sally stands for a woman singled out for public ridicule and abuse. As Ann Longmuir (2007, 121) states: "Aunt Sally was usually depicted as black." In fact, Lurie's comparison of himself to "Aunt Sally" (*Dis*, 95) is ironic since he draws on a figure of an older (black) woman that was humiliated and exploited during the years of colonialism and apartheid, and, in the guise of historically familiar "Aunt Sally," conjures up the scapegoat image of South Africa's era of colonisation. Thus, in order to "characterize himself as a victim of the New South Africa (by comparing himself to an Aunt Sally), Lurie draws on a symbol of the very male, white hegemony that characterized the old South Africa" (ibid.). He believes that the targeting of a white family by blacks in the darkest part of South Africa was fuelled by the white colonisers' domination of blacks during colonialism and apartheid, and he views himself as the victim of retaliation for whites' treatment of blacks during those eras. Therefore, he draws a parallel with a shameful figure of public rebuke and punishment in the guise of "Aunt Sally" (*Dis*, 95), a historically familiar term conjuring up the scapegoat image of South Africa's era of colonisation.

In his works, to a certain extend René Girard has had impact on Coetzee. Coetzee (1996a, 118) states this: "What I take from Girard is not the anthropological scheme at the heart of his enterprise or his counter-Freudian psychology, but the outline of a politics of desire." In *Doubling the Points*, based on Girard's ideas, Coetzee (1992d, 127–28) states the reasons why many advertisements employ women to market specific products. The reason is that desire for the model will have an impact on the

reader. Girard (1996, 12) has also written about scapegoating and the "scapegoating process":

> By scapegoating effect I mean that strange process through which two or more people are reconciled at the expense of a third party who appears guilty or responsible for whatever ails, disturbs, or frightens the scapegoaters. They feel relieved of their tensions, and they coalesce into a more harmonious group. They now have a single purpose, which is to prevent the scapegoat from harming them, by expelling and destroying him.

Girard was a devout Catholic and believed that the crucifixion of Jesus was a pivotal point in the history of sacrifice (see Lamey 2010, 182). Moreover, in Girard's view, in the modern world instances of "sacrificial violence" occur; however, they do not end up in "social harmony" (qtd in Lamey 2010, 183).

As discussed above, during the attack on the farm Lurie compares himself to an Aunt Sally, which is reminiscent of the scapegoat image of the country. References to sacrificial issues appear in *Disgrace*. Lurie carries the dogs, which he sacrifices "in his arms like a lamb" (*Dis*, 220). Furthermore, the novel alludes to sacrifice sheep in the novel as I explore later in this section, where Petrus wants to sacrifice two sheep for his party and Lurie ponders how he can save them. Lamey (2010, 182) recalls that Lurie has been made into a kind of scapegoat by the committee of inquiry and that the surname of Melanie, Isaacs, reminds the reader of "Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac in the Book of Genesis." Significantly, at some points, Lurie comments on the roots of scapegoating in the past:

> Scapegoating worked in practice while it still had religious power behind it. You loaded the sins of the city on to the goat's back and drove it out, and the city was cleansed. It worked because everyone knew how to read the ritual, including the gods. Then, the gods died, and all of a sudden you had to cleanse the city without divine help. Real actions were demanded instead of symbolism. The censor was born, in the Roman sense. […] Purgation was replaced by the purge. (*Dis*, 91)

Comparing Lurie's comment with that of Girard's mentioned above, one can see that Lurie does not believe in the significance of Christianity as Girard does. However, like her, Lurie comments on the role of oblation in the old days and among primeval communities and the role of violence in modern communities. Such violence is abortive and does not have any positive effects. Thus, according to Lamey (2010, 184) Lurie believes that the modern world, has descended "into nontherapeutic violence." Since Lurie words are stated after the attack on the farm, it can be said

that his words refer to South Africa, too, and that such violence will not remedy any wounds of the past.

In the wake of the attack, Lucy avoids reporting her rape despite her father's insistence, and believes that it is personal. Unlike Lurie, who sees a clear connection between colonialism and the attack on the farm, Lucy is at first unable to comprehend why she had been targeted. She assumes that her sexual violation is personal and that there is no need to make it public. This could account for her reluctance to report the crime to the police, for she comments 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 a public matter. But in this place, at this time, it is not. It is my business, mine alone" (*Dis*, 112). In Lurie's opinion, Lucy's refusal to report her sexual violation is the price that she pays for the crimes of the past. That is why Lurie does not believe it is 'personal': "'It was history speaking through them,' he offers at last. 'A history of wrong. Think of it that way, if it helps. It may have seemed personal, but it wasn't. It came down from the ancestors'" (*Dis*, 156). This suggests that symbolically it is Lucy (along with the other female victims) who pays the price for the white male aggressors represented in Coetzee's novels. What Lurie means is that during the colonisation period, whites committed many offences, including the sexual exploitation of black women, taking control of blacks' land by force, and considering them inferior in terms of race and class.

Now, Lurie believes that Lucy is associating the attack on her with colonial crimes, so she is going to neglect to report her sexual violation as compensation. That is why Lurie says: "Do you hope you can expiate the crimes of the past by suffering in the present?" (*Dis*, 112). Although Lucy disagrees with him, she keeps wondering why she had been targeted. In fact, while Lucy is not able to figure out the motives of her assailants, she is astonished at the attack in the first place and comments on the "shock of being hated" (*Dis*, 156). She says: "It was done with such personal hatred. That was what stunned me more than anything. The rest was [...] expected. But why did they hate me so? I had never set eyes on them" (ibid.). Later on, she thinks more about the motives of the attackers. She surmises that probably the attackers had a mission, that they had come to retaliate for the past and chose her body for this purpose. As Horrell (2008, 19) puts it, the body is a suitable place for inflicting pain and avenging guilt.

Authors such as Nietzsche and Foucault have thrown some light on this issue. In regard to Lucy, her view can be explained in terms of the Nietzschean debtor–creditor concept: Nietzsche is perceptive in his analysis of the relationship between pain and punishment. He believes that pain plays a key role in what must be remembered among human beings, and the body plays a key role in this regard, since it the place where pain is imposed on it. Nietzsche (1969, 61) says:

> If something is to be remembered it must be burnt in: only that which never ceases to hurt stays in the memory — this is a main clause of the oldest (unhappily also the most enduring) psychology on earth. […] Man could never do without blood, torture and sacrifices when he felt the need to create a memory for himself […] – all this has its origin in the instinct that realised that pain is the most powerful aid to mnemonics.

Consequently, in any cases of loss, economic or social, or when someone seeks recompense for what has been done to them or their predecessors, such debts can still be collected from the body of those who are assumed to pay for it, from the debtor:

> An equivalent is provided by the creditor's receiving, in place of a literal compensation for any injury […], a recompense in the form of a kind of pleasure, the pleasure of being allowed to vent his power freely on one who is powerless, […] the enjoyment of violation […]. In 'punishing' the debtor, the creditor participates in a *right of the masters*; at last he, too, may experience for once the exalted sensation of being allowed to despise and mistreat someone as 'beneath' him. (Nietzsche 1969, 65)

In such a framework of debt-collecting, Lucy assumes that her sexual violation is the price she pays for the tyrannies of her ancestors; put simply, she assumes that she is guilty.

Lucy's feeling of guilt is quite similar to how some of the white population in modern South Africa feel that they are guilty for the crimes of the past and must pay recompense. As Horrell (2008, 23) states: "In the South African post-apartheid context, 'whiteness' has been reinscribed, no longer unproblematically as a 'norm' or, simply 'privilege', but as 'guilt'." This means that, as a result of a history of colonialism and oppression, in contemporary South Africa some blacks hold whites responsible for the wrongdoings of the white colonisers. This notion that whiteness equates with guilt is substantiated by John Battersby (1997) in his article "Admitting White Guilt." He writes that although he feels innocent in post-apartheid South Africa, it is whiteness that indicates guilt: "I can deny (neither) my 'whiteness' – in a collective sense – or [sic] my collective responsibility for a system which was invented and upheld in my name at the cost of the onslaught on my fellow black South Africans" (Battersby 1997, 23). In like manner, Lucy believes that the whites in modern South Africa owe the blacks a debt. Now with the shift of power, it is white South Africans' turn to pay. Referring to her attackers, Lucy says: "They see themselves as debt collectors, tax collectors. Why should I be allowed to live here without paying? Perhaps that is what they tell themselves" (*Dis*, 158). In other words,

she perceives a link between past crimes and the attack on her farm. The offspring of the colonisers in South Africa have inherited the debt that must be paid back to the collectors.[49]

Lucy thinks that she is an alien in the land where she lives and that she is not the real owner; rather, she believes that the land, and in a broader term the territory, belongs to the blacks. This is suggested when she says: “I think I am in *their* territory” (*Dis*, 158; emphasis added). However, the fact that somebody is alien in a territory does not mean that he or she would be or should be attacked. What she means by being an alien, is that being the offspring of the oppressors of the native South Africans makes her prone to be a legitimate target for revenge, and that the attack would most likely happen again: “They have marked me. They will come back for me” (ibid.). She has abided by this assumption and finds it quite justified. Thus, when Lurie advises her to abandon the land, since there is the possibility of new attacks, Lucy disagrees. She accepts her sexual violation as the price she has to pay for her being able to live on the farm and believes that her rape and the attack on the farm must be viewed in connection to the crimes of her colonial ancestors.

One important feature of *Disgrace* is that it creates an environment in which the media are not biased in reporting cases of sexual violence, that is to say, the rapes of Melanie and Lucy. In other words, the novel sets an example for the media to remain neutral in covering any incidents of rape. Having a look at the reaction mentioned in the section on the critical reception of the novel, we understand that the negative responses that *Disgrace* received pivot around objections to the depiction of black rapists. One should note that the depiction of blacks as rapists is not confined to South Africa; it is rather due to racist attitudes. There has been an age-old accusation of blacks as rapists. As Helen Benedict (1992, 15) writes:

> This essentially racist perception [that the rapists are usually black] leads to the widely held misconception that most rapes are committed by black men against white women, or by lower class men against higher class women – a conception bolstered by the press, which tends to give these stories more play than other kinds of rapes.

Thus, in the historical representation of blacks as rapists, the media has played a role.

Cornwell (1996, 421) compares the momentum of the spread of the fabricated threat of black rape to a contagious disease and writes that in creating such a cliché the media have tried to manipulate people’s minds “since at certain times” such

[49] This is not the first instance in which Coetzee deals with punitive rape. In *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), Magda is raped in revenge for her father’s sexual harassment of the wife of one of his staff (Horrell 2008, 25).

reports "dominated the columns of the national press." Such manipulation has been done by sensationalized depictions of the rape of white women by black men. As Tanya Serisier (2017, para. 1; emphasis added) writes,

> *certain* sensational sex crimes are prominent topics in news and entertainment media. Media attention tends to focus on violent crimes committed by 'dangerous' strangers, largely defined as poor men of color, and crimes committed against white and middle-class victims.

By "certain" she means cases in which the rapists are "men of color." In post-apartheid South Africa, the sensationalised depiction of blacks as rapists has a long history. The country has suffered colonisation and centuries of discrimination against blacks at the hands of racist whites. Thus, in the post-apartheid era, the colonial legacy continues to cast its shadow on the society. Accordingly, cases of black rapes make the headlines in some white media, and such cases receive highlighted media coverage.[50]

I argue that one of the constructive points of *Disgrace* is that it sets an example for the media to remain neutral in covering cases of black and white rapes in the society. That is to say, in the novel, the media covers both black and white threats indiscriminately and thoroughly, and Melanie's case receives a lot of attention. It is due to the media coverage that Lurie's previous wife, Rosalind, claims that everyone knows about his latest affair (*Dis*, 43). Addressing Lurie, she states that in the Cape newspaper *Argus* there is a report headed 'Professor on sex charge' (*Dis*, 46). The report points out that Lurie

> is slated to appear before a disciplinary board on a charge of sexual harassment. CTU is keeping tight-lipped about the latest in a series of scandals including fraudulent scholarship payouts and alleged sex rings operating out of student residences. Lurie (53), author of a book on English nature-poet William Wordsworth, was not available for comment. (ibid.)

Also, a student newspaper covers this instance of the white threat, and Lurie's photograph appears in there, "above the caption 'Who's the Dunce Now?' It shows him, eyes cast up to the heavens, reaching out a groping hand toward the camera" (*Dis*, 56). Due to media coverage, the lobbies and the surrounding streets of the building where the committee held its session are thronged with people (*Dis*, 55). This suggests that the media has not turned a blind eye to a case of sexual violence

[50] Earlier I discussed the role of South Africa's media in the sensationalist coverage of Charlene Smith's rape.

in which the perpetrator is a white man, and it has played a role in making people aware of the incident. The fact is that the media cover of Lurie's and Melanie's case signals an important message.

I have discussed the notion of changing times in the novel earlier. However, it is worth mentioning here that the media coverage of Lurie's sexual violation of Melanie signals the idea that the times are changing in South Africa once more, since such coverage would have been impossible during white hegemony. As Armstrong (1994, 35) puts it, by the end of apartheid, not only was white media coverage of white rape not common, but it was also impossible to prosecute cases of such rape.

The media coverage of Lucy's gang-rape by black men appears later in the novel. The story of the attack on the farm appears in the newspaper as well and Lurie reads their story as reported in *The Herald* (*Dis*, 115). The report describes the details of the attacks. The report also announces that Lurie was injured during the attack and was treated at the hospital (*Dis*, 115–16). In fact, *Disgrace* shows the neutral media coverage of both cases of sexual violation of Melanie and Lucy at the hands of a white man and black men respectively – the message being that the media should not cover only cases of black rape extensively.

4.5 Metamorphosis and shift of power in *Disgrace*

Do I have to change? – Lurie in *Disgrace*

In my analysis, I regard *Disgrace* as an allegory of South African history. In connection to this, the presentation of Lurie's perspective in the book could be seen as a satire on white attitudes in post-1994 South Africa. In other words, while we witness a milestone shift in the way gender-based violence is dealt with, the implied idea is that unlike the previous novels the whites have become powerless, and the blacks have gained power.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, power plays a key role in *Disgrace*. The novel can be divided into two parts. In the first part, through the characterisation of Lurie and his abuse of power, the novel alludes to the era of white hegemony. The second part is in time after the demise of colonialism and apartheid. It starts with Lurie losing his job and subsequently his power, and the attention shifts to the power of the blacks, which at points also involves abuse of power. In short, Lurie's fall from power represents a change of times.

Due to this shift of power and the tyrannies of the past, some whites may be targeted by blacks in post-apartheid South Africa. Attridge (2000, 105) comments on power relations in contemporary South Africa where, due to the shift, "the result is a new fluidity in human relations, a scene that the governing terms and conditions can, and must, be rewritten from scratch." This change of power in relation to

Disgrace is expressed by the Labour MP Gerald Kaufman when he states that the novel is "a millennial book […] because it takes us through the 20th century into a new century in which the source of power is shifting away from Western Europe" (qtd in McDonald 2002, 321).

One of the incipient signs of the new era is evident at the committee of inquiry that investigates Melanie's complaint about her abuse. There is, however, no serious punishment for Lurie as he is asked to make an apology. For Lurie to renounce his colonialist/patriarchal position and to accept his subjection to the new regime of truth is a harsher punishment than he can take. Since he refuses to apologise, he loses his job and so faces the consequences of his misdeed. This shows a shift at universities and in the political system as well. Had it been the white hegemony era, black women's complaints against white men would have been abortive. During the time of white hegemony, abused black women were not able to protect themselves or claim recompense for their suffering. Their lawsuits were usually hampered by the colonial and the apartheid authorities, and in practice nothing would happen to the white rapist as the courts were very lenient with white perpetrators. In an important study, Scully (1995, 335–59) observes cases of gender-based violence and abundance of evidence of discrimination against sexually abused women in colonial South Africa and illustrates how their lawsuits against their white assailants were thwarted by colonial judges due to the political order of the time.[51] Making a confession and making an apology is a phenomenon seen as the business of the TRC, which held its sessions after the collapse of apartheid. Although in effect it was not efficient, the TRC heralded a new era in South Africa. In the same way, the fact that Lurie is summoned and asked to make atonement signifies the new era.

The attack on Lucy's smallholding and Lurie's new job at the animal clinic give us further indications of the shift of power. The intruders treat Lurie "like a dog" and they themselves are described as "dogs in a pack" (*Dis*, 159). Lucy's rape is humiliating also due to its animal connotations. In Lurie's eyes, Lucy is the slave of the attackers, and the way they treat her resembles slavery, since during the colonisation period white men exerted their power over the blacks and sexually abused women. Now the situation is reversed. Lucy herself believes that blacks are now more powerful, but she stops short of saying that she has been enslaved by her attackers. She believes that the way her assailants behaved is not enslavement but subjugation (ibid.). At the animal clinic, too, Petrus, Lucy's black neighbour, treats her scornfully. This is suggested in the way Petrus introduces himself. He sardonically introduces himself to Lurie as a "dog-man" (*Dis*, 64). In fact, Lurie is treated as if he is in a lower position compared to his black neighbour.

[51] For more information refer to Scully (1995).

Owning land is another key, and perhaps the most important theme, which signifies power exchange in the novel. Ownership of land was an important issue during the colonisation era as well, but it is not within the scope of this dissertation to discuss this in any detail. Suffice it to say that the Dutch East India Company began to seize land from the natives. The chain of violence and battles over the ownership of land continued during the reign of the British. In the Eastern Cape, as María López (2011, 178) points out: "Nine Frontier wars were fought between the British and Xhosa people during the nineteenth century – wars in which the question of land was the main reason for the strife." The significance of land in post-apartheid South Africa is present also in the novel.

Similar to the colonial settlers in South Africa, initially, Lucy owns land and while she works in her fields, she leaves traces on it, leaving signs of ownership. As Horrell (2008, 21) puts it: "The image of footprints provides a textual reference to both Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Coetzee's earlier novel *Foe* […]. The allusion is certainly that of the colonist or 'settler' who marks the land with a sign of his (her) dominance or ownership." Significantly, in Lurie's eyes, Lucy's life at the Eastern Cape also resembles that of the settlers. Put in another way, he views her as one of a new breed of settlers. This is suggested when Lurie says: "A frontier farmer of the *new breed*. In the old days, cattle and maize. Today, dogs and daffodils. […] *History repeating* itself, though in a more modest vein. Perhaps history has learned a lesson" (*Dis*, 62; emphases added). My dissertation has focused on analysing male acts of territorialisation and overpowering. How does Lucy's role differ from them? How does she repeat (or how she does not repeat) the history of her male ancestors? I think for the most part she has not repeated the mistakes of her ancestors. The only issue which could resemble the colonial era and ownership of land is the traces which she leaves on her land. Otherwise, she is aware of the crimes of the past and seems to be willing to bear its consequences to the extent that she is ready to give up her land. I think the novel seems to suggest that "white history" might have learned a lesson, albeit in a painful way. During white hegemony, whites claimed the ownership of the land and took hold of the black people's lands by force. Now, by a shift of power, whites lost the land to the blacks. Lucy cedes the land to Petrus and seeks his protection for herself and her child. In so doing she becomes "a tenant on his land. […] A *bywoner*" (*Dis*, 204). This situation, as McDonald (2002, 328) puts it, is a reversal of the colonial order in South Africa, as it will be Petrus who is her master and 'protector'. In exchange for giving up the land, Lucy becomes Petrus's third wife, and he offers her protection, enabling her "to creep in under his wing" (*Dis*, 203). The significance of this submission becomes clearer when we note that Petrus used to be Lucy's "assistant" and now is his "co-proprietor" (*Dis,* 62).

This situation shows how whites have been toppled from power. Since Lucy is not able to protect herself, she seeks help from somebody else, symbolically from a

black person. Black protection is not free for Lucy – she must pay the price, and she fulfils this requirement by giving Petrus land. In Lurie's view, Lucy is humiliating herself and her condition equates with abject misery. Thus, referring to what Lucy says about her new start, he asks if she is going to start to live "like a dog" (*Dis*, 205). In this, the novel alludes to *The Trial* (*Der Process,* 1925) by Kafka, when Lucy accepts that her decision in this regard will bring her shame and humiliation. "'Like a dog!' he said; it seemed as though the shame was to outlive him"; these are Josef K's (another nod towards Kafka, then, is Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michel K.*) last words before he is killed at the end of Kafka's (1998, 174) novel. I think Coetzee deploys Josef's words to show that in the same way that he is executed, due to the humiliation he receives, Lucy is also eliminated. Responding to Lurie, she says: "Yes, I agree, it is humiliating. But perhaps that is a good point to start from again. Perhaps that is what I must learn to accept. To start at ground level. With nothing. […] No cards, no weapons, no property, no rights, no dignity" (*Dis*, 205). This is a pivotal moment in contemporary South Africa. In the novel, Lucy and Lurie have no power. Lucy's seeking protection from her black neighbour implies that there is nobody else who can support her in Africa. Addressing her father Lucy says:

> I am a woman alone. I have no brothers. I have a father, but he is far away and anyhow *powerless* in the terms that matter here. To whom can I turn for protection, for patronage? […]. Say [to Petrus] I accept his protection. […] If he wants me to be known as his third wife, so be it. As his concubine, ditto. But then the child becomes his too. The child becomes part of his family. As for the land, say I will *sign the land over to him* as long as the house remains mine. […] Tell him I give up the land. Tell him that he can have it, title deed and all. (*Dis*, 204–05; emphases added)

Lucy does not consider seeking protection from whites, even from her father, since they are "powerless." She could hire a white guardian or make a white man a "bywoner," but she understands that as living among the blacks is not safe for a white woman, a black man, in this case Petrus, would be her best choice. By marrying Petrus, she would be associated with the black South Africans and avert danger. She says to Lurie that Petrus "is offering an alliance, a deal. I contribute the land, in return for which I am allowed to creep in under his wing. Otherwise, he wants to remind me, I am without protection, I am fair game" (*Dis*, 203). Lurie, too, believes that it is not safe for a white woman to live alone in the area. Addressing Petrus, Lurie says: "I have just travelled up from Cape Town. There are times when I feel anxious about my daughter all alone here" (*Dis*, 64). However, Lucy knows that Lurie would not be able to protect her, so she chooses Petrus to safeguard her against intruders.

Based on his attitudes that marriage between black and white South Africans demeans the latter and knowing that Lucy is not wholeheartedly willing to marry Petrus, Lurie disagrees with Petrus's proposal and tells him that Lucy would not marry him. It seems that like colonisers who were unwilling to marry blacks, Lurie views Lucy and Petrus's marriage as contrary to *Western culture*. Since Lurie assumes that his culture is distinct and better than that of Petrus's, it is whites' culture that presumably should be followed. This is suggested when Lurie comments to Petrus that: "This is not how *we* do things" (*Dis*, 202; emphasis added). Then the narrator informs the reader what Lurie means by *we*: "*We*: he is on the point of saying, *We Westerners*" (ibid.). Petrus admits that he is aware of Lucy's feelings. However, he emphasises, in South Africa "it is dangerous, too dangerous. A woman must be marry [sic]" (ibid.). In contrast to Lurie, who believes in the 'civilised versus uncivilised' dichotomy, Petrus does not believe in such stereotypes and ridicules such archaic ideas and positively chuckles (ibid.). Thus, Petrus blatantly addresses Lurie and announces: "I will marry. […] I will marry Lucy" (ibid.), implying that Lurie is subjected to his will. Petrus is aware that whites have lost their power, and that is why he undermines Lurie's words. If the above-mentioned conversation about Lucy's and Petrus's marriage had taken place in the past, during the white hegemony era, he would have had to obey Lurie. But now, in post-apartheid South Africa, he challenges Lurie and says that he will marry Lucy, regardless of Lurie's objections.

I argue that because of the shift of power, Lurie undergoes a transformation. That is to say, his character changes dramatically after his dismissal from his job. Initially, his sentiments are described as "complacent" and academia constitutes his core essence (*Dis*, 2). In the Eastern Cape, he is reduced to nothing. His feelings in this regard are suggested in his conversation with Lucy when he asserts that he feels humiliated, with no honour, "like a dog" (*Dis*, 204). To have a better understanding of the changes in Lurie's life and to understand how the shift of power transforms him, we must look at the early pages of the novel, covering the time when he worked as Professor at Cape Technical University.

Early in the novel, Lurie's temperament is described as "fixed" (*Dis*, 2) and together with the skull, they form "the two hardest parts of the body" (ibid.). In the same way that the skull would not change there seems to be no alteration in his temperament. Furthermore, the narrator says that for Lurie as a scholar, scholarship constitutes "intermittently, the core of him" (ibid.). At first, he has a powerful position as a university professor who can behaves as he wishes and even abuse his power. Thus, the reader is initially under the impression that Lurie's temperament is hard and unchangeable. This is substantiated by Lurie himself. He reiterates that he "wants to go on being himself" (*Dis*, 77) and that he is "too old to change" (*Dis*, 209). However, with the changing times and change in power, his views change, too – scholarship no longer makes up his core; rather, he turns into an insignificant

person, comparable to a dog. Furthermore, he becomes compassionate towards animals. These changes are suggested by his job at Bev Shaw's animal clinic.

When Lucy tells Lurie about Bev Shaw's job, Lurie shuns it. He says: "It's admirable, what you do, what she does, but to me animal-welfare people are a bit like Christians of a certain kind. Everyone is so cheerful and well-intentioned that after a while you itch to go off and do some raping and pillaging. Or to kick a cat" (*Dis*, 72). However, hapless as he is, later on, in a moment that shows his powerlessness, he asks Bev to offer him any kind of job, even one which may be below him: "He goes off to the Animal Welfare clinic as often as he can, offering himself for whatever jobs call for *no skill*: feeding, cleaning, mopping up" (*Dis,* 142; emphasis added). He becomes "a dog-man: a dog undertaker; a dog psychopomp; a *harijan*"[52] (*Dis*, 146). In this new job he devotes himself to the service of dogs, of dead dogs. Thus, from a position of power, that is, his job as University Professor, he becomes involved in a job that requires no skills or qualifications.

Lurie himself is aware of his fall from power. Being a powerless person without honour is a new circumstance for him, since in the past he was a respectable man with an esteemed job and power. Thus, he confesses that he has ended up in a state of disgrace – as the book's title suggests. Addressing Melanie's father, Mr. Isaacs, he says: "I am sunk into a *state of disgrace*, from which it will not be easy to lift myself. […] I am living it out from day to day, trying to accept disgrace as my state of being" (*Dis*, 172; emphasis added). Lurie feels this way because he is comparing his current situation with his time as a professor. He knows that he has been a powerful and selfish man, but after the dramatic shift of power he is in a hapless situation. In his new job that does not require any skills at all he feels useless. The job at the animal clinic, as Attridge (2000, 116) puts it, if "measured on any rational scale, would register as of no value, lacking even the tiny potential that his work on the opera might be said to possess." Lurie topples from the top to the bottom. As someone who knew how to satisfy his sexual desires, he would probably never have predicted his current misery. That is why his new condition is referred to as a "curious" one: "*Curious* that a man as selfish as he should be offering himself to the service of dead dogs" (*Dis*, 146; emphasis added). As a professor he used to educate students, and his efforts to write an opera about Lord Byron required skills and artistic taste, but his job at the animal clinic is demeaning for him. Any change to his current situation or any other kind of occupation would be better. The narrator says:

[52] 'Harijan' is a term Mohandas 'Mahatma' Gandhi coined in 1933 to designate the 'untouchables', the lowest caste in India. Gandhi had returned to India in 1915 after 21 years of legal service, during which he had developed his ethical and political ethos that eventually led to Indian independence in 1947.

> There must be other, more productive ways of giving oneself to the world, or to an idea of the world. One could for instance work longer hours at the clinic. One could try to persuade the children at the dump not to fill their bodies with poisons. Even sitting down more purposefully with the Byron libretto might, at a pinch, be construed as a service to mankind. (*Dis*, 146)

Lurie's feeling of being in disgrace does not, however, follow from his sexual exploitation of Melanie. He is neither ashamed of what he has done nor does he show any remorse at the committee of inquiry. Rather, his feeling of disgrace is due to the new situation to which he cannot adapt. He would want a job that is in line with his expertise: to compose works of art, to teach. In short, he would like to feel that he is an important, creative person. Yet, all these things are absent in his new position at the animal clinic although the job has its own rewards for Lurie. It causes striking changes in him, who once was supposed to remain unchanged. This is suggested with regard to his treatment of the animals.

Here, I present his trajectory from a person who is heedless of animal rights and even looks down upon animal advocates to a person who develops a bond with animals and cares about them, which is a positive change. With this, I aim to shed light more clearly on the metamorphosis that he has undergone. After all, it is due to the shift of power that his attitude towards animals changes. This is to say, his understanding of animals correlates with the shift of power and becomes particularly manifest after the attack on the farm. Thus, we need to delve into this issue further. Initially, Lurie has no affection towards the animals. Instead, it is the women at the animal clinic who care about them, that is to say, Lucy and Bev Shaw.

The women advocate animal rights: "Yes, we eat up a lot of animals in this country, it doesn't seem to do us much good. I am not sure how we will justify it to them" (*Dis*, 82), says Bev Shaw and tries to remind Lurie of animal rights. Here, the novel alludes to Coetzee's *The Lives of Animals* (1999) where there is no superiority of human over animals: "There is no higher life. This is the only life. This is the only life there is. Which we share with animals" (Coetzee 1999, 74). However. Lurie's thoughts are in sharp contrast with those of the women, and he pokes fun at their attitudes. He alludes to them as "animal lovers" and says that it is "hard to whip up an interest in the subject" (*Dis*, 74). When he commences his work at the clinic, signs of anthropocentrism still show in his character. He states: "All right, I'll do it. But, as long as I don't have to become a better person. I am not prepared to be reformed. I want to go on being myself" (*Dis*, 77). He still believes in eating animals. Bev Shaw assumes that Lurie likes animals and asks him if he does. In a somewhat rude manner Lurie replies: "I eat them, so I suppose I must like them, some parts of them" (*Dis*, 81) When Lurie sees the sheep who Petrus is going to slaughter for his party, he still shows no feelings towards animals and appears violent towards them: "Sheep do not

own themselves, do not own their lives. They exist to be used, every ounce of them, their flesh to be eaten, their bones to be crushed and fed to poultry" (*Dis*, 123). Later on, when he spends sometimes with the sheep, while they are grazing, his thoughts start change. He thinks that the sheep have been enslaved by Petrus and thinks about buying them so that they are no longer enslaved. However, on a second thought he realises that Petrus will buy another pair, thus, his act of buying the sheep will not help the emancipation of sheep in general. He thinks that sheep should not have been presented to humans at all (*Dis*, 123–24). It can be said that Lurie's experience with the sheep acts as a turning point. From now on he is not a speciesist. In his new role, as a person who is no longer anthropocentric, he becomes excessively concerned for them, in his imagination he makes friends with them and sympathises with their pain. As Simone Drichel (2013, 289) puts it, his altered attitude towards animals is illustrated "in an affective bond he develops with the vulnerable animal–other." The following excerpt from the novel sheds light on the issue:

> A bond seems to have come into existence between himself and the two Persians, he does not know how. The bond is not one of affection. It is not even a bond with these two in particular, whom he could not pick out from a mob in a field. Nevertheless, suddenly and without reason, their lot has become important to him. (*Dis*, 126)

His concern for and worry about the sheep is presented in the words of Laura Wright (2006, 97):

> The connection [with the two sheep] is not imagined, [… but] visceral, felt, quite literally, in the gut. It is a physical reaction to suffering, not an intellectualized exercise in mimesis; it is the bodily realization that one cannot 'be' the other, but that empathy is possible regardless.

Elisa Aaltola (2010, 129) argues that from the moment that Lurie develops his bond with the sheep his emotions take over his reason. For me this bond is more obvious when we notice that initially, at the start of the job, Lurie castigates Bev's appearance and looks down upon her. To him she is a "dumpy, bustling, little woman with black freckled, close-cropped, wiry hair, and no neck" (*Dis*, 72). He also describes her as being "full of New Age mumbo jumbo" (*Dis*, 84). Bev finds Lurie gruff and intolerant and tells him to nourish "comforting thoughts," since, according to her, animals "can smell what you are thinking," to which Lurie murmurs "What nonsense!" (*Dis*, 81). However, later on, after the attack, when Bev tries to heel his scars in the same place where she keeps a goat, he no longer has negative thoughts about her. He is impressed by her and comes to understand that animals can feel and

experience the comforting thoughts and humans' gentle manner. That is why he ponders on whether the goat "felt the same peacefulness" (*Dis*, 106). He also understands that animals' reaction to threat is conspicuous. It is as the result of the development of this bond with animals that someone who used to eat animals turns into a vegetarian. Thus, he considers shunning Petrus's party, where the food comes from the two sheep on Petrus's land to be taken to the abattoir to serve the guests (*Dis*, 123–27). After this transformation, he believes that the corpses of dogs should be honoured. He thinks that it is a dishonour to them if the corpses are taken to the incinerator promptly since this means leaving the dogs "on the dump with the rest of the weekend's scourings," in which case they would be piled "with waste from the hospital wards, carrion scooped up at the roadside, malodorous refuse from the tannery" (*Dis*, 144).

So, Lurie's bond with animals has widened and encompasses other animals, such as unwanted dogs in the animal clinic, where he helps in killing them. He wonders how it is possible for a man like him to be so concerned for animals and he tries to "recover himself" (*Dis*, 143). At first, he assumes that seeing the dogs being killed would become normal for him. However, this never happens. The more killings he assists with, the more anxious he gets. One Sunday evening, driving home in Lucy's kombi, he has to stop at the roadside to recover. He cannot stop tears flowing down his face and his hands shaking. He does not understand what is happening to him; his whole being is gripped by what happens in the theatre (*Dis*, 142). He has a sense of disgrace and shamefulness. He assumes that the dogs can understand this feeling. He is bewildered at this queer situation. At last, he becomes cognizant of the changes within him: "He does not understand what is happening to him. Until now he has been more or less indifferent to animals" (*Dis*, 143). In fact, Lurie has a feeling of guilt, and this can allude to Castello, who castigates the animal eater and wants to make such people feel conscience-stricken. From a person who ridiculed animal lovers and used to think that only women care about such matters and not men, he has been transformed into a person who even cares about the dead bodies of dogs.

He has respect for the corpses and honours them and even believes that dogs have a soul and body (*Dis*, 146 & 219). Unlike in the past, he now knows how to appropriately address the animals and expresses his affection towards them. He gives them "what he no longer has difficulty in calling by its proper name: *love*" (*Dis*, 219; emphasis added). His feeling can be explained by the fact that in his new life he makes contact with animals. He is no more the selfish person who used to have disdain for people working with animals as he is himself doing the same job. Thus, he is able to develop a bond with the animals, and one could say that animals become a part of his life and he develops a friendship with them. As Drichel (2013, 290) puts it, as a result of "[e]ntering into proximity with the vulnerable animal–other, Lurie becomes affected by their fate and begins to 'lose himself'." Thus, he ends up

becoming overtly concerned for dead animals. When the women who carry the bags filled with the dead dogs' bodies to the incinerator begin "to beat the bags with the backs of their shovels before loading them, to break the rigid limbs" (*Dis*, 144–45), Lurie "intervened and took over the job himself" (*Dis*, 145). From a person who disapproved of "cruelty [just in an] abstract way" (*Dis*, 143), and who criticized people who honoured animals, he turns into a man who makes friends with animals and honours even their corpses. He becomes "a dog-man" (*Dis*, 146); it is no longer in an abstract way that he denounces cruelty, rather this abstraction becomes material. He is, as Drichel (2013, 291) puts it, "physically and emotionally *affected* by such cruelty." Thus, the novel suggests that human beings, even those who seem to have no sympathy for animals, can feel compassion for them.

Another way in which the shift of power can be seen is related to Lurie's attitude towards Petrus. In the wake of the attack on Lucy, Lurie is suspicious of Petrus as he is a black man, and Petrus himself had been away during the attack. He would like to know Petrus' whereabouts during the incident. However, he has no access to this information since he has no authority. If it had been during the era of white hegemony, he could easily have acquired it. Eliciting truth by the colonisers from the colonised other is a theme that is referred to in Coetzee's other fictional works. For example, in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the nomads are tortured for no good reason by the Third Bureau to get them to confess to an alleged conspiracy against the Empire. However, in *Disgrace* the context is different. Lurie is suspicious of Petrus. He assumes that Petrus is an accomplice in the attack. Thus, he would like to ask Petrus some questions to reveal the truth. The narrator says that the "questions remain. Does Petrus know who the [attackers] were? Was it because of some word Petrus let drop that they made Lucy their target […]? Did Petrus know in advance what they were planning?" (*Dis*, 116). Lurie cannot force Petrus to answer these questions, nor force him to leave or to dismiss him, since the times had changed:

> *In the old days* one could have had it out with Petrus. In the old days one could have had it out to the extent of losing one's temper and sending him packing and hiring someone in his place. […] *It is a new world they live in*, he and Lucy and Petrus. Petrus knows it, and he knows it, and Petrus knows that he knows it. (*Dis*, 116–17; emphases added)

This is something that Lurie is dissatisfied with since he is powerless and cannot try to punish Petrus as he wishes. A similar kind of rhetoric appears in Lucy's words. When Lurie urges Lucy to elicit some information from Petrus to find about his whereabouts on the day of the attack and his possible role in it, she says: "I can't order Petrus about. He is his own master" (*Dis*, 114). Similarly, later when Lucy and

Lurie are talking about Pollux[53] (whom Lucy presumes, but cannot say for sure, to be Petrus wife's brother, and with whom Lurie fights at some point), Lucy confesses she lacks the power to expel him: "But I can't order him off the property, it's not in my power" (*Dis*, 200).

This is not what the colonised South Africans experienced during the colonisation epoch, when they were oppressed and lost their lands to the colonisers and were referred to in the travel writings of the whites as lazy and indolent.[54] Petrus is depicted now as a family man with many family members and friends around him. He does not work for the whites but owns land and is building a large house on it. Also, Petrus is wealthy and able to buy "a load of building materials" (*Dis*, 114). A driver brings his order by lorry (*Dis*, 113) and Petrus does not even bother to unload but has two other people unload the lorry for him.

The depiction of Petrus is the opposite of the depiction of the black people in *The Wretched of the Earth*, since Petrus seems to have an affluent life whereas the blacks, in the words of Fanon, seem to be miserable, yearning to be in the shows of the settlers:

> The colonized man is an envious man. And this the settler knows very well; when their glances meet he ascertains bitterly, always on the defensive, 'They want to take our place.' It is true, for there is no native who does not dream at least once a day of setting himself up in the settlers' place. (Fanon 1963, 30)

It seems that what Fanon says of black men yearning for land and property has become the reality for Petrus. Petrus's ownership of the land and his proximity with Lucy disturbs Lurie: "Too close, he thinks: we live too close to Petrus. It is like sharing a house with strangers, sharing noises, sharing smells" (*Dis*, 127). The fact that Lurie condemns Petrus for living in his neighbourhood shows that Lurie holds racist attitudes towards the blacks and believes in some sort of segregation.

Lurie is able neither to elicit information from Petrus, nor to impose his will on him about his place of domicile. Moreover, this scene, as Tegla (2016, 127) observes, suggests that the blacks are no longer living in isolation, far from white settlements. For the whites, this new status of the blacks is problematic as they find it hard to come to terms with the disappearance of segregation. They are not used to living close to each other. To Lurie's dismay, not only does Petrus come to live in his neighbourhood; he also appropriates a large part of Lucy's land. In the new era in South Africa, people are no longer forced to choose their domicile based on colour.

[53] He is quite appropriately named here, as in Antique mythology Pollux (or Polydeukes in Greek) was an immortal god, unlike his brother Castor (Kastor).

[54] This theme is discussed in detail in section 2.6.

Tegla (2016, 95) argues that "there is no longer a *here* and *there*, a clear (spatial and ideological) demarcation between the blacks and the whites, a 'here' of comfort and safety and a 'there' of violence and poverty, a 'here' which has made ignoring the 'there' possible." Lurie feels his comfort is disturbed; his privacy is damaged by living close to Petrus. Clearly, he still adheres to the prejudiced idea of segregation.

Moreover, Lurie is a typical modern white South African. He is considered to be one of the British colonisers, or of the people who came from the English-speaking world to the colony. Once the dominant (albeit minority) group in South Africa, people of British origin no longer enjoy that privilege. Thus, English is no longer the language of authority in the country. It has lost its grip and ultimately its suitability in the current situation of South Africa, since it will remind the South Africans that a South African native speaker of English is most likely a descendant of the colonisers. This in turn could expose South African native speakers of English to danger. This is suggested when the narrator remarks that Lurie's language is English, and Lurie is becoming aware that English is unsuitable for the contemporary reality of South Africa: "More and more he is convinced that English is an unfit medium for the truth of South Africa. Stretches of English code whole sentences long have thickened, lost their articulations, their articulateness, their articulatedness. Like a dinosaur expiring and settling in the mud, the language has stiffened" (*Dis*, 117). Now, with the shift of power, whites are not the dominant group and accordingly English has lost its significance and is decaying. It is unsuitable for post-apartheid South Africa as it alludes to centuries of domination.

In this chapter, I have shown that Attwell pays attention to such aspects of the novel as its allusion to Hardy's poem and the resemblance of the novel to TRC and Coetzee's concern for his country. I also showed that Drichel argues proximity with animals can end up in a change in humans – here, in Lurie. Significantly, in a novel approach I focused on gender-based violence in its last phase among the selected works, where the white perpetrator, Lurie, was summoned and received punishment in what can be categorised under Foucault's new method of punishment. I also argued that the roots of the problem need to be sought in the white supremacy era and that the novel encourages the media to remain neutral in their coverage of instances of sexual violence. Furthermore, I showed how the situation and power have changed in contemporary South Africa compared to the colonial and apartheid eras as represented in *Disgrace*.

5 Conclusion

In my dissertation I have analysed three selected fictional works by the Nobel Laureate J. M. Coetzee. Using a range of theories by such scholars as Franz Fanon, Homi K. Bhabha and Michel Foucault together with Coetzee's interviews as well as other primary sources and critical works of prominent critics such as David Attwell, Lucy Graham, Susan VanZanten Gallagher and others, I have shed new light on Coetzee's fictional works. Together with my analyses, these sources provide us with perspectives on various aspects of Coetzee's oeuvre and on the affairs in the Cape Colony during colonial and postcolonial times.

I have analysed three works by Coetzee, and in a unique approach I argue that together these works depict complicity and gender-based violence. In gender-based violence, male pathology plays a role within the larger frame of colonial/imperial overpowering. In the two earlier novels – *Dusklands* (1974) and *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) –, gender-based violence coincides with imperial domination and the conquest of land, while in the third – *Disgrace* (1999) –, gender-based violence occurs after the end of the white hegemony era. Nonetheless, the heritage of the colonial era passes on through the years and sets the stage for further gender-based violence. Furthermore, these works portray misuse of power and the theme of patriarchal male pathology, with male protagonists who commodify women. Misusing their power, within the context of colonial/imperial domination, or influenced by such eras, the male characters commit sexual abuse. Eugene Dawn, the Magistrate and David Lurie all fantasise about the body of the female subaltern other. Such fantasies imply that colonial/imperial expansion has either made the sexual abuse of women possible, as is the case in the first two novels, or else it has set the stage for such crimes as it is in *Disgrace*.

In these works male narrators betray intricate and often repulsive relationships to male patriarchy, and, as I have shown, this is often connected with the theme of colonial domination and sexual overpowering. Furthermore, in these works we hear nothing from the natives. They are silenced and the male narrators view the natives from above. The fact that the narrators are males and connected with colonial/imperial systems relate to the idea of patriarchy within a larger framework. The paternalistic theme further corroborates the notion of patriarchy. As a result of

the false ideology of colonialism/imperialism, the protagonists are deaf to the pain of the other and, according to Bhabha's theory, their view is distorted. Furthermore, in their ideology and attitudes towards the natives a Foucauldian notion of power is relevant. The protagonists are associated with power and cannot understand the natives.

In the light of such association and due to imperial expansion, we witness the sexualisation of women in *Dusklands.* In "The Vietnam Project," the US military operation and the sexualisation of women are inseparable: "We cut the flesh open, we reached into their dying bodies [...]. We forced ourselves deeper than we had ever gone before into their women" (*Dusk*, 27). Dawn himself fantasises about the sexual abuse of native women. We also notice the notion of sexual fantasy in relation with power in the Magistrate and Lurie, albeit in different ways. Similarly, in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," while Jacobus tries to revitalise his domination which stands for colonial overpowering, he observes one of his men misusing his power to sexualize and kill a bushman woman, which for Jacobus is an expression of imperial and male power, since in his eyes, he is the power, and the woman is nothing but a rag (*Dusk*, 94). In "The Vietnam Project," we witness similar male patriarchal pathology within the context of imperial expansion, as some army personnel sexually abuse Vietnamese women. The scenes of sexualisation of women bears resemblance to actual incidents, such as the sexual abuse of women by Captain Medina's men in 1968 at My Lai, and in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," scenes of sexual abuse while penetrating foreign lands reminds us of the idea of sexual violence while conquering new territories and abusing power during imperial expansion. Sexual exploitation of women while expanding domination is manifest in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, too. After all, the Magistrate is in foreign territory, an outpost run by the Empire, and he resembles real magistrates during the colonial era.

I have applied the theory of double oppression of the colonised women. Moreover, I have shown that gender-based violence has a trajectory in Coetzee's works. It starts in *Dusklands* from the point in which the perpetrators feel free to commit crimes, commodify women and feel no remorse for their misdeeds. Here, there are no prohibitions against tyrants by the political and judicial systems. Then, in *Waiting for the Barbarians* we witness a shift in the trajectory of gender-based violence. Here, the perpetrator, the Magistrate, has a conflicted character. He feels guilty and tries to atone for his sins by helping the nomad girl. However, like Dawn, he imposes his will on the other and fantasises about the girl's body and the marks of empire on her body, tortures the girl, and finally ends up abusing her sexually. Nonetheless, the Magistrate's conscience acts (or tries to act) as a hindrance to such acts.

In his notion of history and writing, G. W. F. Hegel mentions that there are people with history without any written records, and similarly both the Magistrate

and Colonel Joll deny history for the nomads. I have also argued that the Magistrate adheres to the supremacist idea of civilisation of the Empire. Language plays a role in rendering the Empire as civilised and the natives as inferior. Accordingly, the language of the imperial agents is regarded superior, and the language of the dominated inferior. This explains the Magistrate's lack of interest in the nomad girl's language. For him, her barbarian language is incomprehensible, so, he is not able to communicate with her properly. Instead, he tortures her mentally and abuses her sexually. That said, after a hazardous journey, he reunites the girl with her people, since he would like to atone for his sense of complicity. In this respect, I agree with Troy Urquhart that his returning of the girl can be seen as an attempt to expiate himself of the crimes of the Empire and his feeling of guilt. In *Disgrace*, we witness a significant change in the trajectory of gender-based violence and the way it is dealt with. There is a quasi-legal procedure as the judicial apparatus and the political system punish the violator, implying that a new era has arrived. The sexualised coloured woman, Melanie Isaacs, lodges a complaint and the committee of inquiry summons Lurie to question him. Consequently, retributive action is taken against him. In a sense, while *Disgrace* shares some themes with Coetzee's previous works, there are two significant distinctions: the first is the advent of judicial administration and punitive measures against Lurie, and the second is the rape, fuelled by the crimes of the past, of a white woman, Lucy, by black men, which involves patriarchy and signifies a shift of power.

In the first two novels, the punishment for the alleged crimes of the natives can be located within the realm of the old model of punishment discussed by Foucault: physical punishment in the absence of a judicial system. As analysed in Chapters 2 and 3, those punished had committed no offences, and at most, in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," the natives in the Land of Namaqua are punished on the slightest pretext. However, the analysis in Chapter 4 shows that punishment lies within the realm of a new method of punishment illustrated by Foucault. As the socio-political situation in *Disgrace* is different to that of the previous two novels analysed, also the method of punishment is different. Unlike previously, the punishment is not physical. Moreover, now due to the existence of new legislation the rapists of black or coloured women, can be prosecuted, even if the assailant is a white man, while during the colonial and apartheid eras, such legal procedures were not plausible. In addition to witnessing a new method of punishment in *Disgrace*, we also see that the right person is punished. The arrival of a new era signifies also shift of power.

In my dissertation, I have discussed the idea of complicity in the light of historical guilt. This historical guilt is the feeling of guilt that some white South Africans, in this case especially the author, have due to the misdeeds of their ancestors during the era of white supremacy. I analysed this in the narratives of the protagonists of the novels. While in the first two novels historical guilt is linked to

confessing the crimes committed by the imperial agents at the time of imperial expansion, which in turn alludes to the resentment of the author at such tyrannies, in the third novel, it is the heritage of the white supremacy era which leaves the protagonist of the novel and his daughter exposed to danger in post-apartheid South Africa.

The first book I analysed in the light of historical guilt is *Dusklands*. With this novel, Attwell (1998, 37) considers the brutalities of Jacobus to be “self-assertion,” and Gallagher believes that the novel exposed the dark side of colonialism. Furthermore, Attwell (2015, 58) argues that the novel is an angry book in which the author is outraged at the crimes of his predecessors during imperial expansion. I have built my argument based on such analyses as those of Gallagher and Attwell to develop my own perspective. I have argued that due to the dark side of colonialism, the idea of historical guilt can be discerned not only in this novel but also in the next two novels, which exhibit also elements of the confessional genre. To discuss the idea of historical guilt in *Dusklands*, I therefore analysed elements of the confessional genre in the narrative of Jacobus Coetzee. It can be said that Jacobus confesses to the tyrannies of the colonists in the Cape Colony. To further corroborate the idea of historical guilt, based on my analysis I demonstrated that his narrative bears a strong resemblance to the narratives of the early colonial travellers. Furthermore, I have shown that the author had access to documents regarding a distant relative named Jacobus Coetzee, which further confirms that the novel has been written under the influence of the colonists’ misdeeds. In the first part of *Dusklands*, Dawn admits to the crimes of the US army waging war in Vietnam and confesses to the destruction of the natural landscape and wildlife of Vietnam. For me this means colonisation of land, emphasized by the sexualisation of women. In fact, it is in the connection of the themes of the two parts of the novel, the War in Vietnam and gender-based violence in South Africa, that the author situates his guilty position as an heir of the colonists.

With *Waiting for the Barbarians,* I have discussed historical guilt and complicity in regard to the Magistrate’s narrative, presented in the confessional genre. Like Gallagher, I have shown that the Magistrate is guilty of interrogation and mental torture. I have discussed his conflicted character, as he feels guilty for the crimes of the Empire and tries to atone for the tyrannies of the system for which he works. His position can be seen to represent contemporary white South Africans who feel guilty for the crimes of their ancestors. However, despite his differences in thought and actions in comparison to Colonel Joll, he is still guilty, and cannot dissociate himself from the Empire. Drawing on Albert Memmi’s argument that a coloniser who rejects is still a coloniser, I conclude that the Magistrate is also a coloniser, a member of a repressive system helping to maintain its rule and profiting from it as a top-ranking official. Moreover, his discursive practice, like that of other imperial agents, is based

on his power relation with the Empire. All these signify his adherence to imperial values, and that his opposition to the torture of the barbarians does not mean that he is absolved of the crimes of the Empire. He also has his own methods in securing imperial domination.

In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, there are unmistakable references to the apartheid regime and incidents in that era such as the Soweto uprising and Steve Biko's death in police custody. In this respect, my analysis is in line with such critics as Urquhart and Susan VanZanten Gallagher. However, based on textual evidence from the novel, for example, that neither the name of the Empire nor the dominated area is specified and that the direction of wind is different in the novel from what it would be in South Africa, I have maintained that while the novel concerns South Africa it also relates generally to totalitarian regimes who, by torturing the captives, in the words of Coetzee, take "precedence over law and ultimately over justice" (1992a, 62). In a similar vein, David Attwell (1993, 74) believes that *Waiting for the Barbarians* shows the awareness of the author of his "historical location." I have developed this idea further and consider the complicity of the Magistrate as a way to denote the complicity of white South Africans. Thus, instead of an historical location, I have argued that the complicity dramatized in the novel refers to the historical guilt of white South Africans as well as the author. In a sense, a parallel can be drawn between the Magistrate and the author. They both feel guilty of the crime of the imperial expansion, and they are both colonisers who reject.

In the light of historical guilt, I have also shown that both *Dusklands* and *Waiting for the Barbarians* can be analysed in terms of cultural imperialism. We see that the imperial agents look down upon the customs, traditions, appearance, dance, language and religion of the natives. In this vein, Dawn talks about an American radio station that promulgates American values and tries to Americanise the Vietnamese. Cultural imperialism is also discernible to a certain degree when Lurie considers his culture and heritage superior to that of his black neighbour. Moreover, he believes in segregation and demarcation of neighbourhood based on colour and does not like his black neighbour to live in his vicinity.

Finally, I have discussed the idea of historical guilt in *Disgrace* with regard to the sexualisation of Lucy by black men based on Nietzsche's theory of the debtor–creditor together with evidence from the text and some secondary sources and argue that it is prompted by tyrannies of the past. In connection with the history of male power and the forced colonisation that is examined in this dissertation, it is also interesting that Lurie comments on Lucy's role as a settler, which I have discussed in the dissertation. That is to say, male colonial power and territorial overpowering has left Lucy vulnerable to attack. Importantly, Georgiana Horrell (2008, 18) believes that the depiction of white women in post-apartheid South African literary texts is "etched textually with guilt" and Janet Migoyan (2021, 3)

argues that this mechanism of sexual violence in *Disgrace* is propelled by postcolonial hate. However, I have argued that the whites in the novel owe a historical debt to the attackers and that there are two parallel narratives in regard to the rape. One is white peril, and the other is the counter-narrative to it, that is to say, black peril. Regarding white peril, I have analysed Lurie's rape of Melanie in the light of the heritage of the white supremacy era and argued that Lurie's attitudes towards black women stems from that epoch. He commodifies and objectifies his coloured student, Melanie, and would like to dominate her. Furthermore, like colonial judges and the apartheid authorities who did not recognise the rape of black women as rape, Lurie does not consider Melanie's sexual abuse as rape. For the black peril narrative, I have discussed the attack on Lucy's farm, which is motivated by the tyrannies of the past.

The novel depicts race and rape in the aftermath of the end of the turbulent period of the white hegemony era. The notion and the idea of complicity are highlighted when we note that *Disgrace* appeared in 1999, a full five years after the "official" end of apartheid. Like Attwell (2015, 217), I have argued that *Disgrace* is a bitter reflection of the situation in South Africa. Furthermore, I have argued that the novel suggests the roots of sexualisation of women need to be sought in the centuries of domination and oppression. Based on both the research conducted by scholars such as Pamela Scully and Sue Armstrong and on Coetzee's words as well as my own analysis, I have alluded to the role of colonialism and apartheid in fostering gender-based violence in post-apartheid South Africa. During colonialism, discriminatory laws against the blacks planted the seeds of gender-based violence and in the apartheid era the culture of aggression and domination together with the discriminatory laws nourished these seeds. Hence, the era of white supremacy played a key role in setting the stage for widespread gender-based violence in post-apartheid South Africa. Thus, unlike critics such as Martin Woessner (2010, 238–39), who believes that the disgrace in the novel is Lurie's fall from his position at the university and the rape of his daughter, I have rather suggested that the rampant event of rape in South Africa, so astutely represented in the novel, suggests something about the mutually disgraceful nature of such a culture and the roots of such crimes, which stem from the white supremacy era. Of course, I also agree that Lurie's fall from power can be viewed as disgrace for him, too.

It can be said that the pathologies of patriarchy, gendered violence, and colonization are depicted in a subtle psychological manner in Coetzee's works. In the selected works analyzed in my dissertation, gendered violence originates from the inability of the male characters' – Dawn, Jacobus, the Magistrate, and Lurie – to be sympathetic towards subaltern women or show compassion for them. They have grown up to take it granted the superiority of their culture, race, and ideology. It is for this reason that they are not able to show compassion for the pain of the other

and remain oblivious to their sufferings. In my dissertation, I have shown that certain characters ponder about their actions regardless of the success or futility of their actions. I have argued further that *Disgrace* depicts the arrival of a new era in South Africa, an era in which whites are no longer the governing group, but power has shifted to the blacks. Lucy's sexual exploitation and the fact that she hands her land to Petrus heralds the changing times and that the blacks are not, like in the colonial era, to be driven off from their lands and property. Rather, they are powerful and have affluent lives, which is in contrast to the depiction of blacks illustrated by Fanon. In the novel, it is understood that Petrus enjoys far better living conditions than Lurie. Also, when Lurie wishes to punish Petrus, he realises that, due to the changed times, he cannot. It would have been plausible in the past, but in contemporary South Africa it is no longer achievable.

Based on the definition of postcolonial literature presented by Elleke Boehmer (1995, 3), who argues that such literature challenges the colonists' perspective and the superiority of the imperial agents, I have shown that the narrative of the imperial agents deconstructs itself and renders the so-called civilised empire agents uncivilised, just like the otherness of the other is deconstructed. Also, based on Bhabha (1994, 42), who believes that the view of the imperial agents is distorted regarding the dominated, I have argued that the imperial agents' view of the dominated cannot be construed as true. Their view can also be explained in the light of Said's and Foucault's theories of the affiliation between knowledge and power. Hence, due to this affiliation, the 'knowledge' behind the imperial agents' view of the natives is not realistic – it is a view from above. Thus, the natives are silent, depicted only by the imperial agents. This disturbed and fallacious view is further exacerbated by double oppression with regard to women as the they are commodified and viewed obtainable for sexual abuse.

Furthermore, I have shown that Lurie is suspicious of Petrus's role in the attack, and the role played by Petrus in his continuous exercise of gender-based domination over women remains open to interpretation. In an interview about *Waiting for the Barbarians* Coetzee (1992a, 362–64), expresses his aspiration for a world without violence and torture at the hands of repressive systems. In my dissertation, my aspiration is similar. I hope that the analyses and findings I have offered regarding ethics in Coetzee's works will inspire further studies so that we could help reduce violence, in whatever form. Furthermore, in *Duskland*s in the 2020s, some readers will find the position taken by the book, through its narrating voice, to be voyeuristic, to be celebrating and revelling in the violence it claims to be exposing and attacking. Here, too, research remains open in this respect for further studies.

I conclude my dissertation by saying that Coetzee's works selected for my analysis teach us a lesson. A lesson that humans can be corrupted once exposed to power, as

Dawn and the American forces in "The Vietnam Project," Jacobus in "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," Colonel Joll and the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, and Lurie and the attackers on his daughter in *Disgrace*, all misuse their power. In short, power is contaminating for humans.

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TURUN
YLIOPISTO
UNIVERSITY
OF TURKU

Painosalama, Turku, Finland 2024

ISBN 978-951-29-9599-8 (PRINT)
ISBN 978-951-29-9600-1 (PDF)
ISSN 0082-6987 (Print)
ISSN 2343-3191 (Online)