

## Chapter IV

### Paradigm of Colonial Trauma

Living creatures adroitly experience worldly pleasures and tribulations which mould their mental traits appropriate to the circumstances. A person's cerebral and psychological potency is determined based on the withstanding capability he possesses. The universal fact affirms that when an individual is exposed to rigorous painstaking events, that leads to plentiful adverse effects. When a psychological chaos exists for a prolonged time interval it leads to the occurrence of trauma. Traumatic anguish gradually extends a peril to one's wellbeing and also its fallout gives rise to both emotional and psychosomatic trauma. A traumatising occurs based on these grounds such as, an unhinged and a precarious environment, estrangement from parents, familial hostility, sexual, corporeal, verbal mistreatment, abandonment and grim infirmity. Bearing shock and distress in childhood have vigorous and unending consequences.

In most cases when the childhood trauma is left untreated, it develops a fright and defenselessness which is passed on to an adolescent leaving a chance for the development of further trauma. Nevertheless, the trauma would have occurred a long time in the past but it has an everlasting impact in one's life, owing to which emotional imbalances are heaved up. The traumatising plays a pivotal role in the life hood of South Africans where their acute fear towards influential races lead to psychic unsteadiness. Corresponding to Coetzee's characters, the emotional and psychic trauma can be analysed in a novelistic perspective.

Coetzee's prototypical novel *Life and Times of Michael K* explicates an epigrammatic version of a disfigured gardener Michael K the inelegant protagonist who endures the colonial snares of hegemonies and becomes both mentally and physically infelicitous owing to the

horrendous colonial torments. Coetzee has inventively substantiated the colonial and psychic traumatising of a primordial mind of Michael K. This self-effacing and compassionate novel rightly proves to be an exemplary narrative which illustrates the colonial traumatising in its each part. In all the parts of it, the South African society is depicted realistically with the correlation to the host and parasite magnetism characterised by despicable oppression, hostility and inequality of power. The novel comprises three parts which sensationally expounds Michael's piteous confinement and misery that he endures through in an unarmed position.

Part one clearly illustrates Michael's acute colonial distressing phobic receptiveness during his stay in Jakkalsdriff camp which symbolises the camp life of South Africans in the Apartheid permeated society. The second part amplifies Michael's mental and physical restoration in the Kenilworth rehabilitation camp where the military doctor volunteers to assist him and aids him to overcome his traumatophobic tumult. The last part rationally depicts the bleak state of Cape Town which is utterly devastated in the Civil War. This part specifically embodies Michael's overcoming of the phobia owing to which he positively envisions a resolute momentous incident, where he lends a hand to an old man to fetch water from a puddle with a spoon by uttering a concise far-reaching statement, "One can live". (LTM 184). Michael can be observed as the most significant controversial character of Coetzee who intellectually plans to migrate to his mother's distant native household Prince Albert amidst the Civil War afflicted South Africa in order to lead an isolated, solace and serene life as a modest gardener.

Traumatising phobic element plays a pivotal role throughout Michael's journey starting from Sea Point to Prince Albert and his short stay in both Jakkalsdriff and Kenilworth Camp and eventually his round about voyage again to the same Sea Point, the city of Cape Town. He discharges his duty as a professional gardener in Parks Gardens at Sea Point in Cape Town.

Owing to the unexpected outburst of Civil War, he decides to vacate the Cape Town with his ailing mother. Michael's colonial enigmatic trauma spurts out after the death of his mother in Stellenbosch hospital as the officials there suspect him and treat him indifferently owing to his race and his deformed physical appearance.

Many male victims of Apartheid crave to possess the power which they regard to be more inevitable to express their identities of patriarchy, the power which they lost during the Apartheid era. The scrupulous attitude replicates the suppressive patriarchal laws of both the Apartheid and post Apartheid governance. In the novel *Life and Times of Michael K*, Coetzee luminously pictures the fatalities of Apartheid through recording the authenticable testimony of a Black modest gardener who has an immense yearning to lead a secluded life in his mother's native terrain, Prince Albert. The colonial traumatisation can be fundamentally recognised by the incapacitated Sea Point which features the landscape of deserted beach-front flats, deserted farms, convoys and camps.

South Africa is rightly the distinct example for the restraint of permits, curfews and camps of a war-stricken scenario. The events inscribed in the novel depict the typical African arena where the survival of Blacks becomes very complex and unfeasible. The knaves, burglars, fugitive and the civil servant whom Michael confronts directly and indirectly, crave for leading an exuberant state of living. Miller asserts his perspective of Michael as, "Micheal K's Kafkaesque name prepares the reader for the universality of the issues to be examined, but Michael also means "like God", and he becomes the symbol for man's personal freedom, personal identity and dignity" (41).

The novel, *Life and Times of Michael K* is a colonial traumatic allegory which can be analysed on two perspectives, one is universal and another is specifically South African. The typical South African landscape delineation in the novel is the Sea Point beach front, the far-flung Prince Albert district. The universal criterion presented in the novel is the endurance of misery and anguish. Coetzee's Michael experiences both the universal and the South African colonial crisis. His journey from Sea Point to Prince Albert authentically sketches the real South African topographic setting. His biographic account radiantly represents the Black's traumatic predicament in the South African Apartheid and war-stricken country.

From Michael's birth till his attainment of geriatric state, the traumatising elements persuade him and it is impressively incorporated throughout the novel. His personal identity is presented in a peculiar style in the opening lines. He is born with a hare lip: "The lip curled like a snail's foot, the left nostril gaped" (LTM 1). His mother grows fret and impatient with her realisation that a disfigured child is born to her. Hence Michael is observed as the denunciation of piteous curse not only by the South African's natural system of racism but also by the factor that the subjugation of the individual irrespective of race or colour.

Sverre Varvin in his remarkable book *Trauma and Dissociation* states that according to Laub and Podell, "trauma basically implies a loss of trust in an external empathic dyad. This results in loss of communication with "the other" in the internal world, and this loss leads to a loss of representations and self-observing reflective capacity" (12) <sup>[1]</sup>. Coetzee's Michael can be observed as the epitome of traumatic character. He desires for a reclusive existence, his manner of survival in Visagie's farm in a cave and burrow and his preference of isolation in the Kenilworth Rehabilitation camp delineates the colonised South African situation which forces him to choose such an eerie manner of existence.

Coetzee explores the aspect of traumatising by illustrating the life story of the Black African Michael who endures the intense traumatic phobia of colonialism. The protagonist personifies the specific principle of the novel which is the colonial embroilment, he is very meticulous to evade colonisation of any medium. It is the specific factor of the individual to claim his autonomy through protest which ascends this novel to a materialisation of a commonly existing global notion. Michael's childhood days are spent at Huis Norenius a domicile for the immobilised children where he teaches himself the life skills such as reading, counting, sweeping, and bed-making, which will be more appropriate for him to lead his second-class life.

After Michael's expulsion from Huis Norenius at the age of fifteen, he is rapidly transformed and visualised as an atypical creature of isolation, gloominess and squelchy figure similar to a snail which is referred to his harelip, he voluntarily prefers to work in De Waal Park, "with tall pine trees and dim agapanthus walks" (LTM 5). Michael's habitation, the Sea point and also the hospitalisation of his mother in Cape Town are photographed with the surplus resources to depict the war-stricken arena. The hospital where his mother gets admitted treats the war afflicted victims and the reprehensible bus service also are the evidences of the repercussions of the civil war.

Michael's traumatising at various levels can be exemplified by a strait of desertion. The cessation of his beloved mother creates a kind of vacuum state and he experiences an utter refutation. After the expiation of Anna K, he realises that, "he did not miss her . . . except insofar as he had missed her all his life" (LTM 34). Michael is turned to be a recluse after the demise of his mother and remaining as an outcast has become an emblematic attribute of Michael. He experiences an excruciating secluded childhood state because of his harelip even his mother felt extremely annoyed. Consequently after his mother's expiration Michael endures

awful aloofness and is utterly baffled without knowing the path to tread along. Despite a tedious long journey, eventually he alights to his mother's native land Prince Albert and shelters himself in the Visage's farm with brooding on a positive development that he will lead a blissful life, "by the rising and setting of the sun, in a pocket outside him" (LTM 60). This aspect of living "outside time" is regarded as a kind of diversion which is similar to dodging the rules of law "escape the force of law and persist in its shadow" (Mills 190) <sup>[2]</sup>.

Michael is doubly traumatised first in Sea Point Cape Town and hospital and the second time in Visagie's farm by the Visagie's grandson who is expelled from the army, he maltreats Michael as his slave and snobs at him, "like an animal" (LTM 62). Michael again endeavours to flee from this subordinate traumatism and manages to quit from the farm and conceals himself in a cave shaped cavern and takes refuge over there by contemplating that:

Now surely I have come as far as a man can come; surely no  
one will be mad enough to cross these plains, climb these  
mountains, search these rocks to find me; surely now that in all  
the world only I know where I am, I can think of myself as lost. (LTM 66)

Michael budes back to Visagie's farm when he learns that the grandson has fled from farm and it is vacant and rapidly builds a burrow and resides in it like an insect. In the novel it is recorded that initially he felt isolated from the communal of society whereas later he voluntarily detaches himself from the society in Visagie's farm. This new-fangled living which he has premeditated for himself is a more self-afflicted desertion. In *Life Beyond Law: Biopolitics Law and Futurity in Coetzee's Life and Times of Michael K*, Catherine Mill very firmly asserts that "Michael K can profitably be read in conjunction with Agamben's conception of biopolitics and the condition of abandonment". She affirms that, "Michael K appears as a limit-figure of the

human and animal, in which the caesuras that Agamben argues cross the human being in modern politics become evident” (Mills 178) <sup>[3]</sup>.

Eric Santner alleges in his article *On Creaturely Life* that the varmint is interrelated with politics as it correlates on Agamben’s idea of, “ecstasy –belonging” which is the situation of being outlawed which Santner states as, “being outside yet belonging” (50) <sup>[4]</sup>. Santner elucidates this plight as it is interlinked with that of creaturely or devoid living. The concept of Agamben can be closely associated to Michael’s survival. Nevertheless Mill contradicts that both Coetzee and Agamben analyse bio politics and its outcomes in a dissimilar manner. She firmly alleges that, in Agamben,

[b]iopolitical capture of life takes the form of abandonment, and this condition can only be overcome through the redemption of humanity in a unified ‘form –of-life’ in which the human and inhuman elements of the human being can no longer be separated. (178) <sup>[5]</sup>.

Mill asserts that Michael is exposed to the law “while the law simultaneously withdraws from its subject” and adds that “this abandonment to the law is evinced in the random violence of the police state” (183) <sup>[6]</sup>. Mill’s comprehension of Michael’s status is allied to Agamben’s perception of position of exemption and exposed state. Hence, examining the trauma of falling as the “victim” of a bio political life, it is comprehended that Michael deviates from the Agambian concept. Nonetheless Coetzee portrays Michael transforming into an optimistic Black adapting to live within the small boundary of bio political life.

Mill very evidently states that Coetzee perceives bio political life in a sanguine view when compared to Agamben. Mill perfectly asserts that rather than barely fixing on the notion

of abandonment, Coetzee, in *Life and Times of Michael K*, specifies that there is a constructive living beyond the state of utter desertion. The bio political life has caused a great havoc in Michael's life which can be referred to his life at Seapoint, Stellenbosch, Visagie's farm and camp that the foremost loss, is his mother's expiration leading to the loss of his own land, and eventually the loss of his own self. Hence Mill contradicts that, "what follows is not a Freudian and redemptive working through . . . less itself" (189) <sup>[7]</sup>.

The traumatic obliteration indirectly enables an individual to become very sturdy and aids one to develop further in order to gain positivity to infringe beyond the state of abandonment and begin anew life. This development of positivity is what McColl Chesney signifies in his distinguished article *Toward an Ethics of Silence: Michael K* by referring to Beckett's phrase that, "I can't go on, I'll go on", (321) <sup>[8]</sup> which is very strongly associated to novel's central theme. The perspective of Mill and McColl Chesney is the positive hope to begin a new life, that has enabled Michael to flee from the desertion which is inflicted upon him by the bio political life; he detests being taken care and clinches his own susceptibility and he bitterly states that his condition is that of, "having become an object of charity" (LTM 181). Michael possesses the inhibition to recognise that he is protected in the rehabilitation centre. The man in whose place he takes refuge says that, "people must help each other, that's what I believe" (LTM 48) but Michael "allows this utterance to sink into his mind," wondering:

Do I believe in helping people . . . He might help people, he  
might not help them, and he did not know beforehand,  
anything was possible. He did not seem to have a belief, or  
did not seem to have a belief regarding help. Perhaps  
I am the stony ground, he thought. (LTM 48)



McColl Chesney evaluates this passage and overstates that Michael is highly baffled to relegate his thoughts constructively but instead positions himself, “outside the discourse of the state that only seems to be able to think in these abstractions” (312) <sup>[9]</sup>. Nevertheless Michael proves himself to be an ideal gardener by cultivating the vegetables in Visagie’s farm and also he dedicatedly irrigates the farm land. Though his stay in Visagie’s farm refers to living outside the discourse of the state, he is highly contended and strongly believes that he is a successful survivor. In *An Infinite Question: The Paradox of Representation in Life and Times of Michael K*, Tamlyn Monson affirms strongly that: “[t]he love and care with which Michael treats the vegetables is a sign of responsibility . . . To do something for the Other. To give” (94) <sup>[10]</sup>.

Consequently his plantation in Visagie’s farm becomes palpable to become mentally strong. David Babock argues in *Professional Subjectivity and the Attenuation of Character in J.M. Coetzee’s Life and Times of Michael K* that, “Michael K interprets the pleasures he takes in cultivation as an inner truth about himself, one in which his professional being develops beyond the social context in which it was learned” (901) <sup>[11]</sup>. Throughout his complete existence Michael has lived as a responsible individual sheltering and shielding his mother and an austere follower of the subject of the law and through his magnificent art of cultivation, he has proved himself as a benevolent benefactor.

Michael disregards to perceive on generalisation because he aspires to be an independent philosopher and explores a different way of living outside the law as a, “refusal of the state of exception that governs his society” (Chesney 319) <sup>[12]</sup>. Michael’s policy of living outside the law is a contradiction against the law of universe. His choice of choosing an isolated survival proves his aspiration to maintain his dignity and he upholds his unique beliefs. It can be directly viewed as Michael claiming himself for an independent endurance, his nurturing of the farm, and

averting the law which the society has exercised upon him. When the medical officer learns that Michael has fled from the rehabilitation camp, he utters publicly that, “Michael will die of exposure” (LTM 156). The medical officer realises Michael’s strong yearning of liberty from the iron clutches of society, he realises that,

That I was wasting my life, that I was wasting it by living  
 fromday to day in a state of waiting . . . War time is a tome of  
 waiting . . . Still, it occurred to me to wonder whether Felicity  
 [the nurse at camp hospital], to name only Felicity, thought of  
 herself as living in suspension, alive but not alive, while history  
 hesitated over what course it would take. (LTM 158)

Michael’s confrontation against colonial trauma is interrelated to his protest against the universal discourse which has eventually facilitated him to lay a pathway for his own escape from the brawny and strapping chains of colonialism. His specific quality of acknowledging defenselessness, Paul challenges as something which is “capable of panicking us” (74) <sup>[13]</sup>. He passively accepted his susceptible tarumatisation as a part of his personified survival which he is subjected to. While anatomising his predicament on the traumatic perspective, it can be construed that he exemplifies the non- Freudian approach of trauma recovery, rightly through his personified survival. Despite accepting his susceptibility of getting trapped into the colonial clutches, he tremendously transforms himself to be an independent individual.

Coetzee’s most quintessential novel *Foe* luminously exemplifies the colonial trauma experienced by Coetzee’s White woman protagonist Susan and the Black Friday. She endures the peculiar state of affairs of traumatisation as she lands in the island of Cruso as a cast away. *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* describes trauma, as “a mental state of extreme

shock caused by a very frightening or unpleasant experience”. (1769) <sup>[14]</sup>. Susan’s extreme fringe of fright is aroused as she suspects that she has alighted in the land of cannibals. *Foe* is considered to be the unembellished epitome of colonial traumatising as it was set during the period of Apartheid with a small canvas of people who are defectively persecuted by the rigid clutches of colonisation. The chieftain characters Susan and Friday are unswervingly and circuitously colonised by two male dominant characters Cruso and Defoe. Coetzee has employed an innovative technique of introducing the world of cannibals in *Foe*. This distinguished novel can be regarded as the most unique literary work since it holds its own significant features to kindle the curiosity of the readers.

*Foe* can also be analysed as the archetype of colonial allegory which upgrades the traumatising effects of being mutilated. This work of fiction is impregnated with realistic events and also it comprises many resolute themes such as colonialism, dominance, sexuality, subservience, language, fate and imperialism. The novel not only focuses on the colonial traumatising but also on the story telling narrative technique since it encompasses an elite section of the autobiographical narration of the White woman protagonist Susan to a writer named Daniel Defoe. The distinction between the real and the fictitious world is aesthetically tinted throughout the novel.

In the most legendary critical writing *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*, Cathy Caruth exhaustively expresses how frequently “texts of . . . literature . . . both speak about and speak through the profound story of traumatic experience” (4) <sup>[15]</sup>. Most of the earlier novels of Coetzee emphasise the traumatic distress of the underprivileged that are heinously suppressed by the patriarchal dominated society. For example the primary novel of Coetzee, *Duskland*, comprises of two major parts which justly depict the two different

descriptions of patriarchal tyranny. The first part of the novel ventures the traumatic aftermath of a man who was positioned in a complicated circumstance to state under oath the malignant crimes which are unjustly inflicted on the ignorant victims of the Vietnam War. The second part indicates the significance of time valued in the African history when the Dutch colonisers smoulder the natives of South Africa in a hunting voyage.

Susan's unfathomable fearful plight has a close association to Vander Kolk's trauma theory. The prominent trauma connoisseur Bessel A. Vander Kolk in his article *The Intrusive Past: The Flexibility of Memory and the Engraving of Trauma*, evidently states that "Traumatized people often fail to maintain a personal sense of significance . . . they often identify with the aggressor and express hate for people who remind them of their own helplessness" (197) <sup>[16]</sup>. When Susan alights first in Cruso's island, she is terrified of Friday's external appearances and starts to despise him.

It can be very obviously professed that the extreme augment of violence in South African nation explicitly against women and children can be measured as a corrosion of the traumatic trouncing of clout which a Black male would have endured during the Apartheid administration. In addition to this VanderKolk alleges that, "Reenactment of one's own victimization seems to be a major cause of the cycle of violence that is recurrently experienced by the victims of trauma" (199) <sup>[17]</sup>. In the novel *Foe*, the White protagonist Susan is traumatised since she is confined in a mysterious island and also resisted as well as appallingly hindered to record her own autobiographical events of her island life as an outcome, she entrusts Defoe for assisting her in documenting the account of her life.

Coetzee's *Foe* can be compared to Golding's literary masterpiece *Lord of Flies* as the novelist has imaginatively pictured R.M. Ballantyne's coral island as it elucidates the Ballantyne's illusionary images of four boys whose characterisation is mystifying. Similarly Coetzee has photographed an island in which Crusoe represents himself as the king. With Susan's description of Crusoe's physical appearance and attire one can image him as an ideal king. "His staff in his hand and his great conical hat on his head, I thought: He is truly a kingly figure; he is the true king of the island" (*Foe* 37).

Susan's psychological trauma ascends right from her adrift to the shore of the island as a cast away till her arrival at Foe's abode in a distant country England. Susan becomes extremely panicked at her first sight of the Black Friday, she presumes him to be an insane and qualms that he may devour her at any time. He has been trained to be the acquiescent slave for his authoritarian master Crusoe, since he saved him from the cannibal troop and he is assigned to carry out the culinary tasks and trivial errands. With relevance to his personality traits, Friday can be compared to Walt Disney's barbarian.

Susan's adrift to the anonymous island elevates her trepidation since she witnesses only Friday on the shore whom she approaches in order to quench her thirst and her attempts ended in vain. Only after a long time her basic survival of the requirement of water is met. In an utter depression she claims, "where brooks run to quench the castaway's thirst" (*Foe* 7). No sooner her thirst is quenched she strives to reach the rocky abode of Crusoe where Friday transmits her for a long extended miles. Susan's refuge on Crusoe's island has driven her into an unfathomable gloominess. At her first meet of Crusoe Susan begins to narrate her story by drawing a parallel connection to the past and the immediate present situation. Susan states that her incessant search for her abducted daughter in Bahia and her journey to Portugal and also her confrontation with

the terrible mutineer horde and eventually she has landed on the desert isle as a castaway. Susan is utterly dismayed when she learns that Crusoe never heeds to her narration. She becomes highly speculative of fearing that she may be intimidated to be the second slave for Crusoe; moreover her fear mounts up to a pinnacle when she learns that Friday is a tongueless captive.

Friday is positioned in a subservient status since he fervently performs all the tasks assigned by his master Crusoe. Susan broods about the mystery behind Friday's life when she learns that he is incarcerated by a cannibal first and Crusoe rescued him later. Hence Friday is labelled as a factual colonised who has led a life both as a cannibal and later as a pitiful menial. Coetzee creatively presents the allegorical association by portraying the character Friday as a mutilated Black. He unerringly symbolises the oppressed Black community of Apartheid South Africa. This Crusoe's submissive slave personifies the repressed colonised who are immobilised to shield themselves from the colonial hegemony.

Friday's pathetic plight is revealed when Susan attempts to communicate with him and realises that he does not possess the traits of civilisation since he has not been taught the language by his master who he considered him merely as a slave. Susan becomes psychologically traumatised when her endeavours to obtain the real story of Friday ends in disparity. She is mentally perturbed throughout her stay on the island as she struggles to get acclimatised to that weird circumstance. She probes Crusoe about Friday's mystic silence and grumbles that he should have been taught the language in order to converse with his master:

Yet would it not have lightened your solitude had Friday been master of English? You and he might have experienced all these years, the pleasures of conversation; you might have brought home to him some of the blessings of civilization and made him a better man. (Foe 22)

Cruso not only ignores Susan's query about Friday's silence but also neglects her pleading. Friday earnestly follows Cruso's commandments and also aids him in building his terrace, cooking, cleaning and nursing. As a deserted individual he spends the night by sleeping under the tree outside the hut. Through his everlasting enslavement, Friday embodies the mutilated colonised who are mercilessly dispossessed of all their civil liberties. He is effortlessly susceptible to the violent tyranny of colonialism. "Friday has no command of words and therefore no defence against being re-shaped day by day in conformity with the desires of others" (Foe 121). He symbolises the feeble colonised who are wretchedly taunted and traumatised. Cruso's death causes a phobic traumatising sense within Friday when Susan announces him that "Your master is dead, Friday . . . Did he know we were subject to death, like beasts? I held out a hand but he would not take it. So I knew he knew something;" (Foe 44, 45)

Coetzee portrays Susan as a White liberal who attempts to escape the traumatising circumstances in the anonymous island. She attains a colonial position of becoming neither a coloniser nor a colonised. She empathises the desolate condition of Friday and tenuously endeavours to liberate him from the stringent clutches of colonisation of Cruso since he is the White master of the Black slave Friday. Initially Friday seemed to be a scary creature for Susan, but as the novel progresses he has become a comrade for her, specifically after the death of Cruso the king of the island. As she is unrepressed, unlike Friday, she upholds the free will to express her judgments and requirements. She regrets that Cruso being the king of the island fails to hold an incomparable record of his life on the island. Susan operates as an intermediate between the slave and the master. This mediator position signifies an authentic identity in the postcolonial era.

Susan is crammed with a terrific mind frame when Cruso narrates the life history of Friday, and also she speculates that similarly as Friday, she may also be viciously colonised as a tongueless slave. Her colonial traumatising sensation attains a pinnacle when Cruso elucidates the real life incident of Friday's disfigurement. Once when Friday starts to hum a rhyme by raising his face to stars, he closed his eyes tightly and began to sing and Susan felt that his voice was not that of a human. Susan recognises that his voice missed the clarity for which Cruso summons Friday and shows his mouth very close to her.

No sooner Susan sees his mouth, promptly she learns that his tongue is being cut off, she grows highly impatient and pesters Cruso to narrate Friday's story. She is very inquisitive to investigate the strange personality who has slashed Friday's tongue and the mystery behind his physical marring. She suspects that the slave hunters of Africa have incised his tongue and learns from Cruso that when Friday was a mere child he is abducted by the slavers of South Africa. Susan becomes highly engrossed in a mystic suspicion as to why human beings are captivated as slaves and cannibals, in an utter amazement she gazes at Cruso and meticulously listens to Friday's story. Cruso exhaustively recounts the ambiguity of the tongueless Friday:

Perhaps the slavers, who are Moors, hold the tongue to be a delicacy",  
he said. "Or perhaps they grew weary of listening to Friday's wails  
of grief, that went on day and night. Perhaps they wanted to prevent  
him from ever telling his story: who he was, where his home lay, how  
it came about that he was taken. Perhaps they cut out the tongue of  
every cannibal they took, as a punishment. How will we ever know the  
truth? (Foe 23)



Susan's gracious and upright quality of transforming the barbarian and the cannibal Friday into a civilised individual exposes the altruistic stance of the South African liberal and their consideration for the benighted colonised. Susan endures mental traumatising facets to protest against Cruso for the liberation of Friday as she is highly sympathetic towards Friday and desires that he should be cherished as a dignified individual. Though she attempts to unchain Friday, she is persistently harked back of pessimism that Friday may possess cannibalistic traits, which leads to the arousal of her psychological traumatising situation. After her witness and realisation of Friday's poignant plight, she endeavours to unfetter him from the tyrant master Cruso. The contrasting events recorded in the novel express that on one hand she supports Cruso whereas on the other hand she empathises Friday's dejected predicament. If Coetzee's depiction of the island is regarded as an allegorical representation of South Africa, then the account of their life articulated by Susan can be termed as apolitical.

Coetzee establishes a complex identity of a colonial situation where Susan the White and Friday the Black are downgraded by the White master Cruso. Susan experiences a liberated position on the island and she inclines that Friday also should experience the same. She combats against Cruso for the civilisation and the liberation of Friday. She unflinchingly expresses her desire to flee from the remote island to live a blissful life in England. A comparison can be drawn between the colonial protagonists of Coetzee's earlier novels who can be regarded as the embodiment of positive traits. They resist by leading a serene and idyllic life despite the hostile circumstances. Susan is considered as the ideal personification of the liberal South African colonial whose positive qualities enable her to lead a contented life. Though Susan tolerates a traumatic situation of being accommodated in Cruso's hut in the accompaniment of Friday, she very strongly expresses her wish to be rescued from the deflected island.

Susan eagerly awaits an opportunity to flee from the inaccessible island from the first day of her arrival there. She desperately anticipates any sailor or captain to alight on the island and rescue them. Her proclivity to lead a heavenly life has become her foremost predilection: "I have a desire to be saved which I must call immoderate," I said. "It burns in me night and day, I can think of nothing else" (Foe 36). Her wish to skedaddle from the island causes a perturbation in Crusoe. Since Crusoe is the first progeny of the island, he has a sturdy affiliation to it owing to which he refutes his getaway from the same. Crusoe leads a contented and comfy life building a close acquaintance with Friday. Hence he possesses the sole kingship and reigns because of which he detests abandoning the island where he has lived for many decades. He negatively rebukes Susan and her ideas of fleeing away from the island by stating that, "I do not wish to hear of your desire," said Crusoe . . . it does not concern the island" (Foe 36). His strong association towards his island is clearly perceived from the above utterance.

The portrayal of Susan's character is not only unique but also peculiar since she has a strong craving for beginning a new life and wishes to overcome her traumatising position which she declares, "There was too little desire in Crusoe and Friday: too little desire to escape, too little desire for a new life. Without desire how is it possible to make a new story?" (Foe 88). There are many contrasting traits between Susan and Crusoe as they both do not wish turning into a new leaf since they never forebode a positive future. Both are contentedly accustomed to the mundane life on the island where Crusoe as the master commands and Friday as his dutiful slave obeys him faultlessly. Although Crusoe is the descendant of English family, he connects himself closely to the island and never desires to retire back to his reverential designation in England. He represents himself as a supreme coloniser of colonising Friday by exercising a tyrannical authority over him. Friday proves to be an unlettered slave who fails to find a vent to get

acquainted with the outside world which leads to his despondent state; moreover he is tongueless to communicate.

Friday's elusion from the colonial traumatisatation and Susan's aspiration for a contended life results in their arrival in England. Susan possesses a keen desire to record her account of life in Cruso's island as a story for which she approaches Daniel Defoe. Foe is very crafty and sly as he attempts to colonise both Susan and Friday; moreover he endeavours to manipulate and incorporate his own perceptive and construal in Susan's story to which Susan contradicts. Susan is again physically and psychologically tousled down because of Foe's apathetic conduct. He employs his beguiling aspect of dodging Susan by impersonating a strange young girl as her daughter. Despite many tactics of Foe, Susan never accepts that young girl as her daughter. Susan is mentally cautious not to fall as a prey into the despotic hands of Foe.

Susan very ingeniously manages to flee from her colonial clasp and psychological traumatisatation which Foe causes to her and also adroitly liberates Friday from the awful clutches of colonisation. Coetzee has aesthetically moulded Susan as a woman protagonist of high cerebral and rational capability who audaciously confronts all the tribulations with valour and optimistic trait. Her unfortunate and unprecedented arrival to Cruso's island paves her pathway to directly witness and realise the dreadful status of the colonised who are ruthlessly forsaken in the far- fetched island. She assists both the master and the slave tenderly and also shrewdly dodges from the evil trap of Foe. Coetzee has radiantly photographed Susan as an epitome of emancipation of African women community who has ceaselessly sought her liberation. Being a woman she strives to be psychologically stable and wisely responds to all the insurmountable issues. Specifically this characteristic trait of Susan enables her to reject the girl whom Foe

claims as her daughter. She also symbolises herself to be a rational woman representing the South African womanhood.

Susan's erotic life portrayed in the novel *Foe* also provokes a stint of colonial phobic response in her life. It has its own negative aftermath in both Cruso's and Defoe's life since she develops a sexual liaison with both Cruso and Foe. Susan voluntarily indulges in the sexual action with Cruso in order to recuperate him from his ailment whereas she falls as a prey into the vicious entrapment of Foe and indulges in the sexual activity. Since Susan has arrived on the island as a foreigner and struggles to get acclimatised with the habitual routine of Friday and Cruso, she pities him when he gasps to breathe and in order to comfort him she extends a sexual contact with him. Cruso's seclusion for nearly fifteen years urges him to draw her very close and by analysing the same reason, she also accepts him. At the burial of Cruso, she reminisces her sexual affiliation with him; however the Captain and the other officials of the ship consider her to be his spouse, "Did they truly think of me as Cruso's wife, or had tales already reached them" (Foe 45). Susan symbolises as a compassionate sturdy woman who maintains a sexual relationship with two men on unusual occasions.

Coetzee's *Foe* has similar relevance to Albert Memmi's incomparable concept 'colonial'. Memmi in his prominent critical writing *The Colonizer and the Colonized* demonstrates that Europeans in their colonies are munificent and generous people. They possess all the altruistic and philanthropic qualities within them owing to which they eagerly aspire for a propitious and promising day of liberation for the wrecked colonised. Nevertheless they resist to solely confronting the colonisers who exercise their iron hand on any individual who challenges to contravene the rigid colonial rule and Memmi has assuredly declared it in his aforestated critical work.

Coetzee's most incredible novel *Disgrace* is produced with austere lucidity which has made Coetzee to attain the zenith of his career. *Disgrace* reconnoiters the retrogression of the protagonist and dramatises the poignant plight of the chieftain characters in chaotic racial conflict of South Africa. This eighth novel of Coetzee is regarded as the emblematic exemplar of the frontier of world literature. The novel is set during the post- Apartheid era which artistically depicts the racial and the psychological trauma endured by both the men and women protagonists of the novel. The molestation of Lucy by three African prowlers can be considered as the most crucial trauma that is vividly presented in the novel.

The colonial as well as the psychological traumatic account of the novel, *Disgrace* demonstrates the mutilated African women community suppressed by the patriarchal hegemony. Hence trauma plays a very pivotal role in the permeation of violence which South Africans confronted in both the Apartheid and the post- Apartheid era. Caruth rightly states that, "Because history and trauma are never simply one's own, the trauma narrative pertains to a nation as it does to the nation's individuals" (24) <sup>[18]</sup>. The immobilised victims of Apartheid are persistently coerced to endure a psychic traumatic imbalanced stance, thus they combat to conquer it. It can be vividly comprehended that there exist a rapid suffusion of violence in South Africa where women are highly affected:

In South Africa, violence has become normative and, to a large extent, accepted rather than challenged . . . It is presented as one of the few ways that township men have to assert their masculinity . . . it has been suggested that man are often reacting as victims themselves and have to take a persona that serves as a coping mechanism for the risks of dangers of everyday working lives . . .

leading them to disregard their safety from HIV/AIDS and to perpetrate violence against those weaker than themselves. (Outwater 139) <sup>[19]</sup>.

As an ensue of racial oppression South Africa records the highest ratio of reported sexual harassment cases which are not submitted to the court of law: “To this day [t]he use of certain forms of violence by men to control and punish women in particular situation is perceived as socially acceptable to all ages of both sexes” (Outwater 140) <sup>[20]</sup>. Regrettably the techniques that are operated to gain power by the patriarchal force are the re-enactment of their own persecution which indirectly impinges on the African women in the domestic setting.

Many research programmes are pursued on the recuperation of the traumatised victims who have endured acute traumatic circumstances, “Because the traumatic syndromes have basic features in common, the recovery process also follows a common pathway” (Judith 3) <sup>[21]</sup>. The recuperating process include, ensuring safety measures, restructuring the trauma story and recouping the relation between the remnants and the affinity. For any trauma victim there is a “privileged moment of insight when repressed ideas, feelings, and memories surface into consciousness” (Judith 2) <sup>[22]</sup>. It is through this perspicacity, victims can be recuperated. Trauma experts persist on the significance of restricting the trauma story for a better restoration through the rehabilitation centers. “Reconnecting traumatic episodic fragments in order to reconstruct history and then making meaning of their present symptoms on the light of past events, provide a big step towards a trauma victim’s recovery”. ( Judith 3) <sup>[23]</sup>.

Herman rightly contends that many of the trauma victims are not the men who participate in wars, but the women engaged in civilian life. Owing to the dishonour of sexual harassment, women have their own reticence to express their traumatic plight and they confine themselves into a world of repression and mutilation owing to remorse and discomfiture. Women victims of

seduction struggle to overcome their encumbrance of defiance, neglect, confidentiality and ignominy which their particular traumas provoke and mostly their spineless attitude provides them a liaison to the sexual and domestic deploration. These kinds of women victims are ensnared in a corkscrew of re-enactment of their traumas since they fail to choose the validate medium to express their traumatic endurance which will directly aid them to escape the barbarity they experience.

Coetzee expresses his most considerate trait of the mutilated restraint of women through a repressive trauma which appears to be the fundamental theme of his novel *Disgrace*. This novel aesthetically sketches the Apartheid inflicted South African society where women's state is insecure. The White protagonist Lucy and Lurie are predestined to be the victims of South African colonial trauma and their state becomes more heartrending as they are traumatised both physically and psychologically. However the women trauma victims Melanie and Lucy endure the suffering of sexual assault as Lucy is pressurised to accept the predicament of becoming the third wife for a Black African subordinate, Petrus. Lucy's father Lurie is an aged English Professor who pursues his career at Technical University Cape Town. He quits his job at the university and retires to his daughter's household farm at Oudtshroon town of Salem at Grahamstown.

During his stay with his daughter Lucy, the heinous event of Lucy's seduction occurs. After the gang seduction, Lucy experiences physical and psychological trauma. Lucy suppresses her trauma by not expressing it to her father Lurie, her only statement to her father's advise is, "I am a dead person and I do not know yet what will bring me back to life" (D 161). Even though Lurie regrets about his daughter's distressing situation and also feels it very enigmatic to presume Lucy's deliberate and willed silence, he considers her silence and expresses that,

“patiently, silently, Lucy must work her own way back from darkness to light” (D 107). In her very famous essay, “Pursuing Ghosts: The Traumatic Sublime in J.M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*”, Kimberely Wedeven Segall equates Lucy’s refusal to share her experience with Lurie as, “evoking Gayatri Spivak’s argument on the difficulties of inscribing the voice of the oppressed figure” (48) <sup>[24]</sup>. After the sexual assault of Lucy, the psychological state of her father Lurie can be considered and termed as “in shock”. His baffling state can be stigmatised as physical and mental agony. His physical fright is highly terrible that first his hand is badly hurt and injured; later that pain spreads to his entire body; moreover he visualises appalling and dreadful nightmares which he terms himself as figment of imagination as his daughter Lucy wails for rescue. Gradually Lurie attempts to overcome his trauma which develops into a positive hope that time may cure not only his physical trauma but also his psychological trauma.

Lurie’s psychological state can be affiliated to Freudian Trauma Theory. Freudian concept of trauma pathologises survivors “as victims without . . . agency, sufferers from an ‘illness’ that can be ‘cured’ within existing structures of institutionalized psychiatry” (52) <sup>[25]</sup>. On the basis of Freudian model, Lurie gradually attempts to overcome his psychological grief and also is restoring his physical valour and vigour, he is getting rejuvenated: “His scalp is healing over . . . presumably Lucy is healing too” (D 141). Bev Shaw pacifies Lurie who harbours both the father and daughter in her abode and she morally assists them to overcome their traumatic ensnarement. In order to pursue the routine activities, Lurie acclimatizes to work in Bev Shaw’s clinic to assist her to incarcerate the dogs, as an attempt to disregard the depressing past events. He desires that Lucy also should lead a normal blissful life, hence he persistently advises her to travel to Holland and get reunited with her mother. Lurie’s new job in Bev Shaw’s clinic



facilitates him to sympathise with the misery of animals as he assists Bev to anaesthetise the dogs and carries their carcasses to the hospital.

Lucy's gang molestation can be considered as the traumatic legacy of Apartheid. The novel is haunted with terrible ensues of the legacy of Apartheid both unreservedly and overtly. Lurie infers Lucy's seduction as a misdemeanor of historical vengeance: "history speaking through them (the rapists) . . . A history of wrong . . . It came down from ancestors" (D 156). Lurie desires to rescue Lucy from falling a prey to the Apartheid bequest; hence he admonishes her for her deliberate stay in the farm in spite of enduring dishonour and disgraceful circumstances. On the other hand, Lucy neither heeds to him nor acts according to his will. She disregards Lurie's advice and she is very gritty to reside in the South African farm land. She asserts sturdily about the anonymous rapists as, "They see me as owing something. They see themselves as debt collectors and tax collectors" (D 158). Lurie extremely reproaches Lucy's submissive stance and interprets it as a severe blunder where Lucy 'humbles' herself before history.

Segall analyses this dialogue between Lurie and Lucy with reference to Desmond Tutu's statement, "How are the 'ghosts of the past' recognized so they don't return to haunt us" (48) <sup>[26]</sup>. Lucy's unyielding determination to stay in South Africa and Lurie's persistent admonition against her resolution, by correlating this conflict between the father and daughter on the Apartheid legacy the novel interrogates that, "How is experiential memory assessed after a history of violation?" (D 48). There is an interrelation between the first and the second part of the novel as it is presented in the first part that Lurie seduces his student Melanie, the Black, and quits his job from the University and takes refuge in his daughter Lucy's household. The second part is his reunion with his daughter Lucy in the Outdshroon town where he has to face the obnoxious event of his daughter's molestation. In order to resolve the disreputable and unethical

act of seducing his student, he has to summon before the Truth and Reconciliation Committee after which Melanie has lodged a complaint against him. The committee speaks rather of 'abuse' instead of 'affair' contradicting that there is only an inferior recognition for the Blacks and Lurie, the White, takes the position of power, "the long history of exploitation of which this (the affair or abuse) is part" (D 53). This can be regarded as the history of exploitation between men and women, but it directly indicates the South Africa's history of Apartheid.

Lurie is invariably traumatised when he is summoned before the enquiry committee and as a depressing outcome he quits his job as he steadfastly determines not to yield to the pressure of the Vice Rector of the University. It can be perceived that through his decision of expelling from the University, he is psychologically traumatised only to a certain extent; however, Melanie remains to be the official victim though many critics argue that whether she is a truly or untruly a victim. The history of hostility and sadism is contracted in an intense method and Lurie's attitudinal behaviour as belonging to a White bourgeois society is never expressed by himself as a racially prejudiced personality. Hence considers this enquiry meet only as a mere act of threat. Coetzee has fiercely depicted this event and circuitously states that through Lurie the voice of the White oppressing community is articulated. Lurie apprehends that he is oppressed in his daughter's farmland where the neighbourhood is Black, the native of South Africa.

Lurie conceptualises that he and his daughter symbolise the White oppressors as he captures the boy red-handed when he sneaks into Lucy's privacy; the boy is Pollux the Black, and is also one of the intruders. Lurie grows very forceful and ferocious at the very sight of him. Lurie presumes that the boy seeks another opportunity to abduct and mortify Lucy and perceives that, "phrases that all his life he has avoided seem suddenly just and right: Teach him a lesson and show him his place" (D 206). After this disgraceful event, Lurie decides to vacate his

daughter's household and retire back to Cape Town as he attempts to escape from the racial enslavement. He apprehends that the native Africans aim to unpleasantly oppress the White community as they panic that the White settlers may possess their land and wealth. Lurie's racial phobic trauma urges him to relocate to Cape Town; nevertheless he requests his daughter Lucy also to flee from the African farmland as he fears that her household is insecure for her.

Lurie's traumatic status can be analysed on the basis of Segall's traumatic sublimity. Segall coins a new phrase as "traumatic sublime" which can be demonstrated as, "a troubling sensation that occurs when a painful event of the past is changed into a disturbing image, shifts the gaze from the self to an-other therewith altering the focus from the protagonist to another character" (42) <sup>[27]</sup>. Segall perceives that the merciless molestation of Lucy has forced Lurie into a depressed and disheartened state which can be correlated to traumatic sublimity. Despite confronting the enquiry committee, Lurie never realised his unethical act as a sinful crime but when he witnesses his daughter's poignant state he is psychologically traumatised that his transgression from the ethical conduit cannot be justified.

Segall perceives that, "the metamorphosis of Lurie's sublimations (as) . . . part of (his) emotional development and his sublimated desire to hear the voices of the subjugated" (56) <sup>[28]</sup>. On the basis of analysing trauma the Freudian or the Caruthian manner of correlating trauma to language or the failure of the language recorded in the novel can be explored. Lucy's desperate calm and serene approach and the mutilation of the dogs which are highly immobilised to articulate their stories and Lurie's consequent world-weariness to represent the offended tenor cannot be regarded as a traumatic sublime as Segall wishes one to accept. Lurie reconstructs the traumatic occurrence through his creative drafting of opera, but inevitably it is not the right

manner in which he, “succeeds in embodying a symbolic trace of the traumatic past” (Segall 50)<sup>[29]</sup>, since the opera is obviously a language.

Coetzee possesses an unfathomable conviction that the South African nation’s desolation is owing to the nonexistence of love by the Whites. This entrenched fervour has been permeated throughout the novel. It is being contradicted by many critics that Coetzee abstained himself from the pragmatism till the nation was controlled and reigned by Whites, once the power transferred to Blacks he preferred the rational genre, as the outcome of his choice the novel *Disgrace* is produced. It can be perceived that the solution instituted by him as accepted by Lucy is not the real rational and sensible solution for the traumatised plight of South Africans. The novel *Disgrace* is centered on the White man and woman protagonists, the father and the daughter, respectively.

The father Lurie in his endeavour of quenching his insatiable sexual urge commits a crime of sexually assaulting his own student Melanie, a Black. During his period of refuge in his daughter Lucy’s farm, a ruthless disgraceful incident occurs where his daughter Lucy is seduced by group of Black men. The ignorant victims of both the sexual molestation are Melanie and Lucy. Either because of vulnerability or indescribable trauma, they restrain to protest against the cruel act inflicted upon them. The novel attempts to anatomise the trauma of seduction endured by the innocent victims to overcome their mental agony. The work of fiction incorporates the Apartheid consequences and issue of sexual maltreatment has been crucially permeated in the South African nation as a ramification of political vengeance.

The novel *Disgrace* powerfully proves to be the South Africa’s exclusive literary master piece as it authentically photographs the factual miserable state of Post Apartheid South Africa.

The novel sculpts the White and Black characters artistically as they portray the social as well as the political milieu that is scandalously deceitful. The Truth and the Reconciliation Committee conducts the enquiry in the University against Lurie which is proven to be unproductive since Lurie has dodged the enquiry committee by resigning from his post from the university. The novel *Disgrace* clearly records two sexual seductions by men of two different races and leads a path to dichotomy of sinful crimes of mortifying the women of two races who eventually experience psychological trauma.

Carine M. Mardorossian in her remarkable article, *Rape and Violence of Representation in J.M. Coetzee's Disgrace*, evidently argues that by the, “skilful use of narration and juxtaposition, Coetzee takes a horrific scene of violence and urges readers to view it is not black hole of analysis, but as an opportunity to overhaul normative approaches to rape, justice, and human relationships” (74) <sup>[30]</sup>. The novel endeavours to analyse on the source of the complicated association following the heinous crime on one hand, when Melanie’s molestation is concerned and investigates on precision and righteousness on the other hand, when Lucy’s seduction is taken into consideration.

Coetzee has illustrated the mental trauma of Melanie, she being thirty years junior to Lurie is coerced to extend a sexual liaison with him which is highly regarded as unethical. She skips her test and ceases to attend Lurie’s classes and decides to withdraw from her course, and her torment is provoked when her boyfriend intimidates her to lodge a complaint against Lurie. The reconciliation committee is slandered when Lurie attempts to escape from the vice clutches of the university which coerces him to repent publicly. “The criterion is whether you are prepared to acknowledge your fault in a public manner and take steps to remedy it” (D 58). After Lurie’s resignation, Melanie withdraws from the course and reunites with her parents.

Melanie being a Black, has not sought justice since her position is inferior and is placed in a troublesome predicament of undergoing a physical and mental trauma.

The committee which led the enquiry of Lurie is baffled to comprehend the intentional response of Lurie's avoidance from confessing his dishonorable and appalling act. The enquiry committee of Lurie correlated to the TRC trials, failed to arrive at the truth and justice where the convict is being permitted to breach the jurisdictions of law. The committee anticipates Lurie to admit his crime which he has shrewdly dodged and later Lurie endures the mental and physical trauma because of Lucy's pitiless molestation; hence he was positioned as a helpless father to rescue and shield his daughter from the outrageous atrocity. The Whites who maltreat and indulge in an injustice acts against Blacks, with a strong certainty endure a callous predicament of the same situation and that is authenticated from Lurie's life. Coercing the executor of these sinful crimes to admit to their injustice action, from the perspective of Coetzee is not the equivalent for scrutinising and examining the truth.

Lurie's daughter Lucy who is brutally seduced by the African intruders attempts to conceal her disgraceful plight therefore she too becomes the victim of physical trauma of getting impregnated and firmly decides to deliver a baby. The conspicuous parallel between his own seduction of his student and Lucy's sexual assault indicate a knack of Lurie's dodging intention. His choice of taking refuge in Lucy's farmland arises the incongruous relationship between father and the daughter about the standards and style of living in the new-fangled Apartheid stricken South Africa. Lurie encounters three African intruders during their walk in the morning along with his Lucy and it is they who molest her later:

Three men are coming toward them on the path, or two

men and a boy. They are walking fast, with countrymen's long strides. The dog at Lucy's side slows down, bristles, should we be nervous?' he murmurs. 'I don't know'.

She shortens the Dobermann's leashes. The men are upon them.

A nod, a greeting, and they have passed. Who are they?' he asks. 'I've never laid eyes on them before'. They reach the

plantation boundary and turn back. The strangers are out of sight. (D 91)

These three Black trespassers apparently from the vicinity, forcefully jump at the threshold, break open the gate and the door of Lucy's house, they perform the act of burglary by looting all the valuable items and manhandle Lurie, coarsely seduce Lucy and also shoot the dogs in a beastly manner. The plight in the South African milieu is considered as a common and usual act but not a crime. The Black men never intrigue this odious act of taunting and harassing the fiend. To the contrast, Lucy highly despises revealing her seduction and Lurie is completely baffled and puzzled to comprehend the decision of Lucy as she affirms to stay in the same African farmland. After this disgraceful event, Lurie notices an utter transformation in Lucy. "He goes . . . but the door is closed. 'don't come in,' says Lucy's voice. 'Are you all right? Are you hurt? . . . "He looks into her eyes. 'My dearest, dearest . . . he says and chokes on a sudden surge of tears" (D 98).

Lucy's response to her father's emotional eruption at this heinous act is unfathomably reticent. Lucy appears to perceive her disgraceful event in a unusual outlook that she regards this as a confidential aspect. The post Apartheid South Africa has recorded many shameful and sinful acts of sexual assaults against women, and very frequently, the increase in violence,

specifically the sexual attack, was directly the culpability on the insensitive and indifferent Black rulers of the nation. The paranoid White community attempted to protest the Black revolution by exuding a few events of brutality and sadism. The racist White community struggles to oppress the frenzied Blacks and confront against their violent attacks. Lucy Valerie Graham in her popular essay, *Reading the Unspeakable: "Rape in J.M. Coetzee's Disgrace"*, reports a perceptive insight into this criterion of White woman's seduction that,

Rather than confirming 'black peril' stereotypes, Lucy's name reveals that these have been based on 'up-holding' the 'purity' of White women. The sexual violation of Lucy further highlights a history tainted by racial injustice, by possession and dispossession, where, as Dorothy Driver has pointed out, white women have been 'signs' of that which was not exchanged between men in different racial groups. (437) <sup>[31]</sup>.

The three novels *Life and Times of Michael K*, *Foe* and *Disgrace* analysed in this chapter concentrate on the colonial and psychological trauma endured by both the men and women who are victims of a different range of dreadful events which occur publicly in nature. In Coetzee's perspective the colonial and physical trauma can be elided through approaching a proper resolution and a justifiable vent. The trauma experienced by Coetzee's characters is very indicative of the endemic deviances of the societies they exist in.

The deliberate and forced silence of the victims is impregnated with suggestiveness and can be regarded as the only medium of communiqué with them. The style of Coetzee's narration is exceedingly muted up, which has been caused owing to the consistent distrust of any suppressed voice that endeavours to command dominance. With a motif of exploring the colonial



trauma and its significance on the basis of analysing three novels indicates to investigate the unplumbed psychic depths of despair the characters endure in the novels. The genre of the novel proves excellent and the novelist has expressed his perceptions through the skillful incorporation of appropriate events and incidents.

Coetzee is extraordinarily celebrated for his unique dexterity of narrative strategies and the successive chapter draws attention to his unsurpassed techniques of narration and also the summation which comprises the findings of this proposed investigated study.

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