

Dismembering and Re-membering in J.M. Coetzee's Selected Fiction: A Decolonial Approach.

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Abstract

The present study deploys Ngugi wa Thiongo's (2009) decolonial concepts of dismembering and re-membering to critically explore J. M Coetzee's selected fiction. In my reading of the novels *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Foe* and *Disgrace*, I relate concepts of dismembering and re-membering to decoloniality. In the rendition of Ngugi, dismembering refers to the displacement and dispossession of the colonised, and their mental colonisation through cultural imperialism. Re-membering becomes the decolonial effort to undo physical and psychological dismembering. In the same way in which, since the Berlin Conference of 1884/5, Africa was divided, mapped and colonised, the cultures and histories of Africans were dismembered and dominated. Concerns for the land are expressed in the mapping and the confiscation of land which is depicted in the native's desert dwellings in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Cruso's clearing of the land in *Foe* and Petrus's taking over of Lucy's farm in *Disgrace*. Furthermore, Coetzee's use of language is one important narrative strategy that is explored to ascertain how Coetzee negates or speaks for, of and about the colonised through the narrator focaliser. This study reveals the reflexive nature of the selected novels and seeks answers to the question of why Coetzee tends to make his "black" characters voiceless and rootless (and sometimes nameless)? Is Coetzee suggesting that they have been silenced by history, by colonialism, or is he suggesting that he, the author, has no right to speak on their behalf? In the mode of writing and story-telling, is Coetzee suggesting the impossibility of the coloniser to speak for the colonised or, in speaking of them, does he give the servant characters a voice and can this voice be theirs, or can it be considered reliable? Is Coetzee presenting the power of passivity as a means of resistance and re-membering? This study, from a decolonial perspective, engages with the complex way Coetzee handles voice and the question of the agency of the colonised.

Keywords: *Decoloniality, Coloniality, Modernity, Colonialism, Postcolonialism, Dismemberment, Re-membering, Delinking and J.M. Coetzee.*

DECLARATION

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Dismembering and Re-membering in J.M. Coetzee's Selected Fiction: A Decolonial Approach

I declare that the above dissertation is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Ndumiso Ncube

SIGNATURE

30 January 2019

DATE

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Dedication

In memory of my late grandmother Jane Ncube
(25 December 1947 to 13 September 2012).

And,

To all those willing to die for literature.

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1. Introduction, Overview and Scope

The present chapter delves into an explication of the topic of the study. The aims of the study, its background as well as the central problem are fleshed out as a way of foregrounding the dissertation and illuminating its scope. The chapter also provides the hypotheses, the literature review, theoretical approaches, research methodologies and outline of the chapters of the study.

Background to the Study¹

There is a wealth of scholarly research on Coetzee's fiction which ranges from postcolonial and postmodernist studies, feminist studies, psychoanalytic, poststructuralist, ecocritical and animal studies perspectives, to name but a few. The first full-length study of his work was Teresa Dovey's (1988) *The Novels of J. M. Coetzee: Lacanian Allegories*, a psychoanalytic study. Then came David Atwell's (1993) *J.M. Coetzee and the Politics of Writing* as well as Derek Attridge's (2004) *Coetzee and the Ethics of Reading*. Scholars like Haluska (1987) are pioneers to different readings of Coetzee's fiction, whether politically, historically, ethically, and many other forms. The subjection of his fiction to different readings underlines the complexities of his narrative techniques and character (re)presentation. His complex fiction has sometimes been read as elusive and not taking any stand whatsoever in a country with so many political and social problems. Arguably, one way of reading Coetzee's "black" characters is that they are portrayed as uncivilised anthropoi who have to undergo a process of civilisation on the coloniser's terms.

Indeed, a provocative argument has been advanced on what could be the most fulfilling way of reading J.M. Coetzee's fiction. One illuminating way of reading Coetzee's fiction

¹I began the research on decoloniality and the work of J. M. Coetzee during my honours studies at the University of South Africa (UNISA). In this dissertation I have used some of my honours assignments submitted during my years at UNISA.

is considering a decolonial approach. A decolonial critical reading of Coetzee's fiction presents a potential to unearth various dismemberments and the resistance implicit in Coetzee's depiction of servant characters. The main argument is that modernity/coloniality² (which I sometimes refer to as coloniality) is used as a tool for colonialism and continued coloniality, hence necessitating the use of the concepts of dismemberment and re-membering. Coetzee has created his work with concerns of "being", of humanity and civilisation, which are now finding much relevance in former colonised countries especially the "Third World" countries. Through the representation of the matrices of power in Coetzee's fiction, coloniality decivilises not only the colonised but also the colonisers. Coloniality as the dark side of modernity (or civilisation) becomes a consistent cultivation and maintenance of the economic, social, cultural, ethical, epistemic and ontological forms of dismembering which necessitates re-membering.

While a decolonial reading of J. M. Coetzee's fiction complements the numerous postcolonial and postmodernist studies of his work, it offers new insights into the portrayal of entrenched coloniality in his oeuvre. Although decolonial studies have been limited to scholars in Latin America up until now, most of their foundational texts are from Africa or by Africans, such as Frantz Fanon, Aime Cesaire, Ngugi, Marcus Garvey, Du Bois and Steve Biko among others. Therefore, decoloniality appears to be the thinking of the oppressed and becomes the foundation of all resistance struggles especially of the oppressed Africans. Even though the fall of Apartheid in South Africa represents the completion of decolonisation and the direct oppression of Africans, coloniality still continues (despite black governments ruling throughout Africa). Coloniality is not simply a continuation of previous forms of oppression but new forms of domination like neo-colonialism which often take forms of economic control.

However, decoloniality cannot entirely be equated to neo-colonialism. In fact, neo-colonialism is part of coloniality whose aim is to continue the dismemberment of the neo-colonised. The concept of neo-colonialism was originated by the French

²The justification of this identification is elaborated in my theoretical framework.

philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre in 1956. In Africa, the term was popularised by Kwame Nkrumah especially through his 1965's article titled *Neo-colonialism, the Last Stage of Imperialism* where he argues that independence from the physical empire did not vanquish colonial control (or economic and political control). Nkrumah (1965) relates neo-colonialism to imperialism where the colonist's exploitative practices (of controlling the politics and economic conditions of ex-colonies through the practice of power without responsibility and consequence) creates a dependence syndrome in the colonised. That is, it is through Nkrumah's (1965) use of the word neo-colonialism that I equate the concept to the colonality of power which sees the bifurcation of the world into zones of being and non-being. Equally, neo-colonialism becomes one of the three constitutive elements of decolonial thinking, the other two elements being the colonality of being and the colonality of knowledges. That is, while decoloniality concerns itself with the shifting of geography of reason (from the West to the epistemistic locale), it endeavours to unmask and resist the colonial epochal conditions and epistemological designs which Grosfoguel in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 10) describes as "racially hierarchised, imperialistic, colonialist, Euro-American-centric, Christian centric, hetero-normative, patriarchal, violent and modern world order." In other words, decoloniality attempts to challenge the modern world which is "sustained through the pedagogies and epistemologies of equilibrium that continue to produce and alienate Africans who are socialised into hating Africa that produces them, and liking Europe and America that rejects them" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013: 10).

Before some South African students started the call, among other things, for the "fall" of the statue of Cecil John Rhodes at the University of Cape Town and the demand for decolonised education, decolonial studies were largely a political engagement. What the University of Cape Town students are calling for in their quest to burn Rhodes's statue (a figure that embodies imperialism) is the decolonisation of space and knowledges. Certainly, one form of colonality is the continued celebration of colonial figures through displaying their images in public squares in the name of shared history. While historical contributions of these figures cannot be denied in South Africa today, the "Fees Must Fall" university students demonstrated against the lack of finding their heroes in

university campuses and in books that they read. Their quest for decolonised education is a call for decolonising knowledge and learning to unlearn in order to relearn, which is the central task of border thinking (Tlostanova 2014). Unlearning and relearning is a quest to create equality of knowledges in order to co-create a new world(s). Their decolonial call seeks to create a pluriversal world where life paths and knowledges are multiple (creating equality-in-difference).

In his recent inaugural lecture, Mahmood Mamdani³ (2017) says that he returned to University of Cape Town "because Rhodes fell". To some students, Rhodes's statue became more than a symbol or a physical embodiment of the idea of British colonialism but the university's patronage of his ideas. The "fall" of Rhodes's statue is more than the decolonisation of space but ushers in a new dawn of decolonial perspectives in what may seem to be decolonised postcolonial countries or universities. A decolonial approach helps to create a decolonial world by questioning all what has been regarded as knowledge(s). It is for this reason that decoloniality has been touted as the mother of postcolonial theories in that every act of disobedience against the master, great or small, constitutes a decolonial epistemology. However, this is not to say that I read Coetzee's novels largely as straightforward illustrations of a decolonial turn. Coetzee's fiction, if anything, proves far more complex than a possibly reductive political decolonial reading will allow. Following the current debates on decoloniality, particularly in South Africa, the question is, what does literature have to offer the current debates on decoloniality, focusing primarily on Coetzee's novels? In asking such a question, one has to bear in mind that a novel is a work of fictionalisation that often rejects being categorised either under political or historical discourse as it were. However, no matter how fictitious a novel may be, it often struggles and does not succeed to escape (together with its readership) the ideologies or discourses underlying a particular society.

³Mahmood Mamdani is a Ugandan professor who has written extensively on decolonising the African university. A more extensive treatment of his views on Rhodes's statue is in Idowu's (2017) paper entitled "*Decolonising the post-colonial universities*".

In my study, I acknowledge the contributions of postcolonial readings of J.M. Coetzee's fiction. However, I propose to analyse selected novels from Coetzee's oeuvre in the light of Ngugi's concept of dismemberment. Argentina's semiologist Walter Mignolo's work is used to develop and elaborate on Ngugi's models of dismemberment.

Aims of the Study

This study aims to present a decolonial reading of J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980), *Foe* (1986) and *Disgrace* (2000), focusing mainly at various dismemberings and re-memberings in his fiction. Decoloniality is largely viewed as a political theory yet this study aims to apply it in a non-reductionist manner to literary studies. Decoloniality, as an intellectual framework, helps to explain Coetzee's critique of imperialism in relation to servant figures' "being" in his fictional writing. That is, I investigate the continuation of coloniality (coloniality as the hidden side of Western modernity) in advancing only the interests of the coloniser. Coloniality is best characterised as the manipulation of knowledge systems and the perpetuation of unequal economic, political, social, cultural and epistemological relations, which all have a major bearing in how the "other beings" are viewed or view themselves. That is, I read Coetzee's novels against the backdrop of South Africa's Apartheid system – which after all is the manifestation of colonialism. Since J. M. Coetzee was born and lived in South Africa (even though he now resides in Australia since 2006), it can be inferred that he wrote most of his novels with South Africa's concerns in mind. His novels appear to me to be concerned with colonialism - a dismembering system seeking to disqualify some people from the human family. While Coetzee may appear to be evasive even on the setting in some of his novels, it is clear that he is concerned about and deals with oppression and the effects of modernity.

It is however paramount to note that modernity is not monolithic. There are many modernities, including those of the formerly colonised countries, like Brazil, China and India. Countries like Russia, that have never been colonised, also express their own forms of modernity. However, this dissertation is concerned with Western, capitalist

forms of modernity. There is a need to explore the extent to which such modernity, in the advancement of the Empire, acts to dismember the colonised and for a need to realise this oppression as culmination of discovering one's self individually or as part of a collective.

The proposed research endeavours to critique various colonial matrices of power in play in the behaviour and thinking of some characters as Coetzee presents them in his fiction. The focus of the study is on the resistance implicit in the silence or voicelessness of the servant figures and various dismemberments that happen as a result of coloniality. Therefore, this study seeks to explore how Coetzee's dismembered characters re-member themselves. Indeed, it must be realised that J.M. Coetzee does not present his dismembered characters as re-membering themselves per se. Rather, the act of re-membering occurs through the narrative focalisation or the thoughts of the protagonist. Coetzee's dismembered characters, including Michael K. in the *Life and Times of Michael K*, tend not to have interior lives. They are described from the outside, and hence by merely depicting these characters the way he does, Coetzee problematises or thematises their voicelessness. One may argue again that the process of self-knowledge of the protagonist coincides with the self-knowledge of the dismembered figures. For example, later in *Foe*, Susan and Foe agree that everyone is substantial "[...] my daughter is substantial and I am substantial; you too are substantial, no less and no more than any of us. We are all alive, we are all substantial, we are all in the same world" (Coetzee 1986: 152). In his efforts to write or not to, for refusing to talk in whatever form, and for Susan's story depending on his, Friday asserts his substantiality in his own way.

This study will consider the argument that Coetzee's fiction may have a far more sophisticated position (if it takes a position that is) than merely re-membering a non-colonial state of affairs on behalf of the colonised. That is, is Coetzee's approach not largely negative rather than positive, a critique or deconstruction of colonialism rather than a reconstruction of non-colonial possibilities? How does his social position as a

member of the liberal intellectual elite and a descendent of colonists and Europeans compromise or constrain his right to talk on the behalf of the anthropos (the other)?

Furthermore, the ethos of “managerialism” will also be explored in *Disgrace*. Managerialism relates to neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism, since managerialism is, in part, as Monbiot (2016: 3) observes, the legacy of the conservative Anglo-American politics and economics of Thatcher and Reagan in the 1980s (with deeper roots in the Protestant work ethic identified by the sociologist Weber). Therefore, neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism are management dictates with market led models of control. Neo-liberalism relates to neo-colonialism by definition because they are inherited regulatory frameworks, systems that emulate the laws that existed during the colonial period as a way of management, if not, then the laws or polices are directed from the outside. Managerialism becomes a catalyst for dismemberment because it functions as an organisational arm of neo-colonialism/neo-liberalism, adopting legacies of inherited frameworks and policies. This is one reason Foucault (1982) refers to managerialism as “governmentality” which involves managing identities and sexualities. Therefore, this proposed research argues that the concept of viewing workers as human resources is a dehumanising concept characterised by inappropriate and inept use of power.

Walter Mignolo's concepts of coloniality and modernity/coloniality as well as Ngugi's decolonial concepts of dismemberment and re-membering will be examined in relation to J.M. Coetzee's fiction. This study proposes to contribute to the critical discussions on the most illuminating reading of Coetzee's fiction, at the same time laying the foundation surrounding decoloniality and examining decolonial concepts in relation to South African literature.

The Problem Statement

The central question that this study raises is as follows:

Does Coetzee show a process of re-membering in the figures in his fiction who have been dismembered by colonialism?

Coloniality as a process of colonising people in all respects and in all spheres has been a major process of dismembering the colonised. Although colonialism has been extensively subjected to scrutiny in the wealth of postcolonial studies of Coetzee's novels like Attwell (1998) and Poyner's (2009) monographs among others, coloniality proves to be a major problem that needs to be equally investigated. Coloniality differs from "colonialism" because it is (but not limited to) the continuation of psychological or economic or political state of dependence of decolonised countries on the former colonial masters. In other words, while colonialism refers to a historical period, coloniality is a state of mind or of being, that is, of being dependent. In this study, I propose to investigate how Coetzee portrays the harmful consequences of coloniality in his novels and the degree to which dismembered characters succeed in re-membering themselves, or, at least, the degree to which the narrative focalisers of his fiction succeed in re-membering on the dismembered servants' behalf. While re-membering can be an individual consciousness, it cannot be limited to this aspect only. Re-membering is more often inter-personal, collective and public than merely personal, individual and private. Therefore, it can be argued that the Magistrate in *Waiting of the Barbarians* helps to re-member the barbarian girl by restoring her to her tribe, thereby helping the tribe to re-member itself too.

The effects of colonisation as shown in Coetzee's work has undesirably dispossessed the colonised servants of their being, and robbed them of their voice. This is referred by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n.d.) as the foundational dismemberment. The colonised hence has an advocacy who speaks for and about them. This poses another problem of speaking for "others". The colonised do not often speak as shown in Coetzee's fiction but are spoken of and about. Subjects like Friday in *Foe*, have never attempted to speak but their silences may be a subject of decolonial thinking.

This assertion entails that coloniality is a major process of colonisation, and it outlives colonisation and decolonisation in that it exists in the way of being, a way of reasoning (ideology) and a way of doing things. In the process of colonisation, the colonised is assimilated, culturalised and subjected. His/her being is taken away or dismembered for the purpose of producing a dependent being with a new identity. Therefore, this study proposes to show how the concept of dismemberment illuminates aspects of Coetzee's fiction that other postcolonial studies have either missed or neglected. Coetzee's ambivalent and complex works of fiction reward a decolonial interpretation.

Research questions

The following hypotheses emerged during the research process:

What narrative techniques does Coetzee employ in order to show how dismemberment results from coloniality?

How does Coetzee reveal dismemberment in the servant figures in his fiction?

What fictional techniques does Coetzee use in order to show the process of “re-membering” as a delinking endeavour?

Research Methodology

Considering the diverse wealth of scholarship on J. M. Coetzee's fiction and writings, a general conclusion will be that the scrutiny of his critical writings constitute a theoretical dilemma, posing a great navigational challenge of his work. However, the wide range of critical responses which use diverse methodologies to gain meaningful access to his work have added disparate ways in which his literature can be read and critiqued. The critical position undertaken in this dissertation is approaching Coetzee's selected fiction through a decolonial reading. In my analysis, the decolonial approach is used as a multi-logical dialogue that employs a variety of decolonial views, mostly, from decolonial African thinkers like Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Frantz Fanon and Sabelo Ndlovu-Gatsheni among others. I also draw most of the decolonial ideas from Argentinian semiologist

Walter Mignolo, who has made and continues to make extensive contributions to the development of the decolonial thinking.

In this literary project, I deploy decoloniality melded with close readings of Coetzee's selected texts. Since the decolonial approach is concerned with various "colonialities", it echoes the dismemberment discerned in the social, political and economic lives of the colonised. It must be mentioned from the outset that through the analysis of Coetzee's ways of presenting and representing characters, Ngugi's concept of decoloniality (of dismemberment) sits with the specific context of Apartheid in the selected novels. Even if Ngugi's theoretical concept of dismemberment is inclined towards language issues, it is extended in this writing to allude to the dismembering of African people's "being" and knowledges. Furthermore, since a decolonial reading of J.M. Coetzee's fiction calls for the interpretation and analysis of the primary texts, it follows that a qualitative methodology will be used where the critical analyses of his selected fiction and secondary texts is undertaken. That is, the systemic analyses follows up on the presentation and representation of characters' perception, the recit, the fabula and the act of narration – covering the contextual conditions of characters and the author.

Symptomatically, because of the qualitative nature of the study, the research work will be inundated with textual evidence – descriptions, quotations and narrations of primary texts and secondary texts. The critique of primary and secondary texts gives the possibility of critical analyses, and provides the collection of textual evidence which provides the basis for the argument of this dissertation. Furthermore, extensive and intensive readings of the primary and secondary texts permit the analyses of the focalisation, the narration, perceptions, meanings and voices in order to probe how some characters or even narratives are marginalised as a result of different oppressive forces. Therefore, in relation to Ngugi's concepts of dismembering and re-membering, a decolonial reading of J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Foe* and *Disgrace* provides an illuminating way of reading his fiction.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

This study consists of six chapters.

Chapter One outlines what this study entails and presents the scope of the study with reference to the central problem. This chapter deals with the title of the study, the aims of the study as well as the background. It provides the hypotheses, research methodologies and the chapter outline.

Chapter Two provides the theoretical framework, focusing on Ngugi's key concepts of dismembering and re-membering. In order to provide the foundations of this study, the discussion is extended to Walter Mignolo and other decolonial thinkers who have developed and broadened the decolonial ideas. The basic premise of modernity/coloniality as a dismembering mechanism is problematised in Coetzee's fiction. This chapter also seeks to define key terms of the study.

In **Chapter Three** the focus falls on examining J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* in light of decolonial nuances outlined by Mignolo and others. The focus falls on dismembering and re-membering not only on the servant figures like the barbarian girl, but even on characters like the Magistrate who are located at margins of the Empire. The concept of geo-politics of mapping (creation of boundaries) and the construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of *humanitas/anthropos* in relation to the questions of race and gender (masculinities and femininity) are scrutinised in *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

Chapter Four engages with the silenced characters and their dispensability in Coetzee's *Foe* and ponders on the possible reasons why they are not given a voice. This chapter explores how modernity/coloniality dismembers the servant and women figures. The other possibility explored is how dismembered characters re-member who they are, their successes and failures in this endeavour as well as the author's role in this regard. In the mode of writing, while this chapter explores the dispensability of servant characters like Friday within Coetzee's fictional world (as 'mere' servants or slaves), it also shows that such characters are indispensable to his literary project.

The ethos of managerialism is problematised in **Chapter Five** in relation to *Disgrace*. This chapter examines questions of land as located in Coetzee's fiction as well as the selected characters roles and their (mis)representation. Symbolic violence and the concept of multiple time zones/ moral zones/ human zones are also explored.

Finally, **Chapter 6** draws conclusions from the study by interrogating the questions and possible future engagements on decoloniality and literature as positioned in Coetzee's fiction in relation to dismembering, re-membering and decoloniality. The limitations of decoloniality in literary analyses and, in particular, its applicability to Coetzee's fiction are deliberated.

2. Decoloniality as a Multi-logical Dialogue

And since I have been asked to speak about colonisation and civilisation, let us go straight to the principal lie that is the source of all the others. Colonisation and civilisation?

Aime Césaire (2000: 32).

“Who is to say that robbing a people of its language is less violent than war?”

Ray Gwyn Smith in Gloria Anzaldua (1987: 34).

Introduction

This chapter aims to flesh out the theoretical concepts central to the decolonial reading of J.M. Coetzee's selected novels. Ngugi's (2009) concepts of dismemberment and re-membering are central to this investigation. Literally, dismemberment means to cut off the limbs of a body, which was a reality during colonialism. However, Ngugi expands on this term and uses it metaphorically and on a number of levels: linguistically, culturally, politically and economically. In a symbiotic process, dismemberment as a colonial process is followed by re-membering which also is taking many forms today. While the ex-colonies rid themselves of colonisation through revolutionary revolt and political negotiations that resulted in peace treaties, coloniality⁴ persists in African countries that appear to have achieved their freedom and independence. Their state of being colonised continues in more subtle ways than territorial occupation and settlement and political subordination. The idea of African states itself, is largely a result of the Berlin Conference of 1884-85. This is to say, the creation of boundaries is part of dismembering Africa into states (colonies) by European powers, who in their invasions purported to be bringing civilisation to Africa. Today, African states' dismemberment continues through neo-colonialism, neo-liberalism, economic exploitation, violence that

⁴ While neo-colonialism is a form of coloniality because it is a continued state of economic (and therefore political dependence), coloniality extends to encompass continued psychological and cultural (that is, ideological or epistemological) dependence. I make a distinction in these terms further in this chapter.

include wars while forms of re-membering have taken forms of citizen dissent and epistemic disobedience.

Modernity/coloniality is a belief that Western forms of civilisation or “modernities” always have forms of coloniality because Western modernity has been built on the back of European and American modernities. Particular emphasis is placed on imperial epistemology (a term that I explain later) that occasioned what Mignolo (2013) calls the darker side of coloniality. Therefore, the relationship between modernity/coloniality and dismembering and re-membering is at the centre of this investigation. Dismemberment occurs at various levels and in various spheres: global/international, between and within countries, between and within ethnic groups and tribes, at the level of local communities and individually. It also involves psychology, epistemology, ethics and, most significantly, as Ngugi (1986) points out, language. That is, at the heart of Western modernity or coloniality is dismembering as an imperial hierarchisation of humans into zones. Most of those in the humanitas zone (self) suffer from abundance of resources, power and privileges while most of the anthropoi (other) suffer from famine, poverty, landlessness and insignificant knowledge systems. The categorisation of humans into either the zone of being (the “haves”) or the zone of non-being (the “haves-not”) revolves around the identity of being regarded as “white” or “black” respectively. Evident in this investigation is the utilisation of multi-logical decolonial discussions premised on Frantz Fanon’s (1968) concepts of the creation of zones of being and zones of non-being. The trajectory of this investigation follows the decolonial ideas of Quijano, Sabelo Gatsheni-Ndlovu and Walter Mignolo among others. This is to say, literal dismemberment means to sever the limbs or digits of a human or animal's body (as is seen in Friday’s apparently severed tongue). However, they are various types of metaphorical dismemberments, from mental, psychological, economic, political and cultural among other forms that stem from the creation of zones as identity markers.

This chapter has three sub-headings. The first sub-heading: *Dismemberment: The Imperial Epistemology* defines and engages decolonial thinking informed by an imperialist attitude of human categorisation. While much has been said about racism in

the world and in South Africa in particular, many of these racial issues are better nuanced and problematised in literature. In the hands of a skillful writer, racial themes are often explored in a complex and nuanced manner. In essence, the creation of human categories even in the present-day ex-colonies is the foundational dismemberment that emanate from colonialism. Therefore, dismemberment extends from the most miniscule issues of life to the language that a society uses.

The second sub-heading: *The Ethics of Domination: Linguicides* engages with language dismemberment as one of the gross violations of a human's "being". However, without becoming embroiled in issues of linguistic theory, I examine the marginalisation which led to disempowerment of indigenous languages as well as their extinction as one of the linguicides due to colonialism. In *Decolonising the Mind*, Ngugi (1986) explains how colonial languages such as English decentred indigenous languages (and knowledges) in colonised countries and in Kenya in particular. Therefore, among various acts of linguicides, language dismemberment includes the present-day systems of knowledge and learning that are often presented in English or other colonial languages in ex-colonies. Coupled with numerous injustices in South Africa, "black" students protested in 1976⁵ against the use of the Afrikaans language as the language of learning and teaching. This ignited a revolutionary rebellion that was already simmering following the proclamation of the *Afrikaans Medium Decree* in 1974. In 1974 Circular no. 2 of 1973 entitled *Medium of Instruction in Secondary Schools* was extended to African schools through regional Circular no. 2 of 1974 (Ndlovu 2011: 327).

⁵ The Soweto Uprising was a student led protest against the introduction of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction in local schools. The Deputy Minister of Bantu Education, at the time Mr. Punt Janson justified the proclamation of the *Afrikaans Medium Decree* by saying that black students/people are destined to work in the farms and factories where they will either meet an employer who is English-speaking or Afrikaans-speaking (Ndlovu 2011: 332-3).

The present-day South Africa still battles with student protests⁶ concerning language issues among many other issues. This is indicative of a colonial history that continues to affect the present of the former colonised state. In the present-day ex-colonies, among other colonial traits like government administration, coloniality presents itself in the forms of neo-liberalism and neo-colonialism perpetuated by super powers like the United States of America. Such super powers are joined by Russia and China today. Therefore, the last sub-heading: *The Nervous Conditions of Re-membering* explores forms of re-membering that include the re-kindling of the memory against loss of being, of power, of culture, of language and of the economy. The ex-colonies' delinking hesitancy is oftentimes informed by economic dependency on former Empires. In literature, re-membering can be said to have taken interesting forms of stylistics in writing, in storytelling and de-linking deviations from acceptable canonical norms.

Dismembering: The imperial epistemology

The imperial and territorial epistemologies are defined by Mignolo (2013a: 3-4) as:

[...] grounded on theological (Renaissance) and egological (Enlightenment) politics of knowledge. As it is well known, theo- and ego-politics of knowledge were grounded in the suppression of sensing and the body, and of its geo-historical location. It was precisely that suppression that made it possible for both theo- and ego-politics of knowledge to claim universality.

Therefore, imperial epistemology, through its universal claim of knowledge-making is founded on various forms of dismembering the colonised of their indigenous knowledge systems. Dismembering in the literary sense is genocidal, and genocide is central to the

⁶ The present-day students protest against language issues are wide spread in South Africa. In July 2015 and February 2016, the Stellenbosch University students demonstrated against the use of Afrikaans as the medium of instruction at the university. They demanded a change of the Stellenbosch Language Policy and Language Plan, which places English and Afrikaans at the same level in teaching and learning. In February 2016 language was also the debate at the Pretoria University which saw the clashes between students over the university's language policy.

colonial process particularly in Africa⁷. Ngugi (2009) metaphorically extends the definition of dismembering to highlight the depth of colonialism, coloniality and alienation of colonised people. That is, dismemberment becomes an absolute process of “thingifying” the colonised people such that when they are turned into objects (or objectified) they become invisible and non-human. This means that when they are “thingified” or when they lack visibility, their “killability” can be justified. For such reasons, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013: 25) regards dismemberment as “physical decapitation.” The physical decapitation is not limited to the extermination of the colonised (of removing head from a body) but has taken many metaphorical forms in post-colonial period. Ngugi (2009:2) notes that dismemberment also includes “epistemological colonisation/colonisation of the mind as well as cultural decapitation that resulted in deep forms of alienation among Africans.” In this context, the term “African” refers to “blacks” who bear the brunt of colonialism. The alienation of African people includes many forms such as isolation, exclusion and fragmentation of communities. Alienation has an ability to destroy the mental memory and culture of a group. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015: 25) views dismemberment as a “process of deliberately disconnecting African people from their history, culture and memory.” Therefore, a mentally colonised or alienated individual or nation for that matter is forever dependent on the coloniser because his “memory becomes embedded to that of the humanitas, even [his body] become branded with European memory” (Ngugi 2009: 10). Thus, if the memory of our being and universe is manipulated by imperial epistemology, then truth about ourselves and our knowledge(s) of existence or of territorial boundaries (that include process of naming and mapping) are already threatened as dismembered. It is apt to consider the process of dismemberment as a project of modernity to maximize human labour, land and knowledge systems for capitalistic ends. Consequently, dismemberment becomes “simultaneously the foundation, fuel and consequence of

⁷Among the many events in Africa that arguably fall under the term "genocide", is the Germany-Herero War (1904 – 1907) in Namibia where the appointment of Lieutenant-General Lothar von Trotha by German Emperor Kaiser Wilhelm II as the commander of Germany Forces in Namibia saw the normalisation of genocide against the Herero people. By the end of the war 65 000 of the 80 000 Herero people were killed. In a deliberate violation of war ethics, the Herero people were even denied options of surrendering.

Europe's [and the America] capitalist modernity" (Ngugi 2009: 2). Dismemberment hence becomes part of the legacies of coloniality or modernity/coloniality as it were.

Coloniality as an imperial project is a profiteering scheme that uses the matrices of power for its continuity and hence is catastrophic for the neo-colonised. Coloniality as a form of dismemberment includes questioning the being of the colonised people or what Maldonado-Torres (2007) refers to as the coloniality of being. The idea of "being" can be traced back to Sartre's Existentialist metaphysics and earlier to Heidegger, but it goes back all the way to Plato and the pre-Socratics⁸. The idea of "being" becomes a form of hierarchisation. That is, the hierarchisation of human beings gives birth to distinct forms of identification by one group from another. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n.d.) regards this questioning of humanity of the colonised people as the foundational forms of dismemberment, which is the coloniality of being. Apparently, all forms of dismemberments are inextricably linked to foundational dismemberment. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n.d.) identifies enslavement, the scramble for and partitioning of Africa, erasure and silencing of African people's history as well as patriarchy as other forms of dismemberments. Arguably, patriarchy is not exclusive to the West but characterises almost all civilisations since the Neolithic. However, all the types of dismemberments are meant to humiliate and fragment the colonised. Therefore, imperialism is premised on the thought of placing "self" above the "others" based on race and for exploitative purpose. Even though at the height of the British Empire, social stratification was extremely pronounced in the metropole and the country as a whole (where the wealthy and elite of Britain also treated the servant and working classes as the other), the treatment of the colonised "other" was based on race, commodification of their bodies and thingification of their being(s).

Quijano (2007) views the hierarchisation of humans into zones as being divided by what he referred to as the abyssal line. Above this line is the self and below it is the other. The self places itself in the zone of being and displaces the other to the zone of non-

⁸Alain Badiou (2005) discusses Socrates and Plato's ideas of "being" and "non-being" in *Being and Event*.

being. In the zone of non-being, the non-human is subjected to what Fanon (2008) calls the colonial gaze. Fanon's (2008: 84) concept of the colonial gaze or "objective examination" is an extension to a colonial context of Sartre and Lacan's work on the gaze. Fanon gives the concept of zones a colonial twist. Fanon (2008: 82) reinterprets the terms in a colonial context to refer to the "self" (the *humanitas*) and the "other" (the *anthropos*). Subsequently, the colonist as the creator of the abyssal line perpetuates coloniality through hierarchising humanity, in the process becomes the colonised's advocacy and hence distorts the African people's history. Gatsheni-Ndlovu (2015: 25) says:

[Abyssal thinking] was deployed to justify pushing black people out of the human family and consign them to what Frantz Fanon (1968) named as the 'zone of nonbeing'. This is where the beginning of understanding of dismemberment is traceable genealogically and historically speaking. The second form of dismemberment can be conceptualised as a process of deliberately disconnecting African people from their history, culture and memory.

The hierarchisation of humans see the invention of defamatory labelling confrontations against those considered to be not human. The labelling is a way of justifying genocide or excluding, alienating and exploiting those considered to be dissimilar to the "self". In other words, the creation of the abyssal line results in different forms of racism. Fundamental is the invention of "black" and "white" as identity markers of human race. During colonialism (and even today in some societies) "black" people are either given names of animals like "baboons" or labelled as "barbaric", "primitive" or as "savages". Significant to this labelling is the coloniser's realisation (on his own terms) that the colonised is not civilised as compared to the "self". While labelling saves as a form of exclusion it also acts as way of "decapitating", and a licence to create and reinforce metaphoric and physical boundaries. In most parts of the colonised countries the "barbarian" is ruralised often in non-productive and desert-like lands whilst urban centres (or frontiers) are created for the civilised who often hire and depend on the uncivilised labourers. That is, the "barbarian" who finds himself out of his physical

boundary zone to serve the civilised, a separate dwelling or “Bantustan”⁹ is created, even in farms owned by some “white” people as observed in *Disgrace* where Petrus has a separate dwelling to that of Lucy. However, following decolonisation, urban cartography is designed to distinguish between the civilised zones and the zones of the wretched of the earth. In most urban areas today exist the lasting effects of human hierarchisation where there are areas of the “whites” and affluent blacks often referred as the “suburbs”. Such areas are for those with economic means to afford the cost of living or even rentals. Most of the “black” people reside in separate areas often referred to as “locations” or townships. In *Disgrace*, most of the stray, sick and many healthy dogs are from the townships – consequently from historically disadvantaged people of the Eastern Cape. The creation of these separate zones serves as continual labelling and questioning of the “black” people’s humanness. Once these two zones are created and reinforced, the coloniser then justifies his actions of enslaving through meagre wages, poor working conditions, domesticating and labelling the anthropos. Since the humanity of the anthropoi is questioned, they are then considered as soulless bodies that are usable and dispensable.

Decoloniality deems imperial labelling as a discursive invention and seeks to de-link even from using the colonial terminologies of “self” and “other” in favour for the terminology created in the South. Following Nishitani Osamu’s anthropological categories of *humanitas* and *anthropos*, Mignolo (2013: 134) posits that the “anthropos stands for the concept of the ‘Other’” and the “humanitas” the “self”. Therefore, the renaming signifies the refusal to perish and is premised on the concept of re-membering. On many levels, the anthropos refuses the labels and the stigma signified by words that originate from the coloniser. In other words, this re-membering seeks to

⁹ Bantustans are also known as Bantu or “black” homelands where black people governed themselves albeit with limitations. In South Africa, Bantustans started as the creation of “reserves” in 1913 with revised acts in 1936. The apartheid acts were intensified in 1959 with the passage of the *Bantu Self-Government Act*. In 1970, the South African government passed the *Black Homeland Citizenship Act*. The proclamation regarded all black South Africans as citizens of the Bantustans even if they lived and worked in ‘White South Africa’ (in cities and towns).

correct the imperialist attitude described by Maldonado-Torres (2007: 245) as the “racist/imperial Manichean misanthropic skepticism.” The incompleteness of the African people’s being originates from racism which is often characterised by “whiteness” or white supremacy. Grosfoguel et al (2014:2) view racism as the:

[...] global hierarchy of human superiority and inferiority, politically, culturally and economically produced and reproduced for centuries by the institutions of the capitalist/patriarchal Western-centric/Christian-centric modern/colonial world systems.

One of the faces of racism is discrimination in order for exploitation. Biko (1996: 27) identifies racism or the white supremacist attitude as “discrimination by a group against another for the purposes of subjugation or maintaining subjugation.” White supremacists involve a sub-class of whites who believe that their skin tone is a sign of their superiority to people with darker skin tones. In other words, racism can only be proliferated by the superior and those in power since “one cannot be a racist unless he has the power to subjugate” (Biko 1996: 27). Racism, as Biko (1996: 96) expands, “was created as a moral justification by whites for continual exploitation.” Similarly, Mbembe (2017:11) notes that “race consists of dissolving human beings into things, objects and merchandise.” Through coloniality of black/white racist categorisation of humans, the “blacks” are taught to be “dismemberable”, by making them lesser forms of human beings, they are “taught inferiority complex, to tremble, to kneel, to despair and behave like flunkies” (Cesaire 2000: 43). Even after the democratic transition of 1994 in South Africa, most of the former colonised black people (who form the country’s majority) still live in poverty and some as servants to the former colonisers in corporate businesses and as domestic workers. That is, colonialism which instituted segregation laws like the Apartheid system witnessed in South Africa proves to have lasting and far-reaching effects in the being and the lives of the colonised. In most instances, because of living in coloniality for far too long, the colonised has normalised his state of dismemberment such that a different personhood or livelihood cannot be imagined.

The dismembering of the colonised lies in the corruptible use of power or the manipulation of the matrices of power. The matrices of power include the control of economy, authority, knowledge as well as gender and sexuality. The imperial epistemology hence uses the matrices of power to extract maximum profit from its “produced” exploitable object (the colonised). It is the Western and American coloniality that dismembers the colonised through the purported spread of civilisation. According to Mignolo and Tlastanova (2009: 132), modernity and coloniality are interdependent because, like the two sides of a coin, “there is no modernity without coloniality.” This is to say; Western modernity’s hidden side is coloniality. Therefore, while on one hand modernity promises positives of development or civilisation, on the other such modernity masks coloniality (a desire to benefit economically by controlling the levers of power). In reality therefore, “modernity is just another name for the European project of unlimited expansion” (Mbembe 2017: 54). In a sense, modernity refers to America and Europe’s capitalistic societies. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n.d.) notes that modernity is the “dehumanising constitutive element of the Western civilisation and its mode of spread across the world through conquest, enslavement, colonising, exploiting and racial hierarchisation of human species.” This is in tandem with Cesaire (2000: 31-2) description of Western modernity as a “decadent, sick, deceitful and indefensible civilisation.” Modernity hence is a mode of dismemberment and is often referred to as modernity/coloniality. Cesaire (2000) expands that while the colonists justify their coloniality as a vehicle of progress in dark Africa, India or Latin America of diseases cured and improved standards of living, he points to the devastating effects of societies drained of their being and their cultures wiped out, disrespected and land confiscated.

As part of modernity, coloniality is the “imperial/colonial organization of society” (Mignolo and Tlastanova 2009: 132). Mignolo (2008) opines that coloniality acts as a machine that generates differences or rather the creation of hierarchies in human groups. In other words, coloniality is a political and an economic process by which one group becomes subjected to and dependent on another. Therefore, coloniality is a weapon that is often disguised by development or civilisation mission of modernity and is the process by the coloniser to benefit himself and his Empire (or the economic

Empires as it were). While the age of explicit empires is over, the new empires are economic and often take the form of global corporations. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:13) notes that coloniality survives colonialism since it refers to “long standing forms of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labour, inter-subjective relations and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administration.” Coloniality is what informs decolonial studies since coloniality comes in the form of modernity to the barbaric, uncivilised and savage “other”. Therefore, decoloniality questions the motives of Eurocentric modernity and Americanisation of the world. Maldonado-Torres (2005) defines decoloniality as a term referring to a shift in knowledge production of similar nature and magnitude to linguistic and pragmatic turns. Elsewhere, Maldonado-Torres (2007) says that decoloniality does not refer to a single theoretical school but rather points to a family of diverse positions that share a view of coloniality as a fundamental problem. Dismemberment hence is most explored in diverse schools of thought that critique coloniality and its effects today.

The Ethics of domination: Linguicides

The imperial epistemology relies on language as a proponent vehicle for coloniality. This is to say that coloniality includes disempowering other peoples' languages. Ngugi (2009: 17) refers to language injustices as the “linguicides”, a phenomenon that up to this day needs a decolonial rationale. According to Ngugi (2009:17) “linguicide is the linguistic equivalent of genocide.” The total extermination of a people's language does not only rob them of their being but their culture and history. The question perhaps is, after the linguicides, who then tells your history? I am, however, mindful of the work of anthropologists like Megan Biesele¹⁰, a North American scholar, who spent time in the Kalahari as an educational consultant. She spent much of her life living with and trying to preserve the language and culture of the Kalahari Bushmen. Ironically, this also proves that a language or history can only be preserved or told by those who possess language (perhaps a language that can be heard).

¹⁰ Among the wealth of her scholarship on the Kalahari Bushman, Biesele Megan (1997) has contributed an important chapter entitled *The Idea of Unassisted Birth: Hunting, Healing, and Transformation among the Kalahari Ju/hoansi*.

The colonial silencing of the anthropos' language is tantamount to the mutilation of their being, in order thereafter, to classify them as incomprehensible beings without names and means to utter or reiterate their positions. It leaves us with no doubt that "decoloniality arises hence from this context in which the humanity of black people is doubted and emerges as one way of telling the story of modern world from the experience of slavery, imperialism and colonialism" (Gatsheni-Ndlovu 2013:12). In other words, a decolonial approach seeks to re-tell the stories that are not told and to give the nameless and the kinless "*dames*" a proper place in history. The coloniality of language as a form of dismemberment of the wretched is inextricably linked to racialisation. Mignolo (2008) notes that colonialism or coloniality is a racialising act in that it acts as a machine for generating differences or rather for creating hierarchies in human groups. Language therefore becomes one form of creating and maintaining such hierarchies. In contrast, this dissertation is written in English (a colonial language which may also reflect coloniality). Unlike Ngugi who has chosen to write in Kikuyu, the act of my writing in English means that my mother tongue is suppressed. However, my writing in English also means that the "imperialist" English language can be used against itself, at least to criticise its dominant status.

Linguistic coloniality as a form of dismemberment is most presented and represented in the literary world through the creation of silent and silenced characters. The dominance of one language by another creates inferiority complex, which when unchecked may result to a dependence complex. Speaking of SASO¹¹, Steve Biko (1996) points to linguicides as a major contributor to a "black" man's inferiority complex simply because the black student (who, during apartheid, found himself in a white dominated university) struggled to express himself in foreign language(s). Linguistic coloniality as a form of dismemberment means that the language of the colonised is "decapitated" through language bastardisation (turning it into pidgins and creoles) or totally exterminating it

¹¹ SASO is the South Africa's Student Organisation founded in 1968 by Steve Biko among others. One of its aims was to establish a solid identity among black students and champion the aspirations of black students. It played a role in the formation of the Black Consciousness Movement, which used non-violence as a means to challenge the apartheid system.

through communication and education practices. One example of language genocide is the extinction of some of the Khoisan¹² languages in South Africa which are identified by UNESCO as critically endangered. Even though the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB) has granted an official status to the Khoisan language with aims of promoting and preserving it, some Khoisan dialects like “*kora*” have become extinct. This also means that the post-Apartheid government neglected for too long and not done enough to develop the local languages in the ways that Ngugi proposes.

Ngugi (1986:99) asserts that “language has its own social and cultural basis and these are instrumental in the formation of mental process and value judgments.” This is to say that language plays an instrumental role in the evaluation of situations, events, ideas and even people. If language plays such a role, it has a potential of challenging exploitative social and value systems. In *Decolonising the Mind*, Ngugi (1986) details the entrenchment of colonial languages in ex-colonies’ education systems, which consequently, has affected knowledge systems and value judgments of the former colonised people. In the same vein, Ashcroft et al (2007: 7) say, “one of the main features of imperial operation is control over language. The imperial education system installs a ‘standard’ version of the metropolitan language as the norm and marginalises all ‘variants’ as impurities.” The marginalisation of language is what Ngugi (2009:17) refers to as “linguifam.” Linguifam is the colonist’s linguistic logic of conquest where a linguistic famine situation is created in order to starve and deprive the colonised of his or her language. Ngugi (2009: 20) observes that “to starve or kill a language is to starve and kill a people’s memory bank.” Indeed, to deprive someone of his or her language is a conscious act of language liquidation such that an alternative language, or what Ngugi (2009: 19) refer to as “European linguistic plantations,” may be possible.

The loss of language means that the cultural values and norms of the people can no longer be practised with certainty. In other words, language is the axis of not only

¹²Today, the Khoisan people’s languages vary from the “*Korana*”, the “*Nluu*” and the “*Xiri*” dialects which are critically endangered. In a general report by Nickolaus Bauer (2016), the use of South Africa indigenous languages has been identified to be on the decline.

maintaining hierarchies in terms of race, but also hierarchies of knowledge which is often indicative of the imperial legacies of thought and deed. In many ways, language mediates the way we see the past, and the traditions that form the present. The Khoisan people in South Africa were among the first groups of people to be colonised. Today, the Khoisan people (for example, the Khomani Bushmen in the Northern Cape) even after generations have passed have adopted the Afrikaans language as their own. Similarly, but not limited to English as a dismembering colonial language, most well-spoken “black” English speakers who have discarded their indigenous languages have adopted modes of lives similar to that of their former masters.

Despite the paradoxical nature of language which allows the same colonial language to criticise colonial linguistic domination or imperialism, dismemberment through linguistic hierarchies tends to dehumanise and silence the colonised. Silence hence is symptomatic of epistemic violence. In the literary context, the traumatic silences of Coetzee's servant characters lead to the silence of their history which translates to the incompleteness of their being. Therefore, without language, no one tells the history of the oppressed. Language hence has poorly neglected the “other” and ironically classified him as an incomprehensible being without means to utter or reiterate his position. In other words, we are our language and our language make us who we are. Language becomes a science where being and knowledge are located. Mignolo (2013: 139) observes:

‘Science’ (knowledge and wisdom) cannot be detached from language; languages are not just ‘cultural’ phenomena in which people find their ‘identity’; they are also the location where knowledge is inscribed. And, since languages are not something human beings have but rather something of what human beings are, coloniality of power and of knowledge engendered the coloniality of being.

Coloniality of being and coloniality of knowledge are made possible through the imperial language attitude which is “genocidal” in nature. The imperial attitude is genocidal in

that it prides in the taking away and forbidding the use of indigenous languages in favour of its own. In so doing, the imperialist discourse makes it a point that the colonised remains who he is not. This is to say that part of coloniality of being is to commit the linguicides and languifams so that all can be done, and understood, thought and be produced in the colonial languages. The language of the anthropos will have to bow down to the language of the humanitas.

In *Decolonizing the Mind*, Ngugi (1986) discusses how English became the magic formula to colonial elitedom in Kenya and other colonised African states. Therefore, there is method in elevating the language of the coloniser over that of the colonised for “language has a dual character: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture” (Ngugi 1986: 13). Language becomes a material and an activity of practical consciousness. Hence, a language carries a people’s cultural ideologies and practices and also serves as the memory bank of a people’s historical experience(s). Ngugi (1986: 13) expands that “language as culture is mediating between me and my own self; between my own self and other selves; between me and nature.” Indeed, the domination of colonial languages results in the domination of the mental universe of the colonised, and this influences how people self-define themselves, and how they see themselves in relation to the world. To take Karl Marx’s view in Ngugi (1986:13), language is of real life, it functions as a link to production. Production, according to Ngugi (1986: 13), “is cooperation, is communication, is language, is expression of a relation between human beings and it is specifically human.” This is to say, rendering someone’s language otiose is therefore a violent “decapitation” of that person’s humanity, it is to render him a parasite, and it is to dismember his being.

A language-dismembered society becomes parasitic precisely because there is “being” in our mother tongue, and our mother tongue forms our world. For that reason, the extinction or disempowerment of our mother tongue dismembers, thingifies and leaves an individual without any means of communication. Mignolo (2013) notes that modernity/coloniality ranks inferior all languages as backward and not apt for rational thinking. Human beings speaking such languages that were unintelligible to the

colonists were considered inferior and barbaric. The humanitas hence justified and solidified his “humaneness” through the usage and nuances concentrated in language. Memmi (1974: 151) observes:

The colonised’s mother tongue, that which is sustained by his feelings, emotions and dreams, that in which his tenderness and wonder are expressed, thus that which holds the greatest emotional impact, is precisely the one which is the least valued. It has no stature in the country or in the concert of people.

This is to say that besides the coloniser’s language, all other languages were not apt for rational thinking hence human beings speaking them were considered inferior. In other words, coloniality of language or language dismemberment happens when the colonised people are assimilated, subjectivised, controlled, exploited and dominated to an extent that they lose their identity, culture and being. While the post-Apartheid government in South Africa has given most indigenous languages an official recognition, English and Afrikaans have remained largely dominant in schools and government spaces.

Linguicides leave the anthropos with no doubt that the process of re-membering will have to entail knowing that they “have been made the anthropoi and that we cannot belong to the eyes that look at us as the anthropoi” (Mignolo 2013:135). Language as an imperial tool to invent the anthropos takes a violent form of dismembering the colonised. Therefore, language extends beyond the literal meaning as a means of communication often attached to it. It assumes metaphorical connotations aligned to life itself. If language amounts to an individual’s being, suppression of such languages by the imperial language is violence. Its violent forms stem from the traces of unreliability, omissions and silences in telling the stories of the colonised people. The anthropoi’s language or voice is drowned in the hubris of modernity and civilisation. The language of the colonists (of modernity and development) is inseparable to its darker side of linguistic coloniality or modernity as it were. The darker side of modernity is the disempowering of the anthropoi’s language. Remembering the darker side of modernity

makes it possible to tell the alternatives, interpretations or re-interpretations of the silenced views and positions of the anthropos. Through examining the representation of linguistic coloniality in Coetzee's novels, one needs to read between the lines in order to detect the omissions and suppressions.

Re-reading the omissions and suppressions is an act of re-membering the silent or silenced figures in Coetzee's fiction. Arguably, Coetzee's representation of the servant figures is also a way of re-membering those dismembered by coloniality and modernity. In other words, re-membering offers an alternative understanding of the rootlessness, statelessness, rightlessness and voicelessness of colonial victims. Commenting on the importance of re-interpretation(s) of the silenced histories and voices Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013:14) says:

[... it is the] re-telling of history of humanity and knowledge from the vantage point of epistemic sites that received the 'darker side' of modernity, including re-telling the story of knowledge and generation.

The Nervous Condition of Re-membering

While dismemberment is a creation of the abyssal line, re-membering is an attempt to erase it. The silencing of the colonised embodied in language issues like the labelling of the African people as underdeveloped, as barbaric and uncivilised by those who claim modernity or civility has led to most important questions linked to the anthropoi's freedoms. The success of a coloniality-free society after years of colonialisation is questioned, and indeed, in doubt. In doubt also is the method the colonised or former colonised people need to follow in order to re-launch themselves into the world of being. The world of "being" is not similar to the zone of being but a space where the dismembered can be able to redeem their humanity. If anything, the dismembered's world of being rejects the two human zones of the anthropos and humanitas. According to a decolonial thinking, it is not possible for the disqualified to qualify themselves to inhabit the humanitas zone. They can only be qualified by the same humanitas who discriminates against him on the vestiges of his skin colour and language. That is, once

the colonised realises the coloniser's dismembering acts of controlling them and making them subjects who accept its impositions, they are set to delink from the zone of non-being and the zone of being. The delinking endeavour is informed by the principle that the two zones are created by the coloniser and as a result are meant to dismember the colonised.

According to Santos in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015:12), "Africans and others who experienced colonisation: their realm was reconstituted by technologies of power and colonial matrices of power into an incomprehensible state of being." That is, if the realm of the colonised was reconstituted to an extent that they were referred to as the barbarians, or savages or more aptly as anthropoi, then the possibility of co-operation, or co-presence or co-existence of those in the zone of being with those in the zone of non-being is impossible. The process of re-membering then is a disruptive method of thinking, of political revolt and a demand for what has been dismembered, of which most cannot be recovered. The question posed by Mignolo (2013:131) is, "when you delink yourself from capitalism and communism (established systems) where do you go? You land in ways of life and models of thinking that have been disqualified." The disqualified models of life and thinking that make the world what it is continue to exclude and disregard the anthropos. Decoloniality hence appears to be the future of the anthropos in order for them to re-member who they are. This is to say that a dismembered people need to re-member in order to recapture their lost land, power, history, being, language and knowledge.

Decolonial thinking is premised on the realisation that a dismembered body ought to re-member itself and the fact that it is a body complete in itself. Re-membering becomes a psychological inquiry on who I am and what made me who I am. Such questions are based on knowledge and being (epistemology and ontology) and the re-construction or re-membering who I must be. Therefore, re-membering is a delinking endeavour which is the only option that the colonised and the silenced have to regain themselves. Mignolo (2011: 45) defines delinking as a process of "extricating oneself from all power which is not constituted by free decisions made by free people." Delinking, therefore,

involves a rejection by African people “of being told...what [they] are, what [their] ranking is in relation to the ideal of *humanitas* and what [they] have to do to be recognised as such” (Mignolo 2009: 161). On a broad scale, delinking is the rejection of the dependence complex and denunciation of institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organisation that are seen as serving Western interests. In *New Confessions of an Economic Hitman*, Perkins (2004) provides an insider account of United States of America’s coloniality and how her covert agencies manipulate world politics and economics behind the scenes. Delinking involves the rediscovering of the self (cultural, economic or political) and the language that will aptly tell their stories. In other words, delinking involves a process of re-linking and resistance that gives way to re-existence. Therefore, re-membering of the self extends beyond the process of decolonisation.

The silences of Coetzee’s characters lead to the silences of the history of the colonised. Without language no one tells the history of the oppressed, and this is precisely a cause that Coetzee seems to abandon in the case of Friday. Arguably, Coetzee thematises the language or voice absence by including silent characters in his novels. He thereby undermines the self-assurance of dominant narratives and dominant discourses. Like Kafka's protagonists, who may be weak but do not simply disappear and, instead, persist against insurmountable odds even though they cannot win, Coetzee’s anti-heroes are both victims and conquerors in their own right. Like what Karl (1991: xvi) notes of Franz Kafka’s writings, Coetzee’s “perceptions also make him timeless. There is no need to project his work onto specific historical moments.” Arguably, it is the lack of voice that make Coetzee’s characters appear as if they are helpless victims who are giving up.

Notwithstanding this narrative argument, silence can be an alternative of telling the truth or lies as it were. On another level, it can be argued that the absence of language in most of Coetzee’s servant characters seem to have classified them as unintelligible and unfathomable beings. It leaves us with no doubt, especially considering Coetzee’s characters, that the process of re-membering entails knowing that “we have been made

the anthropoi and that we cannot belong to the eyes that look at us as the anthropoi” (Mignolo 2013:135). The colonised hence has to guard against normalising the context or assuming themselves as lesser beings on the basis that they lack the understanding of a colonial language. Normalisation happens, as Memmi (1974: 151) observes of language, when “the colonised himself discards his language, hiding it from the sight of strangers.”

The projected success of re-membering and de-linking is very much contested today since even decolonial thinking happens inside coloniality. Re-membering takes the form of border epistemology described by Mignolo (2013:131) as the “epistemology of the *anthropoi*, who do not want to submit to *humanitas*, but at the same time cannot avoid it.” In the process of re-membering, a question remains on how the world can be re-made “such that the enslaved, colonised and exploited people can regain their ontological density, voice, land, history, knowledge and power” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2015:23). This is a quest to re-member and consequently to de-link from established norms. Therefore, the exercise of re-membering and delinking, for example in fiction, places characters like Friday in *Foe* and the Barbarian girl, or even the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians* outside the acceptable normative norms of the colonial world. This may lead to the classification (a form of hierarchisation) of these characters as lacking that which makes them human. However, one wonders of the role of the Magistrate in the free outpost. Does he ever come to understand life of those in the zone of non-being or does he remain a symbol of colonisation of space like Cecil John Rhodes’s statue that Cape Town University students protested against in 2016? Perhaps the important question is on Coetzee’s representation of the Magistrate’s character. Readers of Coetzee’s fiction continue to ponder whether the “black” people living in the region in their wake of re-membering and delinking will capture lost land, power, history, being, language and knowledge.

Re-membering is more aptly expressed by Fanon (2008) as “oh my body, make me always a man who questions!” Questioning is at the centre of re-membering. On the narrative level, this is the method Coetzee uses in the representation of his

protagonists. Coetzee's protagonists are described as going through intense self-questioning. Such method of representation forces the readers to engage in self-interrogation too. It may be argued that in this way Coetzee and his characters subvert dominant (imperialistic) discourses. The process of re-membering through questioning becomes a quest for wholeness (Ngugi 2009). Re-membering is, as Franz Fanon (2008) points out, an establishment of a new humanity and the creation of new forms of life. In other words, border epistemology or border thinking is the thinking of the anthropoi who do not aspire to become the humanitas because they are aware that it is the enunciation of the humanitas that made them the anthropoi. The endeavour to de-link therefore is an on-going process, an endless quest that may or may not be actualised.

Decoloniality then becomes the colonised people's liberating option. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015: 13) postulates that decoloniality "is part of the continuing search for the new base by the excluded and subordinated subjectivities from which to launch themselves into the new world that is humane and inclusive." The new world is a world where the abyssal line has been erased and where humans are not divided along the colour of their skins. Therefore, decoloniality does not only question the holistic destabilisation of the colonised people but also questions the humanity of the coloniser as well. That is, the colonised as the product of the coloniser is a subject of violation, abuse and fragmentation. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015) observes that the fragmentation of the colonised from the Cartesian subject of one who thinks he is leads to the coloniser's production of the colonised, and the articulation of subjectivity and being. The inferiority complex ascribed to the anthropoi, and the anthropoi as a product of the humanitas, makes it possible for humanity of the supposedly inferior people to be doubted. However, it is noted in decoloniality that struggles and colonial protests prove beyond doubt that it is the colonised people who seem to want to move forward (towards real civilisation without hierarchies) but the colonists hold them back. Decoloniality hence will like to demystify the European concept of civilisation as Joseph de Maistre quoted in Cesaire (2000) says:

There was only too much truth in this first impulse of the European who, in the century of Columbus, refused to recognize as their fellow men the degraded inhabitants of the new world...one cannot gaze upon the savage for an instant without reading the anathema written, I do not say upon his soul alone, but even on the external form of his body.

At the heart of racialisation is the *cogito ergo sum* (I think therefore I am) formulation synonymous with the zone of being. Maldonado-Torres (2007: 252) puts the Cartesian formulation better, "I think (others do not think, or do not think properly), therefore I am (others are not, lacking being, should not exist or are dispensable." More precisely, race or colour of one's skin is used as a basis and justification for such categorisations. Decoloniality then "facilitates the unmasking of racism as a global problem as well as demonstrating how knowledge, including science was used to justify colonialism" (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:14). Fanon in Mignolo (2013) talks of "sociogenesis", an epistemic and logical racism. It states hence that you are inferior epistemically and therefore ontologically. Mignolo (2013:139) notes of sociogenesis:

sociogenesis emerges at the awareness that you are a 'negro', not because of the colour of your skin, but because of the modern racial imaginary of the modern colonial world – you have been made a 'Negro' by the discourse, whose rules you cannot control, and there is no room for complaint.

It will seem that the anthropoi under what Foucault (1995), in his critique of Bentham's Panopticon, called the panoptic gaze, want to affirm themselves as human, expressing a desire to be the humanitas by adopting what Fanon (2008) called the white masks. Foucault 1995: 202-3) observes the effects of the Panopticon prison:

He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection.

That is, the gaze produces a counter self, an altered self that will never be whole. It follows that the act of the anthropos being what they are not is always bound to fail. Consequently, such acts of adopting Euro-North American-centric modernity, even in the running of governments oftentimes attract further labels like “they are not capable of governing themselves” from their masters (Memmi 1974: 139). Even the act of mimicry done to perfection disqualifies them to be *humanitas* proper because the colonised is always viewed as incapable of running his own affairs.

The concept of human categorisation as an invention does not reflect the realities of “being” of those in the zone of being and non-being. As demonstrated, the idea of the barbaric Negro is a European invention. The invented categories are but separatist ideas to keep the systems of coloniality in place. That is, it is the coloniser in the name of modernity who (after all created hierarchies) is responsible for different forms of re-membering like the violent revolutionary actions witnessed in Africa. In a quest to re-member, decoloniality challenges capitalistic modernity as well as the neo-colonialism. Therefore, political epistemology should be concerned with building inclusive states that responds to local needs, habits and memories of a particular society.

Arguments on differences between postcolonial theories and decolonial thinking continue to surface. Some thinkers see a disjunction between the two terms whereas others do not. Mignolo (2013:131) notes that decoloniality is a concept whose point of origination is the Third World. That is, like Dussel (2002), Mignolo dismisses postcolonialism and postmodernity as Eurocentric. Decoloniality is of the view that coloniality (or modernity/coloniality) is an ongoing process. Mpofu (2014) finds postcolonialism (and, indeed, postmodernism) as insufficient tools to demolish the neo-colonial economic control. Decoloniality hence explores the extents to which such coloniality, in the advancement of the neo-colonialism, acts to dismember the colonised. Therefore, decoloniality makes a call to the colonised to realise this oppression as culmination of discovering one's self. While empires in the old sense, that played a key role in ancient, medieval and early modern history no longer exist (WWI led to the

collapse of some of the last empires - Ottoman Turk, Austro-Hungarian, German and Russian - and decolonisation led to the end of British, French and others), imperialism (or neo-imperialism) continues in a different form. Neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism are new forms of managerialism that involve economic and military domination (hence American imperialism, which does not involve settling lands with colonists but does involve military bases across the entire planet). In literature, neo-imperialism is represented as dismembering the physical, psychological, geographical, historical, epistemological and even on the narrative levels.

The re-membering of the self extends beyond the process of political decolonisation to the level of literary aesthetics. Unlike in the postcolonial protest literatures where characters are engaged in open defiance of oppressive power, re-membering also happens on the level of the author's consciousness as a form of delinking. Therefore, it is noteworthy to explore the possibilities of re-membering through fictional writing. In literature, characters as fictional constructs are silenced and made voiceless by the narrator or the focaliser, and to some extent, by the author and the environment they may find themselves in. Hence, the silence of the servant characters in Coetzee's fiction makes one consider why Coetzee may have decided to make them voiceless. What is Coetzee suggesting about colonialism that he chooses to silence and make voiceless the servants in his fiction? Therefore, re-membering through writing entails the narrator's ability to overcome the realities of character and language over-representation and using European modes of knowledges in storytelling. The complexities in Coetzee's fiction arise from his postmodernist way of writing meta-narratives, and through the utilisation of intertextual forms of parody and pastiche. In so doing, Coetzee places himself at the border. The border position negates the monotopic subject and considerations of the anthropos but advocates for pluriversality. Tlastanova (2014) notes that pluriversality is a concept based on the belief that there is no absolute pluriversal or legitimate knowledge. Therefore, an illuminating reading of Coetzee's novels should acknowledge the ecology of knowledges and post-abysal thinking in his work. Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007) identifies the ecology of knowledges as based upon the idea of the epistemological diversity of the world. That is, the ecology of

knowledges is the pluriversality which Dussel (2002) says leads to a multiplicity of decolonial critical responses to Euro-centred modernity and knowledge.

This decolonial reading of Coetzee's selected novels offers to unearth nuances of writing and aspects of focalisation worthy engaging on. Such reading also gives an opportunity to readers and critiques alike to re-examine postmodern and postcolonial techniques that Coetzee might have employed or deviated from in his writing. By examining the darker side of modernity in Coetzee's fiction, dismemberment becomes the foundation of such inquiry, and to show the process of re-membering. A decolonial reading has to change the terms of engagement as it were. Decoloniality as Mignolo (2013: 133) says, should focus on "changing the terms of the conversation and not only its content." Having said this, it is necessary to delve deeply into J. M Coetzee's novels.

3. Civilisation and Barbarism in 'Waiting for the Barbarians'

I came into the world imbued with the will to find meaning in things, [...] and then I found that I was an object in the midst of other objects. Sealed into that crushing objecthood, I turned beseechingly to others.

Frantz Fanon (2008: 82).

Colonialism cannot be understood without the possibility of torturing, of violating, or of massacring. Torture is an expression and a means of the occupant-occupied relationship.

Frantz Fanon (1964: 66).

Introduction

Colonialism and its accompanying myths of the civilising mission and modernisation project placed much ideological stock on the binary of civilisation and barbarism. The colonisers invested in the political pretence that they had come to the colonies to civilise and modernise backward barbarians. In his fictional writing, Coetzee explores thematic aspects surrounding civilisation and barbarism in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. The juxtaposition of civilisation and barbarism in the novel functions as binary opposition which Coetzee proceeds to undermine. Therefore, barbarisms (and all the terminologies synonymous to it) signify acts of dismemberment – historical, cultural and psychological. In the novel, dismemberment has its roots in coloniality resultant in social realities of the outpost. One reality is the naming, and to some extent the lack of names that ought to be questioned and explored. The naming of anyone dissimilar to the outpost's dwellers as a barbarian is a problematic and problematised reality. The name given to the natives as barbarians is characterised by terrors of torture and mutilation - a particularly gruesome means of dismemberment. In the eyes of the metropolis, the barbarians lead "systemless" ways of lives. The barbarians threaten to disrupt the construction of modernity or European modernity (which is modernity/coloniality or progress, or even universality). Through the critique of coloniality in the novel, barbarism should be

understood in tandem with power relations (or the colonial matrix of power). Coetzee's juxtaposition of civilisation and barbarism is a way of critiquing racial discrimination and hierarchical relations that serve as a dichotomous line between the Empire's outpost and the peripheries. The outpost is the attenuated version of the metropole (of civility) and the peripheral land geographically represents savagery.

The Magistrate governs the outpost in the name of the metropolis in service of the Empire until the arrival of the Empire's new men (Colonel Joll and Mandel) who are the agents of the Third Bureau. The fabula revolves around the Magistrate who is also the narrative focaliser. It is through the Magistrate that the reader gains access to the dynamics of power in the Empire's outpost in relation to the inferiorised barbarians. The novel opens with the deployment of the Empire's Colonel Joll to the outpost. As the official in charge of torture, the Colonel is committed to investigate threats of the imminent barbarian uprising. After his arrival, the number of prisoners increases and torture becomes the order of the day. Ironically, the Magistrate rehabilitates and is eventually obsessed by Colonel Joll's victim whose feet are broken by a hammer and whose eyes are partially blinded by some hot "fork with only two teeth" (Coetzee 2004: 44). Not knowing what to do with the girl, the Magistrate undertakes a journey to return the girl to her barbaric folks. Upon his return back to the outpost he is imprisoned, humiliated, alienated and tortured too. In the end, following an enigmatic battle between the settlers and the natives, the imperialist forces are defeated and abandon the outpost. However, the Magistrate remains partly because he has lived in the outpost for all his life. This opens a new debate on contemporary issues surrounding identity or its dismemberment or re-membering (who and when is someone African or native) in South Africa or in Africa at large¹³.

This chapter consists of three sub-headings. The first sub-heading: *Critiquing the Method (of the narrator/narration/focalization)* examines how Coetzee uses writing and the narrative focus to explore concepts of dismembering and re-membering with the

¹³ See Sally Mathews (2015) *Shifting White Identities in South Africa: White Africanness and the Struggle for Racial Justice*.

main focus on the narrator and the narrator's creator. That is, through examining techniques that Coetzee employs in juxtaposing the models of civilisation and barbarism, the critique focusses on how dismembering and re-membering happens in the conscious or the unconscious. Therefore, dismemberment of the anthropos (the barbarian) through torture may allegorically signify the becoming barbarian of civilisation. The dynamics of civilisation and barbarism, and on many levels, various dismemberings and re-memberings invite allegorical reading of the novel. However, Attridge in Poyner (2006) cautions against many forms of allegorical reading in fictional writing, particularly when dealing with Coetzee's fiction. Attridge in Poyner (2006: 68) argues:

Allegorical interpretation is frequently spurred by a lack of specificity or some other peculiarity in a work's temporal and geographical locatedness, rendering the literal interpretation problematic and encouraging the reader to look for other meaning.

However, throughout his essay, Attridge in Poyner (2006) emphasises that an allegorical reading is certainly possible and frequently rewarding if interpretations are done with the text's literariness in mind. In this spirit, Coetzee, through problematising the Magistrate's identity in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, appears to be calling for different interpretations. This leads us to the second sub-heading: *Can the Dismembered/Dismembering Magistrate Re-member?* Arguably, the Magistrate appears to be a hero/anti-hero character sitting on the fence even though he participates in subjecting the barbarian people to civility. It is, after all, his quest (and the Empire's) to civilise the barbarians through systemic ways of life like subjecting them to the Empire's law. This sub-heading argues that through his application of the law, and his sense to preserve the status quo of the outpost before the arrival of the Colonel, the Magistrate takes part in the management of coloniality. This critique is only possible through devoting to and exploring the Magistrate's identity and lack of in the outpost and his participation in the dismembering project of the Empire.

The citizens of the third world, as observed by Fanon (2004) are the damned or the wretched. It is this concept of the wretched of the earth that brings us to the last critical sub-heading: *Re-membering the Wretched*. The Empire's (re)construction of bodies is a major phenomenon in the novel. While bodies refer to human bodies, allegorically, it also makes reference to territorial bodies. Mignolo in Broecks and Junker (2014) call these borderlines (a simulacrum of Anzaldua's *Borderlands*). Therefore, to use a decolonial term, territorial bodies are the geo-politics locatable in the novel. The dismemberment of human and territorial bodies happens as a result of segregation between hygienic and unhygienic bodies, which has created what Mignolo refers to as "thirdworldism" (Broeck and Junker 2014). Like the naming and the not naming, the labelling and marking of barbarian bodies, thirdworldism is a hierarchisation system that serves to divide and partition land, economies and its people from the first and second world. Put differently, thirdworldism or barbarism is created in order to define the centre or the humanitas.

Critiquing the Method (of the Narrator/Narration/Focalization)

Dismemberment and re-membering in *Waiting for the Barbarians* happen more intensely at the narratological level. Coetzee nominates the Magistrate (a white male colonist) to narrate the story of the outpost and the barbarians represented by Colonel Joll and the barbarian girl respectively. Meanwhile, there is his own story that seems to puzzle him as well. In choosing the Magistrate as the narrator, Coetzee seem to be critiquing the idea of civilisation and its creation of barbarism. The Magistrate introduces the reader to his puzzlement of Colonel Joll's colonial spectacles that he describes as "dark disks of glass" (Coetzee 2004:1). Apparently, this grim image of darkness forms the opening line of the novel and runs throughout the whole text. The plot of the novel seems to be thematic contestation between this metaphor of darkness and light as played out in the first line of the novel. The Colonel's excuse of putting on the sunglasses is to protect his eyes from the scorching sun of the desert. Laue (2015) observes that the masked Colonel is an image of the Empire that is concealed while viewing others. In his thematic portrayal of sight and blindness, Coetzee positions the Magistrate as one progressing from the position of sight to the position of blindness as

is evident in the events that unfold in the narrative. However, Coetzee appears to problematise the Magistrate since he appears to become barbarian as the novel draws to a close. It can be argued that the Magistrate's re-membering occurs in the novel through his process of self-realisation. If the civilised Magistrate progresses from the position of blindness to that of sight by becoming barbarian as can be argued, then a misconception of regarding the barbarians or barbarism as a symbol of primitivism should be questioned.

The metaphor of sight and blindness that is thematised in Colonel's Joll's appearance appears to epitomise the colonist's civilisation. The dark spectacles as a new invention and its ability to permit whoever is wearing them to observe others from an indiscernible position signifies iniquities of modernity or civility. The Colonel remarks of the spectacles, "at home everyone wears them" (Coetzee 2004: 1). The Colonel's 'home' is the Empire he represents in the outpost. Its usage and its ability to conceal the eyes symbolises the darker side of modernity, often referred to as coloniality. Following his defeat, the Colonel loses his glasses and his face appears "naked" to the Magistrate. Colonel Joll's masked description resonates with the panoptic gaze employed by Laue (2015) in her critique of the Empire's gaze. The unmasking of the Colonel at the end of the novel brings the ideal of omnipotence inherent in the Panopticon (universal surveillance) into question. The Panopticon prison, as Laue (2015:1) describes, "is a form of power that seeks to render its subjects docile, predictable and usable through mechanisms of incessant and objectifying watching." The colonial gaze or objectifying watching reduces a black subject to a non-being, that is, to a thing, or, to use Sartre's terminology, a being in itself (an object) as opposed to a person (a being for itself). Therefore, such surveillance tactics are part of the dismembering strategies Colonel Joll uses on the colonised barbarians.

The dismembering colonial gaze of the Empire's Colonel Joll presents an image of darkness to the colonised other. Quijano in Mpofu (2014) outlines how such dismemberment happens when he observes that the Empire's gaze is like a fraudulent mirror which distorts what it reflects resulting in the colonised being presented with

distorted image of themselves. This can be read in the portrayed image and self-image of the barbarian girl and through her hesitancy to speak her mind. Therefore, the colonist gaze shrivels the observed colonised and “ends up creating its object, fixing it, or destroying it, or returns it to the world but under the sign of disfiguration or at least of [...] an object, a marginal being” (Mbembe 2017: 110). Aware of this gaze, the barbarians, including the barbarian girl behave as the imagined invention of the coloniser and continue to be what they are not.

The Colonel's dark glasses that bring a metaphor of sight and blindness are juxtaposed with another binary: truth and lies. In pursuit of “truth” Colonel Joll has to go to the extreme limits of torture. While this leads to physical dismemberment (as seen in the physical impairment of the barbarian girl), truth or torture should be juxtaposed with lies that the Colonel extracts from the barbarian boy in his quest for truth. The exertion of torture on the barbarian boy and the realisation that he is a barbarian (in the eyes of the Colonel) makes him remember that what matters is not truth or lies but his identity. In a sense the barbarian boy re-members when he tells lies. In his compliance, the boy defies the Colonel. The confession that the Colonial extracts from the boy is a false confession tailored to suit what the Empire wants to hear. One will argue that this false confession is what saves the boy's life. At the end of the boy's confession the Colonial decides to let the boy take him to the “arming” barbarians, and as the Magistrate envisages, this means that “...the soldiers are going to ride out against [the boy's] people. There is going to be killing” (Coetzee 2000: 11).

The method of confessing to lies is also employed by the Magistrate later in the novel in his reading of the poplar slips found in the rubble at the ruins of the outpost. Consciously or unconsciously in his interpretations, the Magistrate metaphorically tortures the poplar slips in his attempt to annotate them. However, in his defiance by telling untruths without any measure of force the Magistrate does not re-member because he remains the producer of knowledge. While re-membering is in part the production of alternative knowledges, in his re-membering the Magistrate displaces the original meaning. The slips have or do have meaning since they belong to a structured

system, the code of which, however, has been lost. The Magistrate's finding meanings in the poplar slips' meaninglessness poses a danger of distorting even the unknown meaning. Therefore, while the Magistrate can be read as producing inferred counter knowledges unexpected by the Empire, arguably his meaning-making is epistemologically informed by the same Empire's knowledge. Mbembe (2017: 109) observes that a colonist "strives to create its own world out of the debris of the one that it found when it arrived." On the one hand, the Magistrate is arranging the world according to his own logic that may as well represent the logic of the Empire since he is its product. However, on the other hand, his interpretation or reinterpretations of the poplar slips using his own language signals that the language of the "other" bows down to the language of the "self". Yet still, the Magistrate's interpretation may be argued to be his recognition of otherness (alterity), and, therefore, his openness to change and to challenge the dominant imperial discourse. In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, it is a false belief that the barbarians had no language if they were able to write on the poplar slips (that is if they are the ones who wrote on the poplar slips). Arguably, it is not clear whether it is the barbarians who inscribed symbols on the poplar slips, or whether the symbols constitute a language. The poplar slips could have been inscribed by members of an older civilisation.

This notwithstanding, claims that the barbarians are "illiterate" stem from the Empire's dilemma in comprehending their language(s). While it may be argued that the barbarians may well have been illiterate, the argument can also be on what constitutes illiteracy. If the barbarians (that is, if they are the authors of the poplar slips) are able to inscribe signs that can be read by their folk (be it drawings or paintings), then their illiteracy can only be in relation to their inability to read or write the master's language. Even if this illiteracy is extended to their own language (as the inability to read and write) it does not imply that they have no language at all or forms of representing their communication. If the Magistrate was reading the barbarian inscriptions, his acts of interpretation and re-interpretations are acts of dismembering not only the history of the barbarians, but their language as well. Moses (1993: 120) notes that, "the Empire uses writing (inscriptions and interpretations) as a form of torture." Torture of any form serves

as ways of altering and dismembering. Therefore, the language of the anthropoi is discarded like the polar slips and is taken to mean nothing until the Empire has spoken. If the barbarians are the authors of the slips, then the Magistrate is unconsciously re-writing the barbarian history. Such re-writings may well be regarded as acts of theft and erasure deliberately orchestrated to deny the barbarians' existence.

Through his complicity and the way he views the barbarians, the Magistrate is, at the unconscious level, engaging in acts of dismemberment. The Magistrate's protest and the act of distancing himself from Colonel Joll's impunity especially after his sojourn to the barbarian land cannot exonerate him from the project of coloniality. Introspectively, he questions this notion, "who am I to assert my distance from [the Colonel]" (Coetzee 2014:6). The Magistrate takes part in the civilisation project through his complicity. He says, "I did not ride away: for a while I stopped my ears to the noise coming from the hut by the granary where the tools are kept" (Coetzee 2014: 9). He has done little to rescue the barbarian prisoners from Joll's torture. He is a puppet of the Empire (although not entirely), partly because he is made by the Empire, and only the Empire determines his fate through various mechanisms and measures that are meant to control – like imprisonment, starvation, labelling and, most importantly, paying him a salary. He unconsciously appears to reduce, in a willy-nilly fashion, the barbarians to things, sometimes to animal, and sometimes to human beings-in-becoming. The Magistrate observes the first group of barbarian prisoners eat and defecate as though they were beasts being exhibited in zoos: "I hold these prisoners 'incommunicado' to him. And in a day or two these savages seem to forget they ever had another home" (Coetzee 2004: 20). He describes them as filthy savages who have frank and filthy habits (Coetzee 2004: 20). Coetzee is hereby criticising colonial attitudes to dismembered native people, who are seen as being savages after colonialism has reduced them to a subhuman state.

However, the fact that the Magistrate holds views that the barbarians are "savages" he neither belongs nor is reducible to a barbarian mentally or otherwise. The Magistrate cannot be described as the anthropos when he disassociates himself from the

barbarians. His gaze (informed by his attitude towards the beginning of the novel) suggests that he considers himself civilised. Marguti (2013: 65) says that all “humans who possess civilisation belong to the category of *humanitas*, but never to the category of *anthropos*.” This is to problematise a postcolonial analysis of this figure. His continual reference and use of the word “barbarians” (even if his use of the term may have changed meaning over time) echo the idea of separatism: a barbarian society governed by savage mentality compared to the Empire that is governed by reason (Mbembe 2017:42).

Coetzee enacts instances of racial interpellation especially when the Magistrate rehabilitates the barbarian girl in his room. Fanon (2008: 82) posits that racial interpellation “thingifies” the black subject to the extent that his or her body is reduced to an object. His obsession of the barbarian girl’s body and torture marks is indicative of his bondage to the discourse of “civilisation”. The ritual of washing and watching naked girls’ bodies is commonly found in civilised people’s popular culture where watching and rubbing oils on naked bodies in clubs and bars is a form of entertainment. Therefore, his obsession with the tortured body suggests further torture and signals a racial gaze not dissimilar to that of the Empire's panoptic gaze. The gaze dismembers by alienating and reducing the subject to an object. The Magistrate’s dismembering colonial tendencies include his duties to collect taxes and tithes and his presiding over the economy. While paying tax is an ancient practice even in the pre-colonial African societies in honour of their kings, paying exorbitant taxes, later on to foreign masters is oppressive and dismembering. What comes to mind in this instance is the hut tax imposed by Britain on the tribes of southern Africa, which forced them to enter the global economy¹⁴.

The stylistics in the narrative limits what is seen and told within the borders of the Empire. Coetzee makes this possible through his fictive employ of the Magistrate as the first-person narrator. The only instance where the narrator recounts the barbarians *in*

¹⁴Feinstein’s (2005) book *An Economic History of Southern Africa: Conquest, discrimination, and Development* offers nuanced historical accounts and the effects of hut tax among many other taxes in South Africa.

situ is when the Magistrate travels to the barbarian land in his pursuit to return the physically broken barbarian girl, and his wanderings to the fisherfolk settlement surrounding the Empire. The Magistrate remains an outsider even beyond the confines of the outpost. Upon his meeting with the barbarians, the Magistrate remarks, "I have never before met northerners on their own ground on equal terms" (Coetzee 2004:78). This stems from the barbarians' indifference and their setting of terms of engagement as it were. It is also outside the confines of the Empire that the Magistrate sees the beauty and the attractiveness and the wittiness of the barbarian girl – who she earlier had described as ugly. Therefore, the Magistrate's new dawn outside the confines of the Empire's outpost calls into question the image of the bespectacled Colonel who might metaphorically be blind to the reality in as far as questions on the barbarians are concerned.

Such blindness speaks to the enactment of race, such that one group is made superior and the other inferior, which became policy during the apartheid government in South Africa. This race segregation is evident in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*. While one cannot simply identify Coetzee's fictional Empire with Apartheid in a straightforward way (even though they may share some features in common), the Apartheid-like prohibition of marriage between the Magistrate and the barbarian girl within the Empire reminds one of the laws witnessed in South Africa such as *Prohibition of Mixed Marriage Act* of 1949 and *Immorality Act* of 1950. In fact, the Magistrate's formal charges include his liaison with the barbarian girl. The charges are "the liaison had a demoralising effect on the prestige of imperial administration because the woman in question had been patronised by the common soldiers and figured in numerous obscene stories" (Coetzee 2004: 91). Coetzee's mode of narration critiques the enactment of such unfair and dehumanising laws even within the narrative itself. If the "woman in question has been patronised by soldiers" as the charge goes, the Empire's soldiers are guilty of immorality as well, which ironically qualifies the barbarian girl to be human too.

The Magistrate's deep penetration of the barbarian land as he returns the barbarian woman to her people is symbolical of the continued gaze the Empire practices on the barbarian prisoners. His trespassing to the barbarian land is similar to his absurd possession and penetration of the barbarian girl's flesh. It comes as no surprise that soon after the Magistrate has returned from his sojourn, the barbarians' frontier is invaded by Colonel Joll's army. Soon after the Magistrate's return, there is a fire clearing of the river banks since it is presumed that the barbarians may find cover. The Magistrate remarks that "[...] the expeditionary force against barbarians prepares for its campaign" (Coetzee 2000: 90). In the eyes of both the Empire and the barbarians, the Magistrate is on a spying mission, where he is both a traitor and a spy. One of the charges leveled against him is the purpose of his travel. The Empire says his journey was "to warn the barbarians of the coming campaign" (Coetzee 2004: 91). The refusal of the barbarians to accept the Magistrate offer of peace signaled by their disappearance even when the Magistrate holds and raises a banner of peace made of "a pole and a white linen shirt" and the confiscation of his silver which was meant to buy a horse is evident of this animosity and mistrust existing between him (the Empire) and the barbarians (Coetzee: 2000: 75). While the Magistrate is portrayed as not barbarian enough, he is also an outcast of the Empire. He finds himself in between, mistrusted even by the Empire because he travels to the barbarian land on his own account, contrary to the desires of his superiors. Through the Magistrate's portrayal, Coetzee appears to be concerned about the question of the possibility of an individual's attempts to live ethically in an immoral or unjust society.

However, through his narration (and sometimes focalization) in the manifestations of the narrative and narration processes, the Magistrate stands accused of deciding what to tell (or what not to tell) and how to tell it, and sometimes, of deciding what to see. In his narration and portrayal that only recounts what he sees and hears, the Magistrate omits issues of coloniality that he perhaps views as normal ways of living. Consciously, through his temporary inability to write, the Magistrate is aware of various dismemberments that may occur to the barbarians' history. The Magistrate says "all day I sit in a trance at my desk staring at the empty white paper, waiting for words to come"

(Coetzee 2004: 62). This trance is what characterises most of his undertakings to write throughout the novel. His inability to read (the poplar slips) and write the history of the outpost signals his avoidance to distort or re-write the barbarians' history. However, unconsciously, by not writing the history of the barbarians, the Magistrate renders it open for manipulation. Through his inability to record what he orally recounts (in the level of the narrative), the narrator invites the reader to be skeptical of what he says. If the Magistrate is not to be trusted, therefore what he says of the barbarians may be regarded as a process of dismembering them. It appears that the Magistrate stands accused of dismemberment whatever decision he takes with regards to reading or not reading the poplar slips or writing or not writing the barbarian's accounts.

The Magistrate, together with his creator's (Coetzee) inability to write maybe read as a negation to tackle the pressing political issues of the time in which he was writing. It must be remembered that when the Magistrate faces problems in writing, this is also reflective of Coetzee's dilemma. Mpofu (2014) refers to this as self-writing. When Coetzee writes about writing, he is also writing about himself as a writer. Therefore, the Magistrate's hesitancy to write might also be Coetzee's method of self-accusation. That is, by writing about colonialism in an unnamed setting, he is obscuring current colonialism (Apartheid) in South Africa in the 1980s. In other words, by setting the novel in a fictive land, he is suggesting that he cannot speak for the actual oppressed people of South Africa (but that he feels he has to criticise colonialism nonetheless).

In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, uncertainty hovers around the future of the outpost after Colonel Joll has left. This uncertainty is aided by the Magistrate's incomplete dreams or realities. Throughout the novel the Magistrate's dreams are incomplete and this can symbolise the uncertain future of the Empire, or images of the barbarians' bodies. Through dreams the Magistrate continues to imagine the barbarians, the barbarian girl and the Empire. Therefore, the Magistrate continues to discover the barbarians. A case in point is the Magistrate's "discovery" of the barbarians after his sojourn to the barbarian land. The barbarians did not exist until they are discovered. Yet the existence of the Empire depends on the naming or the invention of the barbarians. In a

comparative study of Cavafy's poem and Coetzee's novel of the same title, Boletsi (2007: 68) believes that "the notion of the barbarians operates as the constructive outside of civilisation and feeds the superiority of the civilised." This is to say that the existence of the barbarians is paramount to the existence and identity of those who live in Coetzee's frontier or Cavafy's Capitol. In fact, the survival of the civilised depends much on the barbarians. In Cavafy's (2013) dialogic poem, the first speaker (who is very much like Coetzee's Magistrate in his ignorance of what is going on in the frontier) questions: "What are we waiting for assembled in the forum" and later "Why this sudden bewilderment, this confusion." Amid the senators' preparations, the second speaker shows the importance of the barbarians, "Because the barbarians are coming today" and later, amid confusion on the square, the second speaker shows the non-existence of the barbarians in answers like: "Because night has fallen and the barbarians haven't come//And some of our men in from the border say//There are no barbarians any longer" (Cavafy 2013).

The Magistrate in Coetzee believes to have seen the barbarians, and it is after this encounter with the barbarians that the Magistrate appears to be what Friedrich Nietzsche refers to as the "civilised barbarian" (Nietzsche's ideas as discussed in Tziouvas 1986). In Nietzschean thought, barbarism is associated with self-consciousness and liberation. However, to think decolonially is to critique the Magistrate's "over-representation" of the Empire in his narration. By over-representing the humanitas, the Empire denies that its existence depends on the barbarians living outside the outpost/frontier. The Empire survives on the acts of dismemberment in order to define itself. The increase of barbarian prisoners and the building of more prisons define civilisation under the legacy of Colonel Joll. In *Waiting for the Barbarians* prisons are not only designed to deny the barbarians freedom but to act as torture chambers to instill fear, torture and murder. On the critique of prisons, Coetzee, as Attwell (1993: 83) notes, refers to new prisons as "a black flower of civilisation." Therefore, the prisons that confine and deny freedom like the dark sunglasses of the Colonel are in a way the language of the Empire.

Can the Dismembered/Dismembering Magistrate Re-member?

The Magistrate's collusion with the Empire in the dismembering project (at least up until he eventually dissents and gets punished) is another dark reality the reader encounters in the novel. It is the troubled/troubling figure of the Magistrate that is unsettling in Coetzee's narrative. The Magistrate's experiences are described in Coetzee's typically pellucid style. The Magistrate seems to have severe limitations in terms of his consciousness, particularly toward the beginning of the novel. However, through the development of his character especially as the novel draws to an end he appears as a dynamic character who has gained self-knowledge and the knowledge of the world. Whichever way one reads Coetzee's novel, characters like the Magistrate appear to have an expanded consciousness at the close of the novel. However, while characters like the Magistrate seem to develop, the barbarians' characters are presented as stagnant. Throughout the novel not much is said of the outpost's future and even that of the barbarians because of the Magistrate's negation of further narration of the outpost in the closing sections of the novel. This can be understood because every novel must come to an end somewhere.

However, in discussing the Magistrate's character and his dismembering tendencies as a result of his civilisation mission, two factual stories come to mind. One is that of Congolese pygmy Ota Benga¹⁵ and that of Jourdon Anderson¹⁶. In the beginning of the novel, the Magistrate commits similar crimes in his further imprisonment of the barbarian girl under the pretext of taking care of her like Ota under the custody of Reverend James Gordon. The Magistrate, like Mr. Patrick Henry Anderson, only begins to realise the importance of the barbarian girl and begs her to return soon before she re-joins her people. The Magistrate says, "Only now that I have brought you back, as far as I can, I wish to ask you very clearly to return to the town with me" (Coetzee 2004: 77).

¹⁵ After years of being exhibited in American Bronx Zoo, Ota Benga was rescued and placed in the custody of Reverend James Gordon only to be denied freedom to return home to Congo which led to his suicide in 1916. Read more on this historical figure at: <https://cjee.lakeheadu.ca/article/view/1399/867>

¹⁶ Jourdon Anderson (1865) wrote a letter to his former master Patrick Anderson who had expressed a wish for the former slave to return to him. The letter reveals the ill-treatment that the slave endured during his employ to the master.

While I wish not to do a comparative study of real figures to Coetzee's imaginary Magistrate, my mention of these two historical facts is informed by what seem to coincide with the fictive characters in Coetzee's novel. The barbarian girl, like Benga who was displayed in the Bronx zoo with monkeys, and like Jourdon, proves far more important to the Empire. The Magistrate, like Anderson, draws our attention on how his character exhibits colonial dismembering tendencies in so far as Coetzee's Empire is concerned. His belief in civilisation and his role to civilise the barbarians is one negative position that ought to be questioned and explored.

The Magistrate believes in the organisation of the outpost and the power of the judiciary system. However in the novel, he deplores the horrific extra-judicial behaviour of Colonel Joll, including imprisonment without trial and torture. Nonetheless, his belief in principles and processes of the judiciary highlights his roots to the doctrines of the civilisation and development. The Magistrate appears conflicted between the interests of the Empire and that of the outpost. In a sense, especially noticing the denouement in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the Magistrate appears to desire a self-governed outpost. The Empire's power that the Colonel possess is strange to the Magistrate, who through his administration of the outpost for "over thirty years" has somewhat endeared himself with the outpost community and its very immediate surrounds (Coetzee 2004: 62). There seem to be trade between the barbarians and the fisherfolk communities even though such trade benefits the Empire. The Magistrate comments:

It always pained me in the old days to see these, people fall victim to the guile of shopkeepers, exchanging their goods for trinkets, lying drunk in the gutter and confirming thereby the settler's litany of prejudice: that barbarians are lazy, immoral, filthy, [and] stupid. (Coetzee 2004: 41).

It is evident that Coetzee is not describing a thriving trade network but rather the abject position of colonised people who have lost their grasslands and only have remnants of their culture to sell - like the Bushmen throughout Southern Africa. Nomadic tribesmen tend to be economically self-sufficient with little need or desire to trade with outposts of

a hostile Empire. Since they are nomadic, it is difficult to carry goods around for the purpose of trading. They tend to do with the minimum necessary for survival and only with what they can carry with them. However, in this model, nomadic people seem to have been pushed off their grazing lands and are engaged in trade and appear to rely on the outpost healthcare facilities as evidenced by the Magistrate's two prisoners who allege that they were captured while on their way to the outpost to seek medical treatment. Despite the Magistrate's efforts to keep taverns closed to protect the barbarians, the Empire still exchanges the barbarians' goods in tea and sugar. That is, the displaced barbarian prisoners/captives and some fisherfolk communities, who either have been released but not returned to their people or occupy the peripheries of the outpost/town are defrauded of their merchants by unfair trade patterns. Coloniality hence happens even in the apparently negligible ways of life. That is, despite the impoverished fisherfolk communities who informally trade with the outpost on a small scale, the fisherfolk cannot sustain their lives since their goods are traded in trinkets and beer. This capitalistic posture exhibited in the trade patterns is a major tenet of coloniality designed to keep the fisherfolk and the local tribes poor.

Despite his criticism of the Empire, the Magistrate does not identify with the barbarians either. He remarks that he has "never seen the capital since [he] was a young man", and since he is now grown and old, he is "a responsible official in the service of the Empire" (Coetzee 2004: 2 and 8). The Magistrate shares the Empire's civilising mission and only denounces its use of brute force. Put differently, the Magistrate, like Cavafy's (2013) congress men gathered on the square need barbarians for their survival. Like the Empire, the Magistrate too depends on the existence of the barbarians for his own identity. Dovey (1998: 208) comments on Coetzee's "allusion to Cavafy's poem of the same title, in which imminent arrival of the barbarians is some sort of solution, indicates that what is at stake, once again, is the issue of identity." It is the Magistrate's identity that he still does not know in the novel that seem to stare him at his face. The Magistrate remarks, "[...] twin reflections of myself stare solemnly back" (Coetzee 2004: 44). Therefore, despite his denial of the Empire and its ways, due to his complicity his own identity cannot be divorced from the Empire. The Magistrate's possession of the

barbarian girl's body, his undressing her, bathing her, stroking her and sleeping besides her may be read as forms of torture or arguably, as a ritual of expiation. Laura Wright in Poyner (2009:61) notes that the metaphor of washing the girl's body (like David Lurie's act of killing the dogs in *Disgrace*) is the Magistrate's attempt to cleanse himself of his sense of complicity.

The Magistrate's denouncement of the Empire has led to some critics viewing him as a liberal character. In Dovey (1998:209 – 210) critics like Young, Roberts and Wood all identify the Magistrate as a liberal character who sympathises and empathises with the barbarians. In presenting the Magistrate's character Coetzee appears to engage "in either a critique or endorsement of the liberal humanist position itself, but in a deconstructive reading of the liberal humanist novelistic discourse" (Dovey 1998: 210). For the liberal humanist critique to be possible, the critic first has to share a view that the Magistrate adopts this position as he is portrayed by Coetzee. Biko (1996: 21) describes liberals as people "who claim that they too feel the oppression just as acutely as the blacks." Biko (1996) describes such people as having black souls wrapped in white skins. If the Magistrate is read this way, he represents the darker side of coloniality nonetheless. The Magistrate's complicity amidst abuse of power especially in the early stages of the novel, and his taking part by subjecting the barbarian girl to his gaze and fetishism points to the helpless position he has assumed as his. By so portraying a character who seems to be in-between or a liberal humanist, Coetzee avoids taking a stance against coloniality of power.

The Magistrate can only be read as a liberal humanist if he is read in juxtaposition to the Colonel's rule by iron fist. The Magistrate as a liberal humanist is a humanitarian or rather what Mbembe (2017) identifies as a "friend of the blacks". The blacks in the novel are the barbarians. Historically, "during the period of slave trade, most of the "Friends of the Blacks" were convinced that Africans were inferior but did not believe that they deserved to be reduced to slavery because of it" (Mbembe 2017: 73). The Magistrate admits to the inferiority of the barbarians by his continued use of the word "barbarian" and his act of keeping them at the outskirts of the outpost. However, he does not agree

that they must be commodified as slaves or tortured as Colonel Joll does. Upon seeing Colonel Joll's prisoners, the Magistrate remarks:

Now herded by their guards they stand in a hopeless little knot in the corner of the yard, nomads and fisherfolk together, sick, famished, damaged, terrified. It would be best if this 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 no more injustice, no more pain. It will cost little to march them out into the desert [...] (Coetzee 2004: 26).

On the contrary, the Magistrate does not qualify to be a humanist because he violated the barbarian girl. Despite saving the barbarian girl from destitution and prostitution he violates her through his obsession over her exotic body, her blindness and her blackness. In reference to the barbarian girl, the Magistrate says "people will say I keep two animals in my room, a fox and a girl" (Coetzee 2004: 37). In spite of the Magistrate being turned into a barbarian due to his subjection to torture, he fails to belong to the anthropoi proper. That is, he views the Empire and the barbarians both as barbarians except himself:

[...] if there is ever anyone in some remote future interested to know the way we lived, that this farthest outpost of the Empire of light there existed one man who in his heart was not a barbarian. (Coetzee 2004: 114).

It may be argued that such claims (denial of his humanist status) of this character might be inconsiderate of his upbringing and the role he plays in the Empire's outpost. After all, it is the Magistrate who returns the barbarian girl to her people against all odds. The Magistrate has lived almost his entire life in the outpost of the Empire, not at its administrative centre per se. He is, thus, positioned on the margins of the Empire, on the border between Empire and barbarian lands (on the frontier). Therefore, he may be well placed to mediate between civilisation and barbarity and to subvert, invert, reverse or deconstruct this binary. Coetzee's protagonists often function as intermediaries in this

way. However, the pith of the argument is on who assumes the duty to intermediate, on whose instructions and for what purposes. The argument may even date back to who sees a need to play the intermediary role and names the people that he meets on these strange lands. Only if this intermediary considers himself as a civilised “humanitas” presiding over the backward “anthropos” then he can assume this role as his.

The Magistrate can be appropriated to what Memmi (1974: 54) terms the “little coloniser.” Such terminology borders on new managerialism, neo-colonialism and neo-liberalism¹⁷ seemingly visible in the Magistrate’s acts of remaining behind when Colonel Joll leaves the outpost. However, a question worth following is on the role of the Magistrate in the outpost (ex-colony). The Magistrate may not escape being viewed as a colonial figure even after he himself has been subjected to colonial brutality. Memmi (1974: 54) makes a difference between a colonial, a coloniser and a colonist. A colonial is defined as a “European living in a colony but having no privileges, whose living conditions are not higher than those of the colonised person [...] and lacks the coloniser’s attitude towards the colonised.” The Magistrate is, as we have come to know, a “victim as well [as the] master of colonisation, [and is] exploited by [his own] masters in order to protect the interests which do not coincide with [his]” (Memmi 19974: 54). However, this is not to say that the Magistrate did not enjoy the privileges himself even in his humiliation. The “little” coloniser as seen in *Waiting for the Barbarians* and as Memmi (1974: 55) observes, enjoys the preference and respect of the colonised themselves and when in trouble with the law, the police and even justice will be more lenient towards him.

The Magistrate is of the Empire despite his being an outcast. Since he is a member of the Empire he has to behave in a particular manner. He is viewed as the coloniser as it were because of the privileges he enjoys. After he falls foul of the representatives of imperial authority, the Magistrate's status drops from coloniser to that of the colonial. In the Magistrate we happen to see the dismembering colonial figure, who apparently has become the coloniser living a life of discomfort and as an outcast outside the realms of

¹⁷I address fully these concepts of managerialism in the discussion on *Disgrace*.

the colonists. On the colonial, Memmi (1974: 65) expands that he is “looked upon in the colonies as a serious illness, the worst of all dangers. It is no more or less than going over the side of enemy.” Therefore, the Magistrate cannot go back to the Empire because he is regarded as a traitor, a person who puts colonisation in jeopardy, or rather a coloniser who rejects colonisation. He becomes an honorary white in the eyes of the Empire. This may lead the colonised to consider him as a moral hero yet the colonist views him as a turncoat.

The Magistrate, despite his trials and tribulations at the hands of his colonist masters, cannot re-member. Mignolo in Broeck and Junker (2014: 37) says that a “white” character (like the Magistrate) cannot re-member even though he knows and understands the case of the barbarians and has been subjected to experiences of physical torture and starvation. Such experiences do not put him in the shoes of barbarians who are treated as slaves. Foundational dismemberment of the barbarian people in the novel is due to their forcible removal from their motherland and destruction of family ties. I argue that this leads to transgenerationally transmitted trauma even in the novel itself. This is represented by the Colonel’s prisoners who consist of the old and young. Therefore, the displacement of the barbarians results in an influx of prisoners and refugees to the outpost. This displacement has its foundations from the Empire’s confiscation of land as they seem to push the barbarian people to inhabitable lands and mountains. Telling one of the new conscripts, the Magistrate says:

I wish that these barbarians would rise up and teach us a lesson, so that we would learn to respect them. We think of our country here as ours, part of our Empire – our outpost, our settlement, our market centre. But these people, these barbarians don’t think of it like that at all. (Coetzee 2004: 55).

The Magistrate is the representative of the Empire and his battles with the Empire are motivated by a sense of justice as he understands it. He is, after all, a Magistrate whose duties and conduct are prescribed by the Empire. In a sense the Magistrate represents the interests of his handlers and his difference with Colonel Joll is based on who is a better representative of the Empire. His battles have little if not nothing to do with justice for the barbarians and their interests. It is the Magistrate who has detained the two

prisoners without trial whatsoever. The Magistrate is aware that the barbarians (including those in the hinterlands) occupy the lowest strata in the temporal human sequence. That is, his awareness of the racial differences is the first form of dismemberment through segregation between “them” from “us”. Commenting on Joll’s prisoners, the Magistrate wishes for “these ugly people to be obliterated from the face of the earth” (Coetzee 2004: 26). Arguably, by wishing for the obliteration of the barbarians, the Magistrate may be wishing for his shameful chapter to be expunged from the Empire's history.

The Magistrate does not view himself as the barbarian even after Mandel has classified him as such. Speaking of Colonel Joll, the Magistrate says:

Why does he think me worth the trouble of his display? Because despite my smelly clothes and wild beard I am still from an old family, however contemptibility decayed out in the back of beyond. (Coetzee 2004: 90)

The old family may be argued to be the Empire or its descendants. This strengthens the position that by being “named” one therefore does not “become”. He longs for the continuity of the outpost in the absence of the Colonel. His view that the barbarians are happy and simple before the Colonel’s arrival gives an impression that he views the barbarians as living simply in their noble savagery. He comments that if the Colonel gets lost, it will be his duty to bring him back to civilisation (Coetzee 2004: 12). That is, the outpost where he has lived all his life is the paragon of civilisation and an embodiment of peaceful establishment. He views the outpost as being peaceful (Coetzee 2004: 86). His role in running the outpost is to prolong the existence of the Empire and exploit the outpost/frontier. His view of the peaceful outpost before the arrival of the Third Bureau is a view that seeks to portray a master who is not in conflict with his subjects; after all, these are people he does not recognise as fully human. Therefore, all he wants is for the outpost to be forgotten and the Empire to leave it alone, so that he can go back to the comfortable way he lived before Colonel Joll arrived.

Re-membering the Wretched.

Who are the barbarians? That is the question. In *Waiting for the barbarians*, the barbarians presented by Coetzee include the nomads, the fisherfolk and the local tribesmen who are often raided, captured and imprisoned. The barbarians have no definite features; some look peaceful and pitiable while others look warlike and fearsome. The barbarians are portrayed as Fanon's (2004) wretched of the earth. The wretched are the black bodies (including the servant figures like the barbarian girl and all the Empire's prisoners) that have been robbed of their land following the outpost's establishment and growth. Neilson (1999: 79) argues that the term barbarism is used by oppressors to justify their slavery, class exploitation or any other brutal system of social domination of other people. The etymology of the term "barbarian" is from the Greek meaning a foreign language that sounds like "stuttering". Therefore, the term points out to the "other" being foreign based on communicative incompetence. It is therefore a term to disqualify other beings from the family of human beings based on language, colour of their skin and culture. The barbarians as classified by the Empire means everyone dissimilar to "them". In other words, while the barbarians may be defined by where they live (outside or at the borders of the metropole), they are also defined by how they look. The Empire hence has created the barbarians from everyone dissimilar to "them"; the old, the young infants and women who are captured, tortured and imprisoned are all barbarians.

Language is at the centre of the creation of the barbarians because everyone who fails to speak the metropole's language is an outsider. Outsiders are considered to have no language and hence need orientation in the dominant language of the Empire. It is this role of language that has created inequalities in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. The dismembering of the barbarians and their language happens through creolisation, and at the level of narration through overcoding. That is, the creolisation happens when a new language is formed but with the dominant language of the Empire. The Magistrate remarks on the barbarian girl's knowledge and fluency of the outpost's pidgin, "I even catch myself in a flush of pride" (Coetzee 2004: 68). The overcoding practices of language see the barbarian language being relegated to its translatability or creolisation

thereby robbing it of its meaning. The linguistic violence as seen in part, in the decoding of the poplar slips becomes forms of dismemberment.

The creolisation of the barbarian language represents the bastardisation of all the languages considered inferior. However, the fact that the Empire cannot read or comprehend the language of the barbarians owing to their silences may represent a deliberate radical defiance of the barbarian people. Therefore, the universal language the Empire seems to have tried to create has failed. Coetzee's servant figures remain silent signaling failure of universality of the Empire's language. Like the creolisation of the English language in Jamaica, their silence is a sign that the master's language is non-universal, and this creates a pluriversal world. It is this re-membering that Coetzee portrays at the narratological level when Coetzee refuses to name the Empire and some of his characters.

The nameless Magistrate in the nameless outpost of the nameless Empire resonates and can be appropriated to any nation of the South that experienced colonialism by any of the Empires like Britain, Spain, France, Portugal and the like. The "namelessness", and "statelessness" serves as a positive in decolonial pluriversal world where many truths are possible. There are reasons the barbarian girl and the unnamed Magistrate are denied proper names as compared to Colonel Joll and Mandel. Although the Magistrate is the central figure of the novel and the "most real" character despite his lacking a proper name, the Empire through Colonel Joll disqualify him from being the Empire's representative proper. It has been exemplified in the novel that one does not fully exist without a proper name. The barbarian girl's loss of a proper name is more profound as it translates to the loss of her being, her time space/place, her world and language. The loss of her name makes it impossible for the narrator or the writer himself to assign fixed identities.

The mis-recognition of the barbarian people in Coetzee leads to their dismemberment due to misrepresentation. That is, dismemberment of the servant figures that happen on a linguistic level also happen because of the realisation of race and ways of life. The

Empire's treatment and its inferiorisation of the captured barbarians leads to the hierarchisation and marking or labelling of dissimilar bodies. The marking of bodies or racialisation serves as the identity maker because the Empire marks to unrecognise the "anthropos", a necessary act in order to recognise the "self". In the empire/outpost (outpost being an extension of the Empire) humans are racially divided, and of course gendered. Attwell (1993:74) observes that Coetzee's Empire is recognisable partly as the focalization of the paranoid moment in Apartheid discourse in South Africa. Inferably, the language used by Colonel Joll to describe the death and treatment of his prisoners is traceable to the Black Consciousness Movement leader Steven Bantu Biko's coroner report, and that of many deaths of Apartheid prisoners in many police cells. Canepari-Labib (1998) makes an intensive comparison between the political situation in Apartheid South Africa and that of Italy under Mussolini's fascist party. This is only possible because Apartheid South Africa, like the fascist government in Italy and Germany's Nazi party, enacted laws to classify people in order to exploit, dehumanise and commit holocausts. Coetzee's Empire's classification of "others", and the bestowing of duty upon itself to classify those considered inferior is in a way an endeavour to dehumanise and get rid of "other" bodies. On Colonel Joll's prisoners, the Magistrate contemplates to obliterate the barbarians (who he describes as ugly savages) from the face of earth (Coetzee 2004: 26). However, his feasible solution is to make arrangements "to restore the prisoners to their former lives as soon as possible, as far as possible" (Coetzee 2004: 26).

The concept of the body becomes a thematic nuance in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. As observed, racialisation happens through the marking of bodies as Colonel Joll writes on captured barbarian enemies. Words like "Enemy" written on Colonel Joll's captured bodies presuppose racial divisions (Coetzee 2000: 115). Besides the concept of marking the bodies being a racist technique aimed at identifying and exploiting the marked bodies, it is also a system of power employed to crush any voice of protest in the outpost. Not in any way has Coetzee portrayed Colonel Joll's victims being mourned as lost human beings or mourned as somebody's lost sons or daughters. Generally, the world mourns loss of lives anywhere regardless of the race, colour or creed (however

deafening is the silence of un-mourned/ less-mourned victims of the Middle Passage). In other words, the barbarians' denial of "proper" names has resulted in their disqualification from the human family, such that their deaths are insignificant. Mbembe (2017: 11) says that "race consists of dissolving human beings into things, objects and merchandise." Racism, therefore, acts as a peripheralisation mechanism designed to isolate the barbarians from the mainstream politics. The narrator seems to present the barbarian people (especially those at the outpost's borders) as lacking organisation as they are seen wandering aimlessly about.

According to Grosfoguel et al (2014) racism is a colonial problem that ought to be viewed as an act of dismembering through disruption and violation. As seen in the cheap lives of marked bodies, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n.d.) writes that "racialisation of human identities is one of the key pre-requisites for genocide." The racialisation which is preceded or accompanied by the animalisation of human bodies makes the barbarians to be wantonly tortured and killed because they occupy a zone outside humanity. At the peripheries of outpost/frontier hence exist a zone of savage beasts, who when captured do not have a right to a fair trial even when brought within the borders of the outpost. The loss of a right to stand trial outlaws the barbarians as a race lacking principles and morals. By making the Magistrate the narrator focaliser instead of a third person narrator, Coetzee evokes sympathy and a somber atmosphere especially when dead bodies of the Empire's soldiers strapped on horses are seen within the outpost's vicinity. Such narrative style may reinforce the savage image of the barbarian people. It is within the Empire's space (the zone of being) that brutality becomes visible, perhaps where the concept of justice and punishment matters. It is also an act of dismemberment by the narrator to fail to mourn the death of Joll's prisoners. However, the Magistrate's return of the barbarian girl to her tribesman is an act of (partial) re-membering on his part. Furthermore, and to some extent, Coetzee mourns by writing extensively on torture. His novel is concerned about the treatment of blacks during Apartheid. It is a critique of the Apartheid government's atrocities despite it being set in a fictional world. Its setting may as well be a way of avoiding to criticise the Apartheid state openly and directly, because his work could have been banned, and like most protest writers, he could face intimidation or banishment.

The creation of boundaries between the Empire's outpost and "other" places emanates from the Empire's power to annex barbarian land as a territorial body. The geographical divisions (between the Empire and outpost) and the labelling that comes thereof, seek to racialise and discriminate against people according to the places they occupy. On boundaries in Africa, Soyinka¹⁸ in Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n.d.) has this to say:

Boundaries imply exclusion, and it is undeniable that this tainted seed of guaranteed future conflicts on the continent was sown at the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884. It was there that Africa, a continent of so many cultures, pre-colonial trade patterns, and development traditions, was shared piecemeal among the Western powers, with no consideration for their histories, languages, and economic linkages. [...]. Africa has never herself delineated her constituent national boundaries, those boundaries being humiliatingly inflicted on her by others. [...]. Nations are not merely multi-coloured patches in the atlas, they answer to some internal logic and historic coherence, and an evolved tradition of managing incompatibilities.

That is, the concept of mapping in decolonial studies is premised on the confiscation of land. The creation of boundaries like the scramble for Africa (that was given legality during the 1884 -1885 Berlin Conference) is part of the partitioning of land and the fragmentation of the anthropos that can be read in the novel. By partitioning the land and crafting the boundaries the coloniser dismembered the African people or any natives that are denied a say in their destiny. Therefore, the expansion of Coetzee's Empire is further continuity of the violation of territorial bodies. When a young officer asks the Magistrate what the barbarians want from them, he says "they want an end to the spread of settlement across their land. They want their land back" (Coetzee 2004: 54). It is observable then that the appropriation of the barbarian land is an act of dispossession marking the causes of displacement and peasantisation of the African people.

¹⁸ See Wole Soyinka (2012) *OF Africa*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

The violation of barbarian bodies through torture reverberates in the barbarian girl's rape. She is regarded as a commodity and is violated repeatedly by the soldiers whilst at the outpost and no one gets tried for rape. Through violence and countless dismemberings, the Empire creates broken slaves who are at its mercy. The barbarian girl's situation makes an emphatic view that the Empire produces slaves who lead hopeless lives. In fact, the barbarian girl is produced by the Empire as a set up for "moral disqualification and practical instrumentalisation" (Mbembe 2017: 28). However, Malembanie (2009: 39) treats the Magistrate and the barbarian girl's intercourse as consensual. Malembanie (2009) outlines the barbarian girl's dilemma and claims that the barbarian girl is happy living with the Magistrate, and that the barbarian girl hides an intention to have sexual intercourse with the Magistrate. She is accused of undressing and lying naked on the bed as a ploy to attract the Magistrate's attention. This is a phallogocentric view that portrays men as victims of women's sexual lust. It is a view that ignores the physical body of the barbarian girl that has been broken down and turned into prostitution for survival. The barbarian girl is accustomed to being abused by the same people who have displaced her and tortured her. When the Magistrate asks the girl about the period after her imprisonment before adopting her, she says: "There was a man who took care of me. He has gone now. [... and another] who gave me the boots [...] there were other men. I did not have a choice. That is how it had to be" (Coetzee 2004: 58).

In the eyes of the Empire, the barbarian girl as the wretched is spiritually dismembered. She is a broken girl who is constantly tortured to the point of being crippled and left blind. Afterwards, she is raped and forced to beg for a living. She has lost her dignity and is therefore invisible in the eyes of the Empire. Her act of undressing ought to be read as a sign that she knows what the Empire wants out of her. Her undressing is an act of communication, an act of saying that she has already been violated. On the other hand, dispossessed of her dignity and abandoned by the Empire, she most likely prefers living with the Magistrate to being handed from soldier to soldier and living otherwise on the streets. However, this is not to say that she enjoys living with the

Magistrate, even though she enjoys a degree of protection living in his house. Allegations that she is of loose morals may stem from her adapting to the Empire's expectations because "the non-white woman is regarded as sexually available and willing to be raped, [and] essentially lacking honour" (Tlastananova 2014). Her acts signal the fact that she is no-longer "rapeable" and this denies her perpetrators the pleasure of violently taming her. Her free labour in the kitchen renders her immune to "enslave-ability", "abuse-ability" and "humiliate-ability". In a way, the barbarian girl domesticates her experiences as tools of expression and resistance.

The Magistrate's commodification of the barbarian girl's body constitutes a phallogentric dismemberment of women from being themselves. The Magistrate's fascination in the barbarian girl's body is not merely as a commodity but as a symbol of civilised brutality. There are moments when his attitude toward and treatment of her body is almost religious, at least ritualised, as though he is trying to atone for the sins of the Empire. The fascination does not mean that the Magistrate respects her as a unique being, necessarily, nor that he may also be exploiting her weakness, but as an exotic "other". Therefore, it is a dismembering of a body to be itself. This may also serve as an example of gender normalisation and stereotypes which views masculinity as superior and femininity as inferior – which is another problem attributed to coloniality. What is astounding also is the barbarian girl's silence throughout her torture treatment, and her imbalance relationship with the Magistrate. What the Magistrate practices is a dismembering act of enslavement. It is through the acts of the Empire that Coetzee's servants like the barbarian girl are rootless and voiceless victims. In the mode of writing and story-telling, Coetzee is suggesting the impossibility of the coloniser to speak for the colonised or, in speaking of them, he does not give the servant character a voice. If Coetzee gives the servant characters a voice, like observed with the barbarian girl, the voice cannot be relied upon. The Magistrate says, "I touched her cheek [...] 'Where do you live?' 'I live'" (Coetzee 2004: 26). It is discernable here that the barbarian girl only provides answers that are necessary and keeps to answer the Magistrate's questions as minimally and hesitantly as one would imagine. There is re-membering discernable in the barbarian's conduct. Her minimalist responses to the Empire should be read as a

withholding of the voice, a sign of delinking. When the Magistrate asks her whether she will “like it living in a town,” the barbarian girl declines. The barbarian girl collapses the geo-politics of knowledge by refusing either to be seen or to be heard. She therefore speaks from where she thinks. Her silence allows her to be spoken of and makes so many truths to be possible.

The barbarian girl and barbarian prisoners, notwithstanding their brutal torture by the Empire's new men, emerge intact despite their broken bodies and impaired sight. The Magistrate's comments:

While I have not ceased to see her body maimed, scarred, harmed, she has perhaps by now grown into and become that new deficient body, feeling no more deformed than a cat feels deformed for having claws instead of fingers. (Coetzee 2004: 61).

Blind eyes, broken feet and dehumanised humiliated femininity characterises the Empire's cruel language. Through its extraction of “truth” the Empire manipulates reality. Torture, including sexploitation is a perennial trait of coloniality which recreates the barbarians, and through pain the barbarians become truth. Having been exposed to the Empire's cosmology (the Western cosmologies) the barbarian girl and all the Empire's barbarian prisoners dead or alive re-emerge and re-exist through stories real or imagined about experiences in the Empire's outposts. The dead prisoners like the tortured uncle to the injured boy and the barbarian girl's father help them to re-member and save as casualties to rekindle the barbarian memory of their dismemberments. The barbarian girl's reunion with her kith and kin marks the possible beginning of a decolonial healing. As a way of re-membering, decolonial healing is “conceived as a generational enterprise” (Mignolo in Boroek and Junker 2014: 38). On the constructional level, re-membering can be read on the barbarian girl's wounds that are likely to strengthen feminine bonds. Her presence may strengthen the tribe's resolve to resist the Empire. Nonetheless, the girl may still be a burden in her nomadic tribe.

The argument has been premised on the non-verbalisation implicit in servant figures and Coetzee's advocacy or its lack through his imaginative creation of characters who or communities that are part of a potential "solution". The barbarians' silence is symptomatic of delinking, and is a way of re-establishing human principles. The argument on reading characters like the Magistrate as representatives of civilisation has been explored. The mention of the Empire becomes indicative of the geopolitics of mapping and various dismemberings implicit within and without its borders. The failure of civilisation is characterised by the defeat of the Empire's army and the lawlessness that its citizens engage in. The Empire's custodians of law are seen engaging in activities of looting from the common people. Mandel and the Empire's soldiers loot shops and are seen "struggling to load a handsome cast iron stove looted from an empty house" (Coetzee 2004: 155). This pinpoints to the decivilising civilisation that is premised on ideas of opportunism. At the end, re-membering as the cornerstone of the barbarian's survival sees revolutionary uprisings against the Empire's coloniality. Through their resistance and silences, the barbarians dismantle the fiction that certain human beings are superior to others. The barbarians' silences and resistance implicit in their socio-political lives gives a sense of the "other" who thinks is no longer the "other".

4. Decolonial Conversations in 'Foe'

Mama, see the Negro! I'm frightened! Frightened! Frightened!

Frantz Fanon (2008: 84)

It is not speech that makes man man but the speech of others.

J.M. Coetzee (1977: 137).

Introduction

In the observation of the present study, *Foe* is a novel that portrays the complexities of writing as a pre-memory, as a collective memory and as a generational memory. Writing is a way of being heard and the refusal to write or a refusal to be read is a refusal to being heard which is portrayed as part of re-membering (of being heard nonetheless). In *Foe*, re-membering becomes a strategy of piecing together of a collective memory and history (Donadey 1999: 111). Coetzee does not only exhume and problematise the black servant's history, but traces the difficulties of preserving it by exploring the effects and the after-effects of colonisation, and this includes modes of writing. In writing truthfully or by insisting to write one's story the way one sees fit is in a way a resistance of amnesia. That is, by writing or by being written about one lives forever. Speaking to Friday, Susan exposes her views about writing, "is writing not a fine thing, Friday? Are you not filled with joy to know that you will live forever, after a manner?" (Coetzee 1986: 58). Therefore, because they are writing and are written about, Friday, Susan and Foe remain the sites of this fictional historical memory that write their own stories and are written about in so many different ways. Paradoxically, by not writing seemingly Friday has written. Susan and Friday's re-membering becomes, as Donadey (1999: 111) "a way of resisting the occlusions created by official history, of recovering the traces of another." In the case of Friday, the body has ceased to become a site of knowledge but becomes an occulted body. That is, Friday's body which has undergone the

dehumanising experience is obscured by Susan's narrative, which ironically depends on Friday's missing experiences.

In *Foe*, Coetzee has exemplified and explored the concept of spiritual healing and the impossibility of adequate mourning. As Susan spied on him while they were on the island, Friday "reached into a bag that hung about his neck and brought out handfuls of white flakes which he began to scatter over the water" (Coetzee 1986: 31). It is through this spiritual or superstitious gesture that Susan believes that Friday has a spirit or a soul (Coetzee 1986: 32). Through this re-membering, Friday becomes human not only to himself but even to those who regarded him as a cannibal or a cannibal's descendants. The cannibals for whom Crusoe keeps looking "out to sea" are the barbarians who he believes are Friday's people, the black people (Coetzee 1986: 12). However not even this spiritual act nor the shipwreck or their destitution (which Barton regards as great levelers) can make them level enough (Coetzee 1986: 70). It becomes clear hence that Friday cannot be completely re-membered or does not completely remember since, in part, re-membering becomes an individual journey to converge and become part of the whole (the masses). That is, while one does not become whole by losing one's individuality, remembering entails reintegrating with one's people, group, tribe and culture.

Friday as the dismembered "black" servant figure is at the centre of this review, because even if one speaks of Susan, Foe and even Crusoe their stories are not complete without Friday's. Therefore, this chapter interrogates characterisation in relation to dismembering and re-membering as portrayed by Coetzee in his novel *Foe*. *Foe* is a pastiche of Dafoe's classic *Robinson Crusoe*. Poyner (2009) notes that Coetzee's characters like Crusoe, Susan and Friday resonate with Dafoe's characters in *Robinson Crusoe*. Poyner (2009: 91) writes that the character of Susan Barton in *Foe* is derived from Dafoe's heroine Roxana. In fact, it should be noted that Roxana's real name is Barton. Another significant intertext could be Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Poyner (2009: 91) identifies William Shakespeare's Caliban as contrasted to Friday. However, Caliban's experiences of enslavement are enlightened by his ability to speak, and the

language that he uses to “curse” is his “profit”. Bearing this intertextual link in mind, a decolonial reading of Coetzee's *Foe* intends to supplement the numerous postcolonial and postmodernist accounts of this novel.

Foe is a complex novel of Susan Barton, about Cruso, about Foe and about Friday whose tongue is said to have been ripped out depriving him of a voice. Susan Barton wishes to tell her story but lacks story telling skills (at least according to her assessment of the markets). The story Susan wishes to tell is also not complete without that of Friday. Yet Susan's story may as well be the story about Cruso who at the same time enslaves Friday but dies on his way to England. Noted in all these stories is that people have been rendered voiceless or have been dismembered, more explicitly in the case of Friday, both literally and figuratively. Susan Barton has a voice but it is proscribed by and dependent on a man, Foe (or Dafoe), to be heard. Through letters to Foe, Susan Barton tells the story of her search for her daughter and her island sojourn - how she met Cruso and ultimately Friday. However, she insists to Foe that he needs to tell her story as she desires it to be told (the truth), rather than a story that is tailored to be known or remembered. Like the Captain of the ship that rescues Susan and Friday rightly observes, Foe is a man who set stories to rights and “trades in books, not in truth” (Coetzee 1986: 40). Therefore, the stories we are reading are Barton's letters to Foe, meant to be properly retold by a professional. Her story as told is not a story proper; it is a raw material of the story that may not fit well in the canon of storytelling (the canon being a time-honoured selection of the best works of written literature in a particular tradition). That is, Susan's story as told by her is not a story – partly because it is told by a woman. This is always embedded in what Susan says; as she introduces herself to Foe, “My name is Susan Barton, and I am a woman alone” (Coetzee 1986: 10). One does not fail to hear the echo of the coloniality of gender. In relation to Friday, racial oppression plays out in the master/slave dynamics. Therefore, it is worthwhile to explore coloniality as it is represented in the novel. In other words, decolonial concepts are used to illuminate aspects of the text in relation to Coetzee's servant characters.

Interestingly, Coetzee's characters are problematised and reject any labels and stereotypes often ascribed to other fictive figures. Their representation may not fit a

single model of interpretation even of servant figure or masters. The character problematisation necessitates a decolonial reading where pluriversal interpretations and truths are possible. Neither Susan nor Cruso remain masters proper, and it can even be argued that Friday too rejects the servant or slave category in his defiance to write or talk. However, the argument advanced here is that racism as a result of coloniality (or what Maldonado-Torres refers to as the creation of the onto-Manichean line) is a form of dismembering the not quite civilised, the women and those viewed as servant figures in the colonial capitalist system. Therefore, the chapter's first sub-heading: *Colonial dynamics: of Robinson Cruso, of Susan Barton, of Foe* critically examines how dismemberment happens even at the centre. I should say upfront that I am investigating Coetzee's imaginative recreation of London, rather than the "real" city. Emphasis is also placed on the coloniality of being and the logic of freedom and bondage in the colonial canonised world.

Freedom dictates that nations or people are free from bondage to colonial powers. This freedom translates ultimately to "beings" that should be realised and be allowed to exist, to live, to be free. Therefore, the second sub-heading: *[Not] Talking on behalf of others* expands on how the dynamics of colonialism denies the colonised and even women at the centre their right to be free. To be free, to be realised or to live denotes that one is able to talk, moreover using one's own language. Language or voice or its lack creates beings that are not regarded as beings. If language has the ability to produce or create then it also has the ability to destroy through "unproducing" or "reproducing". That is, the effects of talking or not talking of the anthropos, or on behalf of them is explored, somewhat as the unreliability and the corruptibility of the authority of language and authorship. This is to say, the meaning and intention of words of a particular language are most often misunderstood, mistranslated and sometimes misread. The possession of language, as illustrated in *Foe* does not guarantee one to be heard or liberated per se. Cruso and Susan have a voice and therefore have the liberty to be heard, but they are not heard. Susan is not heard because she is a woman. Friday cannot be literally heard because he does not have a voice and lacks the status of a citizen.

In as much as the language (voice or speech) has the power to create able beings, it also creates disabled and “unabled” beings. Therefore, a convincing reading of Coetzee’s *Foe* concerns a critique or a meta-critique of language and the form of the story. The last sub-heading: *The shaping of Friday* expands more on how language creates disabled humans. The sub-heading argues that the exploitation of slaves is a way of permanently dismembering them and disqualifying their voices and their being. The portrayal of Friday as a person without parents in a kinless world violates his humanity. Friday’s absent tongue (as Cruso believes) is a metaphorical representation of genocide. His absent tongue permanently silences him thereby denying him his right to be heard. Friday’s physical mutilation is a sign, an index of his literal dismemberment, and a symbol of his figurative dismemberment (his being rendered speechless and voiceless). His location in London is also symbolic of his physical dislocation or landlessness. Coetzee uses Friday’s mutilation as a technique to critique colonialism’s silencing and dismemberment of the colonised. However, Friday may be using his silence as a re-membering tool of defiance, and as a search for his dignity. It is, as I argue, not a fact that Friday has lost his tongue. Besides Cruso’s accounts that Friday has no tongue, no one (not even the narrator in the last part of the novel) has been able to access Friday’s mouth beyond his teeth. Even when Friday has opened his mouth, Susan “saw nothing in the dark save the glint of teeth white as ivory,” and even when Friday’s face is brought closer to hers with his mouth open, “it is too dark” for her to see anything (Coetzee 1986: 22). Therefore, Friday’s mouth remains closed.

Colonial Dynamics: of Robinson Cruso, of Susan Barton, of Foe

Colonial forms of racism and their modern permutations act as dismembering systems that dismember and destroy the colonised’s being. Dismemberment in this instance does not mean physical destruction but psychological dismissal. There is a need to reiterate the fact that Fanon’s colonial gaze is the most important, if not original, source of these ideas (and behind him, Sartre’s existential gaze) as illustrated in the theoretical framework. In the eyes of the colonists, the colonised becomes a non-being. If non-beings are disqualified from the umbrella of “beinghood”, then they are not seen at all.

Paradoxically, in their existence, they do not exist because they always appear as something else (Gordon 2007: 7). When human beings fall below humanity (below the abyssal line), as Gordon (2007:9) realises, such human beings go to hell. Dante in Gordon (2007: 10) views hell as “a place one cannot see: it is discovered by ear – there is a sounding stream that flows.” That is, those in hell leave in an empty space devoid of words but soundless sounds (Coetzee seems to represent this in the last chapter of the novel). It means that those occupying the “hellish” space cannot be heard. Hell is the space occupied by Friday, Cruso, Susan and Foe. However, to say this in such a simplistic way is to reduce the complexities of the whole text. In complex terms, as I argue, Cruso, Susan and particularly Foe may not be occupying Gordon’s (2007) “hellish” space – the space below the abyssal line, the non-human space, the zone of non-being.

Despite dismembering Friday, it may be argued that Cruso is living in the hellish space that lacks civility. He is, after all, stranded on a desert island far from civilisation with only the mute Friday for company. However, Cruso still maintains the role of the master and the discoverer of the island. Even when both Cruso and Friday are on the island by accident, put on the same “zone” by nature, Cruso maintains the same role of the coloniser. Barton observes that “shipwreck is a great leveler” (Coetzee 1986: 70). However, the island dwellers are not quite level. In spite of all the castaways made equal by nature, and the fact that Friday dwelt on the island before Cruso’s arrival, Cruso makes the island his. The arrival of Cruso relegates Friday to a slave, an infantile being who is inferiorised and becomes vulnerable servant who suffers from statelessness and rightlessness. Therefore, Cruso confiscates the land that is not his and falls in the trap of European cosmopolitanism. That is, even if Cruso is marooned on a desert island, peripheralised and far from the colonial centre, he tries to replicate the colonial centre on the island. According to Margutti (2013) European cosmopolitanism is responsible for the cultural crimes that often are caused by dominating and silencing the inconvenient other.

Intriguing is Cruso's silence in *Foe*, partly because he has refused to keep a journal which Susan believes keeps a record so that what one has "passed through shall not die from memory" (Coetzee 1986: 17). His silence is rather unexpected and it is unprecedented that a colonial figure like Cruso is silent and dies early in the text. His death, like his existence is insignificant like the stories of the island and Friday he tells to Susan. One wonders at Coetzee's objectives by having Cruso die early in the novel. It will seem that in doing so, Coetzee decentres, in his novel, the figure of Crusoe in the *Robinson Crusoe* novel. He kills off early and very pointedly the white male patriarch from Dafoe's novel, allowing the previously peripheralised Friday and the non-existent Susan Barton characters to come to the fore. His silence in Susan's account has to do with either Susan herself or Coetzee's act of writing. Since Cruso is a civilised man who appears to reject this civilisation, it is not that important for the story teller Susan or the writer Coetzee to focus on the barbarism of the one who is supposed to be civilised. However, after landing on the offshore island by chance, it does not take Cruso long to discover "the advantages of his new situation" (Memmi 1974: 48). He immediately enslaves Friday for cheap free labour and hence becomes "the coloniser who has not yet become aware of the historic role which will be his" (Memmi 1974: 51). However, I must mention that Cruso's enslavement of Friday and his clearing of terres are pointless activities from which Cruso does not really profit in any way. His enslavement of Friday is more about a power display than exploitation for profit.

It is necessary to expand on the figure of Cruso, who not only enters the world of a colonist but is viewed by Susan, as not human proper since he, arguably, rejects some aspects civilisation. However, for avoidance of doubt, Cruso is a civilised man (in whichever sense), who is marooned and stranded on a deserted island by accident, and, as a result, loses contact with Western civilisation. He may, as observed, try to aspire to civilised norms but lacks the resources to do so. This is evident with his creation of the terraces without seeds only for those who come after him to do the planting (Coetzee 1986: 33). However, most significantly, by making Friday his servant, Cruso imitates the colonial project as it has been enacted elsewhere. His rejection of some aspects of civilisation is his unwillingness and hesitance to return to London.

Lugones (2010: 743) contends that to be human is a “mark of civilisation.” Cruso’s story or his role in Friday’s dismemberment is not recounted much by Susan in her letters to Foe. Cruso dies on his way to England, the epitome of the civilised world. Therefore, Coetzee has Cruso die for aesthetic reasons and his physical death is a way of rejecting to be defined by the centre. That is, he rejects to be human on Western terms. Some of the Western terms of being human are to be above the slave and to be privileged with a voice. His silence rejects the comfort of modern colonial man and his body continues to occupy the primitive symbolic island. However, unconsciously he is still trapped in Western modes of life and the island may as well symbolise the colony.

Susan considers Cruso as a “lenient master” who avoids teaching Friday his language (Coetzee 1986: 23). He only teaches Friday words that reduce him to a labourer. Even though it is not clear who cut out Friday’s tongue (if he does not have it), a total obliteration of his language (tongue) constitute *linguicides* – by devoting their time to teach and re-teach Friday a new language, Susan and Foe are participants of this dismembering process. Decolonially speaking, Cruso is a patriarchal figure who also appears, like Foe, to dismember Susan. Like Foe, Cruso is also a coloniser who seeks to retell Friday’s story. Cruso does not attempt to escape from his role as a coloniser. When asked by Susan to seek help and escape the island he asks, “And where should I escape to?” (Coetzee 1986: 13). This is indicative of a man enjoying his role as colonist and makes his myths of cannibalism in new places a reality. He also views Susan Barton as a gendered body since he holds a view that the island apes “would not be as wary of a woman as they were of him and Friday” (Coetzee 1986: 15). Therefore, while Cruso suffers the actual death, women like Susan suffer a social death. She tries to find a way to live in a world that is against her humanity.

Susan Barton is dismembered because of her gender and seems to occupy Gordon’s (2007) “hell” of the colonial world where murder and rape is the norm. She is cast away by a ship crew who killed their master. Susan remarks that she was “insulted” before she was set to sail with the dead body. This is a suggestion that she might have been in love with the ship master (Coetzee 1986: 9). Such actions show the “killability” and

“rapeability” that is inscribed in her gendered body. Later in the novel while in London Susan gender becomes an issue too. She writes:

We were stopped on the Windsor road by two drunken soldiers who made their intention on my person too plain. I broke away and took off to the fields [...] now I pin my hair up under my hat and wear a coat at all times, hoping to pass for a man. (Coetzee 1986: 101)

Susan Barton is therefore denied existing and living according to her own terms, to do as she pleases. Grosfoguel *et al* (2004) view the dismemberment that happens at the centre as internal colonialism. Unlike Foe, Susan is confined in her own hellish zone – a place that cannot be seen. She occupies what Fanon (2004:94) identified as the “light side.” People who occupy the light side are “people in the zone of being who are subjected to class, gender and or sexual oppression” (Grosfoguel *et al* 2004:3). Susan is treated as a human with deficits merely by being a woman.

Susan Barton’s portrayal as a subhuman denotes her non-humanness that is proliferated by the cruelty of phallogocentric ideas which inferiorise women. Anzaldua (1987) observes that women are turned into strangers, into others and are a man’s recognized nightmarish pieces. This means that women suffer the gaze of men which consequently reduces them to objects. That is, Susan struggles to tell her story in a patriarchal world that is also governed by canonical expectations. If the voice she has is not good enough to be listened to or to tell a story, then the voice she has is not that of a human being. Contentiously, in a colonial world, to be human means not only to be white but male as well. Braidotti in Goodley *et al* (2014) posits that the idea of being human was born in Europe and was shaped through capitalist mouldings. Therefore, to be human is a self-aggrandising idea which means to be a “he [...] he is white, European, handsome and able-bodied” (Braidotti 2013: 24). This disqualifies Susan’s claim of seeing herself as a substantial human. In the beginning of the novel, Susan is portrayed as only there to satisfy the whims of men. The sexual intercourse between Susan and Cruso is not necessarily for her satisfaction but because Cruso “has not

known a woman for fifteen years, why should he not have his desires? So [she] resisted no more but let him do as he wishes" (Coetzee 1986: 30).

Therefore, her views that she is a "substantial being" are motivated by her desire to be a human on the "light side". Susan asks Foe, "do I owe proof that I am a substantial being with a substantial history in the world" (Coetzee 1986: 131). As Mendez (2015: 51) observes, a woman on the light side is not a human being but is a woman who is "called to oppress and be complicit in the oppression of those on the dark side." Her insistence hence that she is a substantial being underlines her yearning to be on the light side. While she is oppressed herself, she is complicit in her oppression of Friday. For keeping Friday while proclaiming her own independence, Susan Barton, like the Sojourner Truth¹⁹ who asks the question "Ar'n't I a woman," wishes to be incorporated in the light side. However, in asking Foe to tell her story, she recognizes her marginalised body. Furthermore, if her story is told by Foe, a masculine colonial figure, Barton appreciates that only a man can establish her own name and make her famous. Unlike the helpless Sojourner Truth who is dismembered by the colonial matrices of power (until her resistance), the gender-dismembered Susan longs to be part of the colonial world.

Susan is denied entrance in the world of beings unless she translates herself to the light side. Therefore, she has to act feminine and suit the cult of domesticity where women are subordinated to men. Mandez (2015: 45) views this as wages of gender where a woman requires the protection of men because of her subordination. Susan (like the barbarian girl) is portrayed as a woman always longing for sexual intercourse. This is a typical portrayal of her as a bestial, promiscuous and sinful woman. The ship crew views her sexuality as a sin and throw her into the sea. Lugones (2010: 745) notes that "the Manichean division between good and evil served to imprint female sexuality as evil." The fact that she was thrown out of the ship with a dead captain's body underlines

¹⁹ Isabella (Sojourner Truth as she came to call herself) was first auctioned as a slave at the age of nine. As a feminist and abolitionist, Sojourner is known for asking the question "Ain't I a woman" that refutes beliefs that black women are less human as compared to white women, their femininity and purity. Gilbert (1998) gives an extensive treatment of Sojourner Truth's narratives.

the fact that the soldiers considered her dirty and polluting. The image of women portrayed as evil also reverberates when the two men she has sexual intercourse die in the novel. Furthermore, the colonial literary setup that denies her authorship of her story also defines her as less than human, primitive, satanically possessed, infantile and aggressively sexual (Lugones 2010). The coloniality of gender is a result of modernity. According to Lugones (2010) coloniality was designed to see the reduction of human beings to animals, to inferiors by nature (however, the attitudes of racial supremacy presuppose those of species supremacy). Gender or being gendered does not only serve as a biological descriptor for sexual difference but as a dichotomous hierarchy of colonialism and inferiorisation. This constitutes coloniality of being because the gendered body has to conform to the norm of domesticity. In her way of relating, Susan ceases to be an “other” but becomes an “othered” body. She is reduced to a subaltern position through capitalist exploitation and heterosexuality by Foe. As an “othered” body, Susan Barton falls into a colonial trap of what I will call “gender silence”.

Susan’s silence is problematised in *Foe* in that the readers know of her story even if the *sjuzet* of the story is not professionally written. Even if Susan struggles to let Foe represent her story, the mere fact that she has written to Foe expressing her story and how it should be told enlightens us that she has already told her story. Despite the fact that her account lacks Friday’s story, the reader knows her story. Again, if the reader has been told of the void (the lack of Friday’s story) then Friday’s story has been told altogether and hence Susan’s story is paradoxically complete. If by struggling to tell her story Susan tells her story then Susan has remembered to re-member. As a gendered body she has re-membered who she is and where she stands in world. At a narrative level, her consciousness implores the reader to understand who she is, and that “who she is” has a bearing on how she acts and conducts herself in the hierarchically stratified world. Therefore, her act of re-membering happens on the narrative level. Despite the fact that her voice cannot be heard (or is marginalised) by other characters in the novel like Foe, I argue that as the narrative focaliser of the novel, Barton is given a voice by Coetzee. In fact, by having a voice, Barton is made human (at least in Coetzee's imaginatively constructed world).

The act of dismemberment in the colonial capitalist world is also seen in Foe. Foe is the subordinate of the colonial world and conforms to set stylistics and standards of telling stories. He is the agent who advances the colonial capitalist legacy and preserves it by writing and re-writing (hi)stories. The fact that he runs away from his creditors and seems to be a conformist in his writings, he might be viewed as a lower level colonial agent or an unwilling collaborator in the colonial enterprise, or merely a peripheral member at the heart of the Empire, or of a lower social status. Whichever way he is viewed, he is like the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, an unwitting agent of the Empire. Foe, like Coetzee, is a writer of fiction and this means that Coetzee may be dealing with the issue of writing itself in meta-fictional play. Foe's narratives are inventions designed to suit the demands of inaccuracies like his demands to incorporate cannibal and pirate stories. By his own admission, he and Susan are "[Friday's] later masters" (Coetzee 1986: 148). His re-writing of Susan's story is a distortion of the truthfulness of events and challenges Susan's resolve to tell her story the way she desires. While these are forms to dismember both Susan and Friday, his misrepresentation of Susan's story is symbolic of the misrepresentation of history by epistemological erasures, deliberate omissions and re-writings. In other words, Foe is a dismembered dismembering agent because he represents the legacy of his colonial canonised world. It may be argued that Foe's persistence to change Susan's story is his concern to turn it into a popular story - one that will sell well. However, his insistence to alter Susan's story should be viewed as phallogocentrism designed to dismember Susan (and all women) from power, knowledge and being for itself.

Foe's misconstructions and his inventions of truths denote precisely how capitalist machinations manipulate a people's being. He himself is a fugitive from his creditors, thus living a "hellish" life. It also means he lives a life in capitalist confinement (as a beneficiary and victim of capitalism) and his "being" thus is dismembered. The concept of *being* should be understood from Heidegger's (1996: 18) concept of *Being and Time*: Being, Being there and Being in itself. The concept of being is understood as a quest on how one can define himself without relating to others (the "they"). The coloniality of being, understood from Maldonado-Torres's (2007) point of view (which in form is a

Fanonian view) is the naturalisation of the non-ethics of war. This means that the coloniality of being is normalisation of war like events. The “others” who have lived without death are not considered people at all. They are confined to the “hellish world existence in the colonial world [that] carries with it both the racial and the gendered aspects of the naturalisation on the non-ethics of war” (Maldonado-Torres (2007: 254). Like Susan and Friday, Foe occupies this space of manipulating others because he himself is manipulated by the capitalist world. Therefore, Foe himself lives in isolation notwithstanding the fact that he is at the centre of civilisation, England. Attridge (2004: 70) observes that Coetzee’s novels “return again and again to the solitary individual in a hostile human and physical environment to raise crucial question of civilisation and humanity.” Foe, like Cruso and Susan, are victims of coloniality who by either rejecting or conforming to civilisation are all dismembered beings whose colonial world decivilises them.

[Not] Talking on behalf of “others”

Colonial forms of racism and their modern permutations have ripple effects in that they produce silent or silenced humans. To be silent or silenced is rather an act of dismembering because it entails that someone speaks for, of or about you. Speaking for or of is advocacy and it all necessitates that someone is speaking for or describes you and who you are. Consequently, this requires that there is a subject that speaks and a subjective that is spoken of. The ability to speak demands that that someone holds the power to pronounce over someone or something. In the rationale of coloniality, the power to pronounce entails dismemberment or violation of the subject spoken of. Racialisation or hierarchisation as I argue, is a result of the ability to pronounce on others. That is, the programmatic classification of beings becomes a way of identifying the “other” (and identifying the “self” in the process). Africans and others dissimilar to “selves” are spoken of as the anthropos who lack humanity. In *Foe*, Friday is “soulless” and “kinless” until Barton spies him sprinkling ashes into the sea. Hierarchisation of the “othered” body happens “by a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it” (Fanon 2004: 87). This underlines a gap in poor relations about those that one speaks about and also exposes

the manipulation and misrepresentation of the anthropos's story. In other words, speaking about is tantamount to dismembering the subject one speaks of and a distortion of the truth, as seen in the story Susan Barton wants Foe to write and the one Foe prefers to write.

To stratify people is an act of speaking for those occupying the lower strata. When one speaks for "others", one's position is revealed in the process – the speaking subject placing itself above the spoken subjective. Therefore, to speak for others is to speak of "them" and "us" binaries. It follows then that in the colonial system, whoever speaks for (or has a voice) classifies oneself as belonging in the zone of being or the centre. This denotes that there is a line that divides the human (the one who can speak) from the non-human (the one without a voice). The dividing line is a colonial line or a modern colonial-line (Maldonado-Torres 2017: 123). Santos (2007) calls this dividing line the abyssal line. In the colonial racial system, the humans are above the line and the non-humans are below it. Those who are below occupy the darker side of coloniality as non-humans or "dishumans" who do not speak, whose speech is disabled and whose voice cannot be heard. I refer to non-humans as dishumans because they are viewed as disabled in all respects by those occupying the human zone. The dishuman are disabled by the colour of their skins and are not capable of evolving or belonging to the human zone. The subhuman may transcend the abyssal line like Cruso and Susan but the dishuman are the "abnormal" and the dismembered others like Friday who live in bondage.

Therefore, the concept of humanity in the colonial world has two racial worlds – the zone of the human and the zone of the dishuman. Fanon (2004) describes the colonial world as a form of Manicheanism. Using Fanon's model, Maldonado-Torres (2017: 122) describes the line that defines and delimits the space of authentic humanity and separates it from lesser forms of humanity as onto-Manichean line. Therefore, the modern civilised order is inherently produced by the modern colonial line that divides the world in lighter zones and darker zones. In *Foe*, those belonging to England (or occupying the centre) speak for the one's on island as evidenced by Foe's zeal to tell

Susan and Friday's stories. The fate of the island dwellers consequently is in the hands of those who can speak for them. However, those who speak like Foe choose what to say about those who cannot speak. Speaking of racism in Finland, Mirriam Makeba (1969) says the conqueror as invaders write history and they avoid writing the truth about the conquered. By negatively rewriting history of the conquered, the conqueror justifies his invasion. Without Foe, Susan's story doesn't exist, and without Crusoe and Susan there is no Friday. This mirrors the history of the colonised that only comes to fruition after the act of conquering. Until civilisation happens nothing is recorded.

Foe as the experienced writer has the ability to speak and write what the markets anticipate. The fact that Foe has the knowledge of what is canonised elevates him above Susan. In other words, his knowledge objectifies Susan who does not only rely upon Foe for her story to be told but is regarded as an empty being who has to be taught the knowledge of the established canonised literary world. Foe, like the markets, is more interested in what will sell than in the truth of the story. Susan is concerned with the value or the truthfulness of her story because (to her) a story's value is in its relation to record reality. She vows, "I will not have any lies told...I would rather be the author of my story than have lies told about me" (Coetzee 1986: 40). Even when Foe rejects her story as one that is not a story, Susan contends that "it is not so dull so long as we remind ourselves it is true" (Coetzee 1986: 127).

Speaking for is a dismembering act that seeks to manipulate someone's story and being. Foe's insistence on changing Susan's account of the story sets doubt even in Susan because she begins to doubt her own experiences, her story and herself especially her solitary life in Bahia. Susan says:

When I reflect on my story, I seem to exist only as the one who came, the one who witnessed, the one who longed to be gone: a being without a substance, a ghost beside the true body of Crusoe" (Coetzee 1986: 51).

The fact that Susan doubts who she is and her true experiences (as she believes) signify that Foe is recreating her identity. Susan remarks that under Foe's surveillance, she began to tell about "dark staircases, the bare room, the curtained alcove, particulars a thousand times more familiar to [Foe] than to [her]" (Coetzee 1986: 133). Therefore, Foe's interest in what will sell by adding exotic accounts of cannibals landing on the island than the truth of the story is an act of oppression. However, Susan will have none of it, "what I saw, I wrote. I saw no cannibals, and if they came after nightfall and fled before the dawn, they left no footprints behind" (Coetzee 1986: 54).

In his advocacy Foe wants to tell Susan's story in a simple way, "loss, the quest, then recovering; beginning, then middle, then end" (Coetzee 1986:117). In his story that he constructs makes no mention of Friday and Crusoe except in relation to the island. He treats the island story as an excess. Susan realises even in the instance of telling her own story that Friday lacks words to make his world. Therefore, because of this lack, Susan, like Foe attempts to speak on his behalf. Speaking on behalf becomes a colonial tool that dehumanises those considered to lack a voice. Dehumanisation happens because speaking for or of or about dispossess the "other" of their stories or disauthorises their voices. Jehlen (1993) bemoans the temptation of analysing colonial discourse by appropriating the voice of the oppressed in order to speak on their behalf. The voice that speaks for those considered to lack a voice is a dismembering voice as seen in Foe trying to re-articulate Susan's story. In fact, the meaning of what is spoken or what is spoken about is affected by where one speaks from (the speaker's position, location or social identity). Rather, the text illustrates that if one's voice is silenced, or not heard or misrepresented it culminates to dismembering (by being recreated, misrepresented or even silenced). Therefore, this shows that the future of a complete being (a re-membering being) belongs to those who put effort into telling and owning their stories – because by telling their stories they resist being reconstructed. In other words, the identity of those who lack a voice or whose voice is silenced is reconstructed when they are spoken of, equally so, when they are not spoken of.

The act of not speaking for others is a silencing act. Not speaking for others opens opportunities for the other to be altered and hence dismembered. Characters silenced in Coetzee's *Foe* cannot articulate their position, beliefs and opinions of things. Parry (1991: 199) turns to Coetzee as the silencing author and asks, "Does not Coetzee's own principled refusal to exercise the power of the dominant culture by speaking for others paradoxically perform the discursive process of silencing?" This is the question that keeps arising. By failing to give them a voice, Coetzee positions them partly as unrepresentable figures and this constitutes misrepresentation. In other words, by portraying Friday as a speechless figure whose tongue is dismembered, Coetzee uses his intellectual authority to silence him and presents him as an incomplete figure. Friday's utterances (the few words he is taught by Cruso) are unrepresented and unrepresentable. According to Bennet (1997: 22), "a self-righteous refusal to speak for others [...] threatens to reproduce the denial of audible utterances to subaltern subjects." Perhaps it would be impermissible for Coetzee as a beneficiary of colonialism and a privileged European white man to give Friday a voice, and Susan a mind after giving her the body (which disqualifies her to be heard). It would be again a transgression to give Cruso a voice after denying him civilisation that ultimately makes him human.

As noted, Coetzee has explored the impossible scenario of either speaking for or not speaking for the "other". On the one hand, Coetzee may not speak for others and not avoid robbing them of their own voices. On the other hand, not speaking on their behalf also robs them of their voices. This seems to be a fundamentally contradictory position, rather than merely creative tension during the act of writing or telling. Therefore, Coetzee's use of *Foe* is a comment on the choices he makes in his own writing and the fact that he writes about Susan Barton himself. These are meta-fictional facts that relate to the concepts of dismembering and re-membering. By making Barton the subject of the story that she cannot tell, Coetzee points to the impossibility of representing the other's story, yet, paradoxically, he does just that. As a white male author, he may believe that he has no right to tell the story of the white female (Barton) or the black male (Friday), which is why he writes about them the way he does. He tries to re-

member them without colonising them in a different way. This may explain why Friday is said to have no tongue and consequently no voice.

The silence of marginalised people or even groups is, as Bannet (1997: 22) notes:

[...] the colonial effect of institutionalised organisations of social discourse, in which certain utterances fall outside of what is recognisable and legitimised as audible speech.

People like Foe, portrayed as writers of note, even if they are debtors hiding from their creditors have a reputable voice. Foe is admitted in the zone of the *humanitas* even though he has a dubious character. Nonetheless, Foe's dishonest character seeks to underline the fact that to be in the civilised capitalist zone is to be denied freedom unless one owns capital. It is to appear to be in control yet to conform to the set standards of living and making a living. It is to be in the zone that enables one to speak for others without consequences. It is a zone where one may write, re-write or exclude historical facts of the colonised to his liking in order not to deviate from the standards of the civilised capitalist world. It is continuously to deny the colonised and oppressed entrance to the world of human kind. The civilised West or North has determined the single norm of humanity and even of legitimate knowledge and values.

The colonial world legitimatises the dismembering of the colonised even by an act of speaking and not speaking for them. However, the silence and being silent may be Coetzee's ways of drawing the reader's attention to the power of language or lack of thereof. Coetzee, as a conscientious writer, is drawing the reader's attention to the silenced and acts of silence. However, without falling in the trap of the intentional fallacy, answering the question on what circumstances it is legitimate to speak or not to speak for others is paramount. Whenever one assumes the role of speaking or of choosing not to speak for, it often means that one occupies a position of being heard. It therefore means that the same individual has a choice of either using his power to speak or may choose not to. The act of choosing becomes an act of wantonly

dismembering (in the sense of rendering others voiceless) those they speak of or those they choose not to speak of. Dismembering, therefore, takes the form of an ontological marginalisation of the subhuman, the nonhuman and the “dishuman” and those who are rendered not human or not quite human. For the human, it would be rather legitimate to speak of others in a world already defined. Therefore, in *Foe*, it is a canonised world where truth does not matter. Barton remarks that after her story is tampered with, “nothing is left to [her]” (Coetzee 1986: 133). If our stories are rewritten, the dominated has no more story to tell, therefore, nothing is left of Susan and Friday. By altering Susan’s story, corroborating her claims, she is no longer a substantial being without a substantial history in the world (Coetzee 1986: 131). Her insistence of the verisimilitude of her story is synonymous to humiliating herself. That is, her voice, like her being, cannot be heard within the narrative. Her voice is cast in doubt on the credibility or value of the story and her ability to tell it. Social power or the power to tell one’s story is, in *Foe*, defined by the coloniality of the discourse. This also relates to the politics of interpretation and reinterpretations - the power or lack of power given by gender or class regulates what story is told.

The shaping of Friday

A dark shadow fell upon me. [...] The man squatted down beside me. He was black: A Negro with a head of fuzzy wool [...] flat nose, small dull eyes, the broad nose, the thick lips, the skin not black but a dark grey, dry as if coated with dust. (Coetzee 1986: 1-2)

This is how Susan describes Friday as she meets him for the first time. Her first impression (informed by this dark image) was that she has landed on an “island of cannibals” (Coetzee 1986: 2). Susan’s description of Friday makes (shapes) him and readers perceive him as described. The reader has no alternative image of Friday except that which Susan provides. However, using Susan’s words, if Friday had the ability to read, will he have marveled at writing as a “fine thing” if he is described in this manner? Could this be the image he would have preferred to “live forever” of him? (Coetzee 1986: 58). Elsewhere, Susan finds Friday “in all matters a dull fellow”

(Coetzee 1986: 22). In fact, it is after learning about Friday's mutilated tongue from Crusoe that Susan "began to look on him – [and] could not help [herself]" (Coetzee 1986: 24). Coetzee, through Susan's representation, appears to be calling us to "look" and "re-look" at Friday, because any analyses of *Foe* (or of Susan's story) cannot be far-reaching without this constructed figure who appears more like an "actant" (since his individualising characteristics are portrayed as irrelevant).

Friday is one of the slave figures without any power whatsoever except his silence. Friday's role on the island is to help Crusoe as an obedient slave with the passion to work. It is Friday who saves Susan by taking her to Crusoe soon after she lands on the island. Therefore, Friday immediately doubles his duties as a slave to the new master (Mistress Barton), by bringing her "water" and later making her the bed and changing it "every third day" (Coetzee 1986: 8 and 19). In return, Friday as a slave had to be tamed and civilised. In his portrayal of Friday, Coetzee seems to use the Kantian image of race that, in order to discipline a negro, "the use of a bamboo cane instead of a whip is recommended, so they may suffer a great deal without dying" (Magutti 2013: 67). The bamboo cane image sums up the many methods used to silence and dismember Friday. With this image in mind, I argue that the violence (of enslavement) suffered by the slave figure Friday, socially and symbolically kills him. What fronts as the advancement of those who cannot advance themselves is the darker side of modernity that dehumanises and dismembers the so called primitive people like Friday.

Friday's silence reduces him to a symbol rather than a character. His voicelessness renders him closed both to his fictive world and to the reader. His construction by those with voices has been represented as untrustworthy like Crusoe's tales of Friday. In explaining Friday's tonguelessness, Crusoe says that "the slavers cut out his tongue and sold him into slavery" (Coetzee 1986: 23). However, Susan suspects that it is Crusoe who removed Friday's tongue to make him silent. There is, however, inconclusive evidence in the narrative to test Susan's suspicions except for Crusoe's inconsistencies particularly when speaking of Friday. The metaphorical reading of Crusoe's inconsistencies underlines the colonial side of dismembering the colonised by telling the untruths. Therefore, the aim of colonialism is not to create any humans but to create

dishumans or non-humans who, after being inferiorised, can be exploitable and later disposed. Lugones (2010: 744) posits that “turning the colonised into human beings was not a colonial goal.” Therefore, Friday’s enslavement and his ultimate dismembering renders him “dishuman” and easily disposable. Friday’s dismemberment condemns him as having a dependency complex, an anthropos who is comfortable in his “colonisability”. He is described as “a slave and child” who has to be cared for by his masters (Coetzee 1986: 39).

Friday is constructed and reconstructed by those who purport to speak for him. His lack of any authority to tell his story emanates from his portrayal as a voiceless slave without a tongue. His story can neither be told by him nor his masters. He, of all the characters in *Foe*, exists in his own world without words. His loss of words renders him inaccessible and serves as an impairment preventing him from articulating his experiences. His inaccessibility draws the reader’s attention to his two immediate masters, Cruso and Barton. In fact, all that we know about Friday in *Foe* is told by Susan Barton and briefly by the unnamed narrator in the last part of the novel. The fact he is spoken of makes him liable to be constructed to anything that his colonisers desire or make him to be. His misconstruction or reconstruction, is only possible because he lacks a voice. That is, speech or a voice may enable Friday (as Foe and Susan assume) to understand his world. Susan Barton remarks:

Friday has no command of words and therefore no defence against being shaped day by day in conformity with the desires of others. I say he is a cannibal and he becomes a cannibal; [...] these are mere names [...] he is himself, Friday is Friday (Coetzee 1986: 122).

Friday’s lack of voice precipitates his exploitation. His first master Cruso ceases to be a “lenient” master as Susan says of him. In fact, Cruso like Foe and Susan are colonists who use the ethics of “might is right” in their colonial tendencies. The colonial ethics (be it of “might is right” or war) as Maldonado-Torres (2017) notes, is equivalent to a world without ethics where all violations are permitted. Gordon (2007: 11) observes that “the absence of ethical relation means living with death-bound subjectivity.” That is, where

there are no ethics murder becomes a legitimate feature. The act of silencing Friday by ripping out his tongue (as Cruso alleges) is symbolic of his death. Foe's misrepresentation of Susan's story also translates to her death as a substantial being, but this is worse in Friday's case. The flawed colonial ethics demonstrate that one group of people's lives is less valuable than others (Gordon 2007: 11). Lack of ethics creates a tension with the representation or misrepresentation of Friday as a dishuman character. He is not only dishuman to the colonist but ultimately to the author and reader because to be human is to be a rational animal endowed with language (Braidotti 2014). Silencing Friday by physically dismembering him as Cruso does, or speaking and not speaking of him as Coetzee does, or speaking of him and misrepresenting the truth as Foe does, is to confine him to nonexistence or nonappearance. It is, in Gordon's (2007: 10) words, to be a "monster" since modern colonialism has created disastrous people who are "modern monsters". Therefore, modern monsters create damned human beings who are always presented as violent. Friday's masters, including Susan, regard him as uncivilised and a human eater.

Cruso's project in the island is an act of dismembering the discovered black other. Using Friday's labour, Cruso builds terraces that lie idle. Poyner (2009: 95) compares this wasteful effort to the "blood of slaves spent in building the Egyptian tombs." Furthermore, Cruso teaches Friday few words. However, even in its minimalist way, the teaching of Cruso's European language is another way of an imperialist's genocidal attitude. Genocidal in the sense that the language of the other has to bow down to the language of self. This dismembers the other since "language has a dual characteristic: it is both a means of communication and carrier of culture" (Ngugi 1986: 13). To take Marx's view of language as of real life, these, as Ngugi (1986: 13) posits, functions as a link to establish among themselves a people, a community of human beings. Therefore, adopting Marx's view, language becomes a means of production because "production is communication, is language, is expression of a relation between human beings and it is specifically human" (Ngugi 1986: 13). Therefore, Cruso's few words that he teaches Friday are an assertion of power, and dismembers Friday's being completely.

In the absence of a voice that will tell his story, Friday remains a slave even under his “liberator” Barton who even fears to send him back to Africa. Susan sees no need to understand Friday’s music from the flute and her intolerance leads her to knock the flute out of Friday’s hands. She says, “This tune, of which he seemed not to tire, grew so to annoy me that one day I marched over and dashed the flute from his hands [...]” (Coetzee 1986: 28). For this reason, one metaphorically deduces that it is Friday who is expected to learn Susan’s tune. On the other hand, Barton has used words to objectify Friday to his will and attempts to educate him. Susan says, “I tell myself I talk to Friday to educate him out of darkness and silence. But is that the truth? [...] I use words only as the shortest way to subject him to my will” (Coetzee 1986: 60). In other words, Barton realises and bemoans the fact that she has subjected Friday to her own language. The fact that she wants Friday to learn her language and music underlines the necessity for the colonised to be the ones who must conform.

Susan Barton is aware that she is playing the role of a master as she remarks that if Friday “was not a slave, was he nevertheless not the helpless captive of my desire to have our story told?” (Coetzee 1986: 150). However, even without his own language, Susan realises that Friday is the void in her story and that the story is beyond her. In other words, Susan keeps Friday as a key to her story, to complete her and as a ticket to her fame. While Friday is silent, Coetzee might have silenced him to show the importance of the other in the “self” stories. Therefore, Friday’s story lacks substance and is not there which makes him a silenced individual in silence. It will be an assumption that it is the coloniser who severed Friday’s tongue to silence him forever. It ought to be realised that such an act of coloniality bites back the coloniser since their stories too lack substance without that of the anthropos. A problem, therefore, is created where no narrative is complete or reasonable without the story of the oppressed anthropoi.

Friday’s silent and silenced body is that of a body Barton discovers between London and Bristol road – where nothing stirs and where nothing is still. Susan observes that when Friday dances “nothing was still and yet everything was still... what has been

hidden from me was revealed. I saw, or, I should say, my eyes were open to what was present to them" (Coetzee 1986: 119). This may also suggest that Friday is also castrated. However, only to read Friday as silenced is to stifle decolonial conventions that thrive on the multiplicity of truths. For some reason or other, to use Anzaldua's (1987) phrase, Friday has to exist, he has to survive. For Friday to exist in the decolonial world, he has to remember who he is, that he is human and that he is not what the coloniser says he is. His refusal to talk might be a refusal of his body to be read. There is no proof whatsoever that Friday does not have his tongue since even Susan struggles to get into his mouth. Susan (who is a narrator) and who by her use of "I" in the story has endeared herself to the reader as it were) does not believe in Friday's tonguelessness. Metaphorically, by failing to see (or get into his mouth) Susan demonstrates that she cannot speak for Friday. Friday's lack of speech makes him appear and disappear at the same time in Coetzee's narrative. His silence is so loud that it continues to perturb Susan. She writes to Foe:

"When I lived in your house, I would sometimes lie awake upstairs listening to the pulse of blood in my ears and to the silence from Friday below, a silence that rose up the stairway like smoke, like welling of a black smoke" (Coetzee 1986: 118).

Therefore, Friday's silence is, in fact, loud to Barton's conscience and it communicates in a haunting manner. Cruso's accounts of Friday's loss of tongue are but utterings that lack seriousness and substantial evidence. It is hence indistinguishable in the text whether Friday chooses his silence as defiance or is silenced by the colonial system.

Friday, in his silence, is not only the key to the coloniser's story but makes him himself. This may be a result of his re-membering himself, or Coetzee's strategy. His fate and that of Susan remain tied together because of his untold story. However, it is worthwhile keeping in mind that Friday's fate is far different from that of Barton in as much as the Barbarian girl's fate is different from that of the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. Friday's fate demonstrates that while the coloniser is completed by the colonised, the

colonised is complete in himself. He only become the anthropos as one chooses to define him. However, his resistance to be talked of or to be described renders him invisible like the barbarian girl whose eye pupils cannot be discerned by the Magistrate. Even though Friday's role is similar to that of Caliban in the *Tempest* who collects firewood and performs other menial activities, he represents those who have been silenced by the politics of hierarchisation due to sex, gender, class and race.

According to Mullins (2009: 15), "Friday uses silence as a calculated form of insubordination and rebellion." This is to read Friday as a decolonial figure engaged in the struggle of creating a decolonial world. I argue that Coetzee has represented Friday not as a [non]being spoken of but a figure paradoxically speaking for himself through his silence. Friday's refusal to be heard or read is a form of epistemic disobedience. Spivak in Bannet (1997: 11) argues that "any subaltern voice that is heard in a colonist text has already been appropriated and re-articulated by the dominant discourse, and that it is altered by subjects admitted into those formations under particular circumstances." If Friday is read or heard in the colonial world, he risks being misappropriated, and spoken of. Therefore, his refusal to speak (for he can speak the few words taught by Cruso) or to read (as he wipes the slate clean) makes him who he is – Friday. Friday can write (a writing, perhaps, similar to the one on the poplar slips in *Waiting for the Barbarians*) but openly refuses to engage. Even if Friday's inscriptions are possibly nothing as Spivak (1991: 172) argues, Friday's mind can be read from those inscriptions hence, to avoid being read and heard, it is appropriate for him to rub off his inscriptions. Bannet (1997: 7) says that "writing is conceived as the empirical container in which the workings of the mind are stored and from which they may be recovered intact." If Friday's mind is deciphered then Susan Barton's story gains the substance that it lacks.

In *He and his man* Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Coetzee (2003) narrates Robinson Crusoe's story in which Friday does speak. Crusoe remarks, "How then has it come about that this man of his, who is a kind of a parrot and not much loved, writes as well as or better than his master?" (Coetzee 2003). In as much as Crusoe's man relate to Crusoe's news bear, it also seeks to speak of his man-servant Friday whose

relationship with him has become illogical. Perhaps as Crusoe, Foe and Susan ought to, Robinson asks, "How are they to be figured, this man and he? As a master and slave? As brothers, twin brothers?" Daniel Defoe's characters in *Robinson Crusoe* could very much be appropriated (in an act of interpretation or misinterpretation) to those of Coetzee's *Foe*. The image Coetzee uses of two ships passing by, unable to connect or meet each other can very well represent different destinies of characters like Crusoe or Foe and poor or parrot Friday. The gulf between the slave and master (like two ships unable to meet and connect) is the echo of silence that set them apart.

Friday's silence and his defiance, therefore, might be his strong search for dignity and his endless search for ancestry as demonstrated by his throwing of ash in the sea. His rootlessness made worse by his forced migration to England is rather an idea of colonial manipulation and diplomacy often disguised as salvation and civilisation. Therefore, Crusoe, Susan and Foe's portrayal of Friday as helpless and a silent character are for manipulative ends. Barton remarks of Friday, "inasmuch as Friday is a slave and a child, it is our duty to care for him in all things, and not abandon him to a solitude worse than death" (Coetzee 1986: 39). The fate of black servants and slaves is in the hands of their masters. Even the concept of blackness that is inextricably linked to racism is a construction designed to discriminate and to create subjects. Mbembe (2017) charges that to be black is to be an excess. To be an excess like Friday is to be "fundamentally unrepresentable [...and] powerfully possessed by emptiness" (Mbembe 2017: 11).

The unidentified narrator in the last part of the novel makes all worlds of truths possible. It might be Friday's story told by him since Foe and Susan are in slumber resembling death. Coetzee might have abandoned the unreliable narrator focaliser who is Susan and told Friday's story in a dream-like recitation. All in all, the expressive nature of the last part of the novel demonstrates placing of the blame squarely on those failing to represent Friday's story – including of course Coetzee himself. Mullins (2009) observes that the narrative ambiguity of the last part of the novel seeks to highlight that colonialism is not only practiced by the oppressors like Susan, Crusoe and Foe but also on Coetzee and everyone who reads his work. Unlike his masters, if Friday refuses to

perish in this last part, as Mbembe (2017: 181) notes, it might be signaling a need for blacks to be viewed as historical beings who can make it possible for a world to be a world. According to Mbembe (2017: 182) for the world to be a world, the stolen humanity of those that are historical subjected has to be restored.

5. Colonial Crossroads in 'Disgrace'

*If you ask me
Who I am*

*I will tell you nothing.
I will tell you nothing.
I'll show you the scars of centuries
Which furrow my black back
I'll look at you with eyes of hatred
Shot red with blood
Shed through the years...*

*I'll tell you nothing
But you will know why I fight.*

Armando Guebuza in Chirere (2005: 1)

Introduction

Meaningfully, “the question is, what are we going to do now that we are sorry?” and this stands as the central question that Mr. Isaacs asks David Lurie in the novel *Disgrace* (Coetzee 2000:172). The question of what thinking and practice should follow the experience and condition of being sorry comes into prominence. The assumption being that being sorry should unenvelope new practices, experiences and another existential universe. It is a thematic question that borders on apology, forgiveness and compensation which the novel explores. The question, which Mr. Isaacs asks is on the lessons that the likes of Lurie have learnt, not only from the apology but from their past misdeeds. Lurie is portrayed as an archetypal character that goes through sin, confession and forgiveness. *Disgrace*, which seems to concern itself about contemporary South Africa, becomes an apocalyptic novel that has a futuristic outlook. When Kaufman announced *Disgrace* as the winner of the Booker Prize in 1999, he called it “a millennial book because it takes us though the 20th century into a new

century in which the source of power is shifting from Western Europe” (McDonald 2011: 321). Indeed, J. M. Coetzee has contextualised, in an elusive and peripeteian fashion, the dilemma of dismembering and re-membering realities of the post-Apartheid South Africa. In *Disgrace*, Coetzee is critiquing both the global ethic of managerialism and its particular manifestations in post-Apartheid South Africa. Attridge in Poyner (2009: 152) notes that “the narrative is not an attack on the new nation that emerged from the elections in 1994 but a distance from a new global age.” In general terms, a new global age is characterised, among other things, by agricultural industrialisation, political peacemaking, neo-liberalism, managerialism and tenements. That is Coetzee critiques the global ethos of managerialism even as he critiques it in the post-apartheid ethos of the novel. In other words, *Disgrace* concerns itself with political, economic and social realities in the post-Apartheid South Africa.

Nadine Gordimer in Mattos (2012: 12) criticises the representation of black characters in *Disgrace*, “in the novel *Disgrace* there is not one black person who is a real human being.” The South African ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) reported the novel to the Human Rights Commission (HRC) in 2000 accusing it of constituting hate speech. Jeff Radebe (2000), the then Public Enterprises Minister, in the ANC news briefing on 5 April 2000 said, “in this novel J. M. Coetzee represents as brutally as he can the white people’s perception of post-Apartheid black man.” Glen in Horn (1992: 122) perceives Coetzee’s decision to leave South Africa after the dawn of a new political dispensation as a “blow to white intellectuals in that it suggested that things were now worse, beyond any hope of redemption or improvement.” While a decolonial reading seeks to contribute to the wealth of criticism and vast scholarship of Coetzee’s novels, it differs in that it critiques power relations from the perspective of the colonised and the foregrounded complexities of history and social meanings in South Africa. Therefore, in this chapter, the wealth of scholarship on *Disgrace* provides crucial foundations of my criticism. A critical decolonial reading seeks to problematise further the author’s presentation/representation of the recit (the narrative), the fabula (the story) and the narration (the narrative act).

In *Disgrace*, Coetzee critiques not only the changes brought by the new political dispensation but more so its neo-liberal defects that dooms the form and meaning of the novel to be in a cyclic stasis. The cyclical events of rape, of confession and need for forgiveness that seem to plague both black and white characters are indicative of the post-Apartheid government's neo-liberalism. In a way, dismembering and re-membering become imbedded in the historical memory and its loss. The stubborn historical epithets become the residue of dismembering that are characteristic in the post-Apartheid South Africa. The novel's fabula becomes a re-membering mechanism, a metaphorical jigsaw puzzle reminding its readers that the African people have histories too.

The third voice narrator attributes the focalisation of events through a disaffected Cape Technical University professor David Lurie. Lurie is fifty-two years old and is twice divorced. In his view, he has solved the problem of sex very well by buying the services of prostitutes. However, when this fails, he preys on one of his female students at the university. When his sexual involvement with Melanie Isaacs (who attends his class on Romantic poets) comes to light, he refuses to answer any questions before the university's disciplinary committee and the media, citing his affair as a private matter. As a result, he resigns because he refuses to make a confession and issue a public apology to the disciplinary commission. David finds making private matters public unacceptable. However, his refusal to confess partly reveals his rejection of the Christian mode of atonement similar to that which was used in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Elleke Boehmer in Poyner 2006:140). He, however, goes on to atone to Mr. Isaacs later in the novel.

After his resignation, David travels to Salem in the Eastern Cape to live with his lesbian daughter Lucy on her farm. According to Lurie, Petrus the black farm labourer on Lucy's farm orchestrates three black men to rape Lucy, in the process killing six dogs, burning Lurie, looting the house and stealing his car. Lucy refuses to report her rape ordeal to the police, citing the matter as private. She falls pregnant and finally accepts to be Petrus's third wife. Pollux, who was present when Lucy was raped (and who may have taken part), is a relative of Petrus and has always lived with him on Lucy's farm. In his

journey to repentance, Lurie apologises, seemingly from the heart, to Melanie Isaacs' father for violating her daughter. It is on this instance that Mr Isaacs asks the central question on what should be done since he is sorry. Thereafter, Lurie finds a new purpose as a "dog-man" to what seems like his period of mourning in disgrace. He takes over Petrus's job of the dog-man by helping Lucy's friend Bev in the animal clinic.

This chapter consists of three sub-headings. The first sub-heading: *Disgrace(land) through the eye of a needle* explores how racial and or patriarchal dismemberment happens through the degradation of human female bodies. "Disgraceland" is a term borrowed from Cornwell (2003) "*Disgraceland*" where he details the history behind and the significance of Salem as the land of disgrace. In this chapter, emphasis is placed on Soraya's trade of sexual favours and Lurie's violation of Melanie Isaacs. The exclusion of black females to contribute to the meaningful economic growth and educational attainment signify dismemberment which is characterised by keeping gendered beings inferior. In particular, the sub-heading explores Coetzee's mode of portraying race and gender violence as a dismembering tools in *Disgrace*. Throughout the novel Melanie Isaacs is silent or silenced and her father becomes her spokesman, and it he, at the end of the novel, who seem to forgive Lurie. Even in this instance, Melanie becomes a forgotten university girl whose first-hand account, even before the commission never reaches the reader. She becomes just another victim of Lurie's erotic desires. In this sub-heading, I will also explore forms of re-membering in the institutional and curriculum reforms as Coetzee portrays them in *Disgrace*.

Gender and racial violence in *Disgrace* happen as a result of the inappropriate use of power. David abuses his position of professor to take advantage of one of his students to satisfy his sexual desires. What gives him the advantage in this instance is the power he possesses within the university. That is, his taking advantage of Melanie Isaacs is one of the disgraces in this post-Apartheid novel. Even after independence, South Africa remains a "disgrace(land)" resembling the rule under the Apartheid government because of violence and lack of social and institutional reforms. Therefore, the second sub-heading: *Managerialism and "whiteness" in the ex-colony* argues that the

representation of managerialism and neo-liberalism (which I partly discussed in *Waiting for the Barbarians*) appear to be tenets of “whiteness” and results in the inefficiency of the economy in *Disgrace*. The government’s stance in the revival of neo-liberal policies relates to the adopted neo-liberal Western policies crafted in the name of development and progress. In fact, besides the coloniality of the economy, managerialism is the negative management of identities in South Africa, which also extends to gender managerialism. Therefore, the ethos of managerialism like coloniality of identities and coloniality of gender are neo-colonial and neo-liberal forms of dismembering race and gender respectively. The managerialism in the novel mimics Western forms of managerialism. That is, the new government’s memory on economic, identity and gender management becomes inefficient and translates to a dismembering society or state. This points to the legacies of inherited frameworks, policies and regulatory strategies that are designed to advance the coloniality of power among other colonialities within the neo-liberal framework.

Managerialism and neo-liberalism point to the coloniality of power in *Disgrace*. It is the coloniality of power that appears to be the foundation to a number of disgraces in the novel. The coloniality of power is inextricably linked to modernity as a dismembering strategy. The dismembered servant figures like Petrus are portrayed as resisting the vestiges of the coloniality of power. Therefore, the last sub-heading: *Re-membering in disgrace* explores more the re-membering of the servant figures as they are portrayed in *Disgrace*. As a result of South Africa’s colonial history, the servant figures are locked in their “blackness”. “Blackness” is tied to poverty due to the dispossession of land – land being a topical issue in contemporary South Africa and the Southern African region. The use of terms like “black” and “white” comes into scrutiny and are regarded as racial terminologies designed to dismember one race. In post-Apartheid South Africa, the collective memory of the servant figures catapults them to re-member who they are, or at least, who they think they are. This re-membering is aided by Coetzee’s narrative focus which partly re-members the servant figures. How the servant figures are re-making themselves becomes an act of de-linking from established modes of living.

Disgrace(land) through the eye of a needle

Disgrace portrays the dismembering acts of the past having lasting effects in the present-day South Africa. The nuances in Coetzee's writing may not be fully comprehended without its historical context. The Apartheid system that has dismembered characters in *Disgrace* results in a post-Apartheid "disgraceland". Therefore, "disgraceland" becomes a space where psychologically, culturally, politically and economically dismembered bodies exist together in *Disgrace*. David Lurie through his narrative perspective as an internal focaliser appears to have "solved the problem of sex rather well" (Coetzee 2000: 1). The very notion of sex is problematised in the first sentence of the first chapter in the novel. The novel hence becomes an epitome of different forms of sex acts including sex as rape. That is, David Lurie's solution to buy sexual services from "black" prostitutes must be viewed as sexploitation, partly because he is "old enough to be [Soraya's] father" (Coetzee 2000: 1). Soraya as a "black" and historically disempowered young girl is thus forced into prostitution because of poverty. She is employed in the escort industry and works for the company called "Discreet Escorts" (Coetzee 2000: 2). In her absence, David Lurie does not have any difficulties in finding another Soraya to satisfy his sexual desires. Soraya ceases to be a specific person but functions as supernumerary for "black" prostitutes who are in abundance. While prostitution as a legal sex business rests on the precepts of modernity, it underlines the desperate times of "black" female "unemployability" emanating from the lack of education, equality and equity in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Disgrace exposes post-Apartheid South Africa's various problems in an apparently simple narrative technique where events chronologically follow each other. However, Coetzee's authorial power can be discerned in the simple turn of events that seem to embed troubling social, political and psychological facets that emanate from historical dismemberment. David Lurie's habitual buying of sex from "black" sex workers pricks a colonial racial festering wound that is still volatile in South Africa today. Soraya, and all the Sorayas at the Discreet Escorts languish in a country that still battles exclusionist gender stereotypes and where prostitution is a means of survival. Lurie views Soraya as a girl whose "general opinion [...] is surprisingly moralistic" and is easily offended by

“tourists who bare their breasts on public beaches” (Coetzee 2000: 1). That is, at a constructional level, Soraya’s character is portrayed as disgraced by her employment in the prostitution industry. Her dignity and morals hence are maligned, not only by the closed economic system, but also by people like David Lurie who occupy positions of relative power in society and who ought to be vehicles of social change. Therefore, the dawn of the new democracy apparently has not brought any economic or social change to the apartheid’s dismembered figures. However, it is noted that the post-1994 South Africa has led to a burgeoning black middle class, which may now outnumber the entire white population. Nonetheless, while economically empowered, the new black middle class may still be culturally dismembered as a result of modernising. To return to the fulcrum of the matter, the birth of the new society has failed to enlighten and define the roles of the colonial dismembering figures in post-Apartheid South Africa. Furthermore, political freedom has brought no “grace” to the “black” masses who still resort to menial jobs for their survival. South Africa has one of the highest unemployment figures in the world, and by far, the majority of the unemployed are black. In a way, through economic dismemberment, the “blacks” like *Disgrace*’s Sorayas are relegated and excluded from the mainstream contributions of the economy.

The African’s economic exclusion in *Disgrace* reiterates the on-going coloniality in the ex-colonies in general and South Africa in particular. Soraya’s economic exclusion becomes an index for sexual exploitation not only as gender sexploitation but as gender racial sexploitation. David Lurie’s attraction to the “exotic” black women is a privilege. In the past, the Apartheid laws like the Marriages Act²⁰ prohibited inter-racial marriages. The law enforcers focused on the “immoral blacks” because even then, the privileged white men were permitted to violate the law at will. That is, David Lurie’s sexual behaviour in the post-Apartheid South Africa can be traced back to these unjust laws. His conduct can be said to be opportunistic – after segregationist Marriages Act is abolished, he continues to dismember and undermine “black” women, and women in general. In this instance, dismemberment means stereotypically confining and defining

²⁰ The Marriages Act was an enacted law to prevent marriage between the people of different races to preserve any contamination of the white race.

women as sexual objects to satisfy his erotic desires. He believes that “[...] a woman’s beauty does not belong to her alone. [That] it is part of the bounty she brings into the world [and that] she has a duty to share it” (Coetzee 2000: 16).

His routinisation of daily life to satisfy his sexual desire amounts to re/commodification of female bodies, when in fact post-Apartheid South Africa should be concerned about “decommodifying” women. Lurie’s encounters even lack passion that forms the element of love making. He views his sexual intercourse with Soraya as the “copulation of snakes: lengthy, absorbed, but rather abstract, rather dry, even at its hottest” (Coetzee 2000: 3). While he undertakes the sexual acts to fulfill his sexual pleasure, he might be unaware of how complicit he is in perpetuating power relations of the past. Therefore, Lurie’s Hedonism is used as a sexual manipulation, partly because it is one space still open for continued dismemberment of women. Farodia Rassool, an outspoken member of the commission of inquiry, during the sitting, laments Lurie’s evasive nature in answering question with “no mention of the long history of exploitation of which this is part” (Coetzee 2000: 53). This is to say, sexual exploitation remains a de-empowering mechanism and a means of domination, victimisation and control. After his rejection by Soraya, Lurie preys on one his students, Melanie Isaacs.

David Lurie is a communications lecturer who fails to inspire his students. He should be concerned about different teaching methodologies to meet his teaching objectives (for instance, to boost the morale of his students as per the university’s aims in teaching the Romantic poets), but instead he courts and sleeps with Melanie Isaacs, a much younger girl of twenty years “whose hips are as slim as a twelve-year-old’s” (Coetzee 2000: 19). His sexual encounters with her have the indications of forced sexual intercourse. She is described as “passive” during sex and Lurie views himself as an “intruder who thrust himself upon her” (Coetzee 2000: 19 and 24). Besides harassment charges, Lurie faces a charge from the university’s Registrar for awarding Melanie Isaacs marks for assignments and examinations for which she did not sit. During the committee of inquiry’s hearing, David shows contempt for the establishment and no remorse for undermining section 3.1 of the university’s code of conduct. Therefore, Coetzee

portrays David Lurie as a character who has little understanding of the political changes and institutional reforms that the new political dispensation ushers in. That is, Lurie proves that some attitudes (which may emanate from the colonial period - of undermining and exploiting women) become a way of life. It follows again that institutional exclusion that the likes of Lurie are faced with arises from the inclusion of the other and attempts to decolonise the university. Therefore, by finding new forms of disgracing the politically included, Lurie participates in the long standing coloniality of power. His coloniality of power hinges on what Desmond Swarts, Dean of Engineering at the Cape Technical University, and a member of the disciplinary commission of inquiry identifies as Lurie's occupation of position of power (Coetzee 2000: 53). In *Disgrace*, Lurie is a dismembering figure owing to his misuse and violation of the position of power he occupies.

While Lurie's exclusion in post-Apartheid South Africa may be read as abuse of his position of authority in the university, it is evident from the novel that his exclusion is resultant from decolonising the university. Furthermore, the dawn of a new nation has introduced decolonial institutional reforms as a way of re-membering. The change of Cape University College to Cape Technical University resonates with the changes that new political dispensation continues to effect. However, what may seem like re-membering is always portrayed as inadequate since it fails to protect students like Melanie Isaacs. In fact, it may be argued that what may seem like re-membering is an expansion of neo-liberal capitalism, turning universities into businesses, the main purpose of which is not to provide education but make a profit.

Name changes of universities and public spaces in South Africa might be a way of disrupting patterns of coloniality. However, the place and name changes of the institutions as noted in contemporary South Africa²¹ has not helped the university students who still demand so many "falls" even after the "fall" of Cecil John Rhodes's

²¹ Noted among the institutional name changes and or new establishments in honour of South African heroes of the liberation struggle is Sol Plaatje University (2013), Sefako Makgatho University (2014), Walter Sisulu University (2005). The University of Port Elizabeth (1964) was changed to Nelson Mandela University in 2005.

statue at the University of Cape Town in 2015. Among other “falls”, the students demand the “fall” of imperial education in favour of the curriculum re-alignment of the education system in the South African university. It is, more or less, a similar call made by students in 1976 when they demanded the “fall” of Afrikaans language as the language of learning and teaching in South African schools. With similar concerns to the students’ 1976 Soweto Uprising, in 2015 the Stellenbosch University students embarked in an analogous protest. Therefore, *Disgrace* has been prophetic on the processes of re-membering that has reached its height almost twenty years after the novel’s publication. However, it may be argued that name changes and curriculum reforms in *Disgrace* (and even in the contemporary South Africa) are not so much about decoloniality as they are about managerialism. These reforms (as it may be argued) do not respect local culture but are and maybe an imposition of an international culture of managerialism.

In *Disgrace*, the disillusioned Lurie, once a professor of Modern Languages in the department of Classics and Modern Languages which is now closed, is inconvenienced by the curriculum and institutional reforms. Professor Lurie offers two modules “Communication 101, ‘Communication Skills’, and Communication 201, ‘Advanced Communication Skills’” (Coetzee 2000: 3). He finds the main premise of Communication handbooks “preposterous” (Coetzee 2000: 3). One may suspect that Coetzee is voicing his own views on the managed university. That notwithstanding, professor Lurie, like the Magistrate in Coetzee’s (2004) *Waiting for the Barbarians*, desires to preserve the old order. Lurie’s temporary comfort at the university is the solace he finds in teaching the Romantic poets’ course, ironically, which fails to boost the morale of his students as intended (Coetzee 2000:3). While Coetzee as a linguist and a literary scholar himself laments the global devaluation of the Arts, he also seems to contests that which is re-membered. That is, through disinterest that his Romantic class shows, Coetzee laments the teaching of Western poetry in African universities like Cape Technical University.

Furthermore, students’ non-committal attitude to the Romantic poets might be having a lot to do with Lurie’s person. Lurie is portrayed as a professor who has not

contextualised the changed context in which he teaches. Therefore, through his character portrayal of Lurie, Coetzee seems to mourn the insignificance of the “self” whose “whiteness” has to die for the self’s relevance in post-Apartheid South Africa. “Whiteness” is interlinked to racialisation because “It is racial thinking itself that make people think they are white” (Hernandez 2016: 2). The death of “whiteness” (of the supremacist attitude) in the new political dispensation is similar to Rhodes’s “fall” at the University of Cape Town. Symbolically, name changes in *Disgrace*, like Rhodes’s “fall”, is an attempt to decolonise space and restore African people’s history. Consequently, Rhodes’s “fall” has attracted back African professionals like Mahmood Mamdani who had left the Cape Town University and country citing lack of institutional and curriculum reforms.

The re-membering of space in the Cape Technical University (minimal as it might be) has jeopardised the colonial hegemony. David Lurie is lost of purpose and is “more out of place than ever” (Coetzee 2000: 4). The curriculum re-alignment at the Cape Technical University is not only informed by the dawn of a new political power, but also informed by the background and enrolment patterns of the students. In other words, the surging number of black students in universities inform the changes at the Cape Technical University. David’s failure hence to engage with the students on his favourite subject (the Romantic poets) places him out of tune with the demands of the social, educational and institutional change in post-Apartheid South Africa. His inability to comprehend the new setting that is on a different footing is not his alone but apparently that of his other “colleagues from the old days” (Coetzee 2000: 4). Lurie’s continued teaching of the Romantic poets (the Western poets of whom he claims to be their disciple) is an attempt of the continued dismemberment evident in denying students relevant education. Therefore, it may be argued that through their detachment, his students are in a de-linking quest from such knowledges. Wang and Tang (2013: 294) observe that “Western languages and Western poetry have lost their function to domesticate the natives.” Yet again the student’s indifference may mean that they are creatures of global consumer capitalism. Through their passiveness and indifference, the Romantic poets’ class at the Cape Technical University may be calling for decolonial

education. Their disengagement with Lurie is illustrated when they “look through [him] when he speaks [and] forget his name” (Coetzee 200: 4).

David Lurie's uninspiring lectures may arguably and correctly be attributed to his lack of respect for the modules he teaches. The narrator observes that, “Because he has no respect for the material he teaches, he makes no impression on his students” (Coetzee 2000: 4). Nevertheless, the students' indifference signals their rejection of Western cosmology. Wordsworthian and Byronic poetry as Western knowledges are proven not universal. In fact, Lurie's look-West educational solution brings into question among other things, the supposed producer and consumer of knowledge in *Disgrace*. By only presenting this Romantic poetry class (and perhaps leaving other classes that might be teaching African poetry), Coetzee seem to be foregrounding re-membering. In other words, by teaching poems of Western origin, Lurie consciously or subconsciously excludes Africa and regards the continent as empty and devoid of any poets of note. The student's refusal to regard the West (including Lurie's person) as the producer of knowledge is discernable in their silences during lessons. At one time, David Lurie finds himself with only a class of few students. That is, reading the students' silence may illuminate one possible decolonial interpretation. Therefore, delinking starts with thinking, then defiance. This signals the student's refusal to be brought closer to the Western ideals of knowledge.

In *Disgrace*, Coetzee exposes the colonial crossroads in South Africa's new political dispensation. The white and black subjects who re-member or fail to re-member are both critiqued in *Disgrace*. David Lurie is portrayed as having lost everything in post-Apartheid South Africa. He has lost his comfortable professorial position following Melanie's violation and the poor reception of his three scholarly monographs. None of his three books have been well received, “or has caused a stir or even a ripple” (Coetzee 2000: 4). Arguably, for failure to protect Lucy and keep his marriage, Lurie is also a failed father and a husband. At the end, David, like Soraya, both find themselves in a space where they do things they least enjoy. Lurie compares his profession to that of Soraya because “he doubts there is any irony to match it in hers” (Coetzee 2000: 5). This underlines the fact that while colonialism dismembered the colonised, who after

decolonisation still bear the scars of centuries; their re-membering has been portrayed as fragmenting and isolating the former coloniser.

Indeed, the re-membering of the former colonised appears to be fragmenting the former coloniser. Fragmentation of the former coloniser, in this case, should not be read as a form of dismemberment. It is not a shift in emphasis from dismembering and re-membering “blackness” to that of the colonists, but a highlight of accusations levelled against the decolonial approach that may be argued to be trapped in Manicheanism of coloniser/colonised, zone of being/zone of non-being binaries. This view of fragmentation also underlines the complexities of Coetzee’s protagonists who may live in both zones, or between the zones, or move from one zone to the other and then back again. With this view in mind, it is the disposition of knowledge and the re-conquering of space and place that Coetzee portrays as dismembering the beneficiaries of colonialism. That is, after colonialism, both zones are presented as failing to escape the “disgrace”. Post-Apartheid South Africa becomes a disgrace(land) to Lurie, because even prostitutes like Soraya re-member themselves and reject him. Finding himself in the colonial intersections (and as result of his resignation, resulting from his refusal to show contrition) Lurie travels to Salem to find refuge in Lucy’s farm.

Managerialism and “Whiteness” in the ex-colonies

Before travelling to Salem, David Lurie appears before the commission of inquiry at the Cape Technical University. The committee demands Lurie’s apology from the heart which he refuses to offer. During the committee’s deliberations Farodia Rassol says, “The statement should come from him, in his own words. Then we can see if it comes from his heart” (Coetzee 2000: 54). Lurie’s failure to issue an apology and repentance, at least before he goes to Salem, is one issue often juxtaposed with South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) headed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu (Wright in Poyner 2006). While the TRC stands accused of imposing a Christian confession, forgive and salvation model, the establishment of the hearing’s tribunal at the university is a managerialist way of containing conflicts. Such tribunal bodies often work within

agreed frameworks. The establishment of the commission of inquiry (a trend that has been given legitimate powers in the world today) signals that there are consultations on its depth and *modus operandi*. During the inquiry Professor Manas Mathabane of Religious Studies reads out terms of reference, "The body here gathered has no powers. All it can do is to make recommendations. Furthermore, you have the right to challenge its makeup" (Coetzee 2000: 47). That is, one of the committee's resolve is to obtain a confession and an apology from Lurie. The commission of inquiry's demand for Lurie's confession is like the TRC's demands for confession premised on Christian's beliefs of healing and forgiveness. Horn (2012: 117) observes that "[Lurie] does not subscribe to the TRC's premise that making the dark secrets of the past public is healing or therapeutic." Lurie, like many apartheid law enforcers who appeared before the TRC, arguably commits a criminal offence but the commission only demands his confession from the heart and repentance. Even though Melanie is not under-aged, Lurie commits a criminal offence because their sexual intercourse may be argued to be non-consensual. Even considered otherwise, his act violates article 3.1 of the university's Code of Conduct which "deals with victimisation or harassment of student by teachers" (Coetzee 2000: 39).

While the commission of inquiry may be viewed as an attempt at re-membering, its subjection of the confessor (Melanie) as the sacrament of reconciliation might be dismembering. By telling and re-telling her story, Melanie Isaacs is re-living her rape experiences. Consequently, Melanie divulges her rape experiences to her boyfriend Ryan, and later to her father and members of the tribunal. Therefore, the establishment of the inquiry as a managerial tool dictates further humiliation of the confessor due to loss of privacy. Parry (1991: 188) questions the whole notion of the commission similar to the TRC as that which creates "the atmosphere of euphoric Christian revivalism." Jacques Derrida in Poyner (2009: 151) observes that "when Desmond Tutu was named president of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, he Christianised the language uniquely destined to treat politically motivated crimes." Derrida identifies this as an enormous problem. It is a similar view expressed by Horn (2012: 123) who says, "Because South Africa is not a theocracy, many had problems with the religious underpinnings of the TRC, while the crimes confessed to, are political." Therefore,

confessing as a therapeutic healing is a view David Lurie fails to share which makes the whole concept of the commission of inquiry's objectives futile. Furthermore, the failure of the commission to get an apology from David's heart points, to some extent, to the failure of coloniality of knowledge in the ex-colonies. In fact, the state, as Derrida contends, has neither the right nor the power to forgive in the ethical economy of forgiveness (Poyner 2009: 43). Attridge (2000: 102 -3) correctly demonstrates:

Loss of privacy felt by Lurie when he is requested to confess to the committee is not merely a mapping of the transitional period within post-Apartheid South Africa, but looks beyond, to the global economy and the increasing influence of the United States.

Despite coloniality of knowledge, dismemberment and re-membering in *Disgrace* happen as a result of "whiteness" management (or what I will call coloniality of identity). In the blurb of Coetzee's novel, Justin Cartwright of the *Daily Telegraph* says at the end of his commentary, "Coetzee captures with appalling skill the white dilemma in South Africa." Perhaps in ways that were not intended, the "white dilemma" is what Arndt in Meyer (2009: 182) identifies as "whiteness" in *Disgrace*. "Whiteness" is characterised by what Lucy labels as Lurie's "unbending" nature that resists the virtues of compromise and institutional correction (Coetzee 2000: 66). "Whiteness" as disgrace is also portrayed as the disappearing of the distinctions between servant and master. Arndt in Meyer (2009: 182) locates "whiteness" as unseen and permissible crimes committed by white people. "Whiteness" then becomes an alienating mechanism that is a "social position closely related to guilt, privilege and power" (Meyer 2009: 184). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (n.d.) says that "The inventors of 'whiteness' as a badge of superiority also created 'blackness' as a sign of inferiority." Therefore, blackness is already a product of dismemberment. This becomes evident in *Disgrace* when Lurie retires in Lucy's farm. Even before then, David Lurie's identity has come into self-conflict as a result of his exclusion in the post-Apartheid South Africa including his inner conflict which results in his otiose knowledge in the wake of the institutional reforms. David is in emotional and moral paralysis which makes it apt to locate his disgrace in his inability to literally say the truth in the new nation (although he would argue that he refused to lie, and that is

why he had to resign). Even though he makes efforts to apologise personally to Melanie's parents for violating her daughter, he does not attain grace (until he obtains a measure of grace in his work with dogs). Grace, as Coetzee (1992: 392) notes, "is the condition in which truth can be told clearly without blindness." Therefore, Lurie's disgrace emanates from his failure to acknowledge the dynamics of the new government and his inability to "bend".

Coloniality of identity located in *Disgrace*, like Lurie's dilemma, dislocates the straight forward meaning that some readers may have held of the novel. The novel persistently asks who may be the rapist and the raped in the post-Apartheid South Africa. While Pollux and Lurie may be compared as rapists, Lurie's rape is mildly portrayed as statutory rape and it borders on being viewed as consensual sex. Such portrayal problematises Lurie's white privilege and the exhibition of coloniality of power. Lurie uses white privilege as a strategy to continue the sexploitation of women. However, masculine sexuality in the novel, including Lucy's rape by three black men, is used to commodify and disempower women. Rape in a sense becomes a dismembering colonial residue in the ex-colony as Coetzee portrays it. In other words, rape becomes the futile tool of imperialism for domination that is continued in post-Apartheid South Africa and adopted by the former victims of colonialism. Lucy's rape is indicative of rape mimicry in *Disgrace* where the former colonised appears to adopt the weapons of the coloniser. Comparatively, if one argues that Lurie's raping of Melanie is a personal act, it then follows that the rape committed by the three rapists against Lucy is personal too. Suffice however at this point to say that sexploitation incites the youth like Ryan to solve issues violently. After Ryan learns of Lurie's affair with Melanie, Lurie's car is "vandalised. The tyres [of his car] are deflated, glue is injected into door locks, newspaper pasted over the windscreen, the paintwork is scratched" (Coetzee 2000: 31).

The issue of explicit violence in *Disgrace* is one embedded with the location of Salem. Salem is an actual border town in the Eastern Cape in South Africa. As mentioned before and in relation to *Disgrace*, Cornwell (2003) explores much of Salem's history, land polices and violence. In Lucy's farm, conflict appears to be triggered, among many factors, by land and labour exploitation. Writing of Salem, Cornwell (2003:51) posits that

“the fall from peasant husbandry into agricultural capitalism began in 1939,” when the erfholders of Salem petitioned to have rights to own the land and keep (what they called) “strangers” and their disease-ridden cattle at a distances. The “strangers” were their co-habitats or neighbours: the Xhosas or the black inhabitants of Salem. Cornwell (2003: 52) notes that following the success of the white settler’s petition, “part time labourers and tenant farmers like Petrus in *Disgrace*, [...] were expelled from the land or obliged either to become wholly dependent wage labourers on the consolidated farms or to seek work in Grahamstown or elsewhere.”

A document submitted by six Salem community leaders at the Legal Resource Centre in Grahamstown reads in part:

The land that [black residents] used was later sold to white farmers without their consent and they were forced to offer those farmers [their] labour for survival ... Those who offered resistance were intimidated and their lives threatened. (Cornwell 2003: 52).

Therefore, land dispossession (as a form of coloniality) in the ex-colony continues to exploit labour as an economic vehicle for production. However, Lucy appears to reject the use of the word “farm” and cautions David against using the word (Coetzee: 2000: 200). She prefers to call it a smallholding or just a piece of land. Her refusal to call it a farm may be misread as way of portraying South Africa as a country of vast lands where other people may own vast acres as compared to hers. However, Lucy’s use of land appears to be for subsistence farming purposes, unconcerned with economies of scale or producing for profit.

However, it is in the way how the farm worker like Petrus are described that one reads them as human resources in Coetzee’s fiction. Petrus, who helps Lucy on her piece of land is a farm labourer who is becoming a “co-proprietor” who is, “quite a fellow [... and] has his head screwed on right” (Coetzee 2000: 62 and 64). Petrus’s description epitomises how characters like Lucy create their black heroes. Mazisi Kunene in Cesaire (1969: 8) notices that “a black-man is [...] not a man in the white-man’s eyes, but a type. As a type he can either be a good nigger [who] fulfils the role that the white

authority has assigned for him, or else he can be an incarnation of evil.” Petrus seems to be portrayed as a dynamic character transforming from being a good farm labourer to being a land-grabber of Lucy’s farm. Whichever way one reads Petrus, his humorous description of himself as a “dog-man [and] a gardener” is an act of historical re-membering (Coetzee 2000: 64). I return to this argument in the last sub-heading of this chapter.

In the meantime, we read Petrus (like Soraya) as an unskilled or semi-skilled labourer “who sells labour under contract, unwritten contract” (Coetzee 2000: 117). This explains how African people’s lives remain economically untransformed (however, Petrus seems to transform his life by taking farm ownership during the course of the novel). The pith of the argument, however, is that the unwritten contract which is at the heart of labour exploitation both in *Disgrace* and in most ex-colonies like South Africa, pricks labour issues which are festering colonial wounds. In his first encounter with Petrus, Lurie presents him as a “propertyless” wage labourer who is economically and intellectually dismembered. Giddens (1990: 55) identifies the axis of capitalism as “centred upon the relations between private ownership of capital and propertyless wage labourers.” Petrus and his wife (later wives) live in the “old stable” which Lucy describes as “quite comfortable” (Coetzee 2000: 64). Despite Petrus living in what can be called squalid dwellings, his labour is valuable. Therefore, labour becomes an efficient tool of exploitation for capitalist ends. The invisible labour of Petrus becomes the sole beacon for Lucy and Lurie’s survival, ironically while he lives in unpleasant conditions. In an introduction to Aime Cesaire’s (1969: 7) *Return to My Native Land*, Mazisi Kunene observes that “the colonising whites set out not to exploit the blacks economically, but also to reshape their reality so that they become willing slaves and willing servants.” Reading between the lines, Petrus becomes a servant who aspires to reclaim what he believes is his inheritance. He does what is required to achieve economic independence and have more than sufficient means to support his family. Ironically, Lucy does not try to keep Petrus back but, if anything, supports his attempts to empower himself.

Petrus and Lurie, having been socialised in the Apartheid South Africa prove that colonialism has far reaching effects in shaping people’s lives, values and their attitudes.

Petrus is a product of the Bantu Education Act of 1955 which was designed to limit the education provided to black South Africans, thereby limiting their participation in the economy to menial labour. Commey (2012: 14) says, "Bantu education created inferior and badly resourced education system with a curriculum that taught blacks to be servants destined to minister to the needs of the white master." Petrus's employment as a gardener may highlight the inadequacy of the Bantu education system to prepare its recipients to contribute meaningfully to the economy. In contemporary South Africa semi-skilled or unskilled employment is argued to be a way of curbing high unemployment rate. In 2018, a billionaire business woman, Magda Wierzycka²², a much-respected Polish born but South Africa based Chief Executive Officer of the Sygnia group tweeted "I often get asked, how can I help South Africa? Our biggest challenge is job creation. A thought: let every household employ just one more cleaning lady or a gardener. Just one. I know it is a financial sacrifice." While there could be so many ways of reading her proposed solution to the high unemployment rate, one way is to note her endeavour to create a country of servants; of unskilled and semi-skilled labourers like Petrus. This becomes part of colonial crossroads that position modernity or any progress in *Disgrace* as a problem. Therefore, Lucy's goodwill to co-share the farm may have unintended consequences but seems to be the only solution.

In *Disgrace* neo-liberalism becomes an epithet of managerialism epitomised by a belief that the law enforcement ought to be minimal, and as a result is left to its citizens. Lurie's failure to disclose Lucy's rape at the police station may be read as influenced by a neo-liberal notion that individuals are responsible for the consequences of the decisions they freely make. Lucy asks David to tell only his story with the assurance that she will also tell what happened to her (Coetzee 2000: 99). Ironically, Lucy refuses to tell her story even after David's insistence: "You don't know what happened" (Coetzee 2000: 134). Lucy's silence further defies the notion of disclosure as a form of therapeutic healing. Her healing, as she sees it, can only be attained through the sharing of the land. Therefore, she views her rape (which is portrayed as constituting

²² Magda Wierzycka's 17 March 2018 twitter message appeared in The Citizen on 18 March 2018.

uncontrolled crime) as a form of reparation. She remarks to David, "They see me as owing something. 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" (Coetzee 2000: 156). Lucy re-members because she has chosen to reject white hegemony and consumer capitalism to live on the land in relative poverty. Unlike the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Lucy remembers to re-member that, one way or the other, she inherited or benefitted from colonial system. She, hence, acknowledges that it is the blacks like Petrus who are the historical owners of the land. Her way of thinking disrupts the colonial hegemony by "bending" in order to allow the process of healing and reparation to take place. Her behaviour also raises the question of who has to pay reparation, or does one suffer for crimes which she herself did not commit personally. However, her stance to "bend" is what Petrus sees as forward looking (Coetzee 2000: 136).

Neo-liberal policies become one of the historical legacies of dismemberment in *Disgrace*. The failure of "farm" management can be attributed to the state's neo-liberal policies. Neo-liberal policies dictate that the state abstains itself from assisting farmers and that the market must regulate itself. David Lurie is aware of free trade, and of South Africa that is characterised by a political arrangement of private property rights, and free market. Lucy too understands that her farm is a bone of contention in the post-Apartheid South Africa. While she lawfully owns the farm, she understands the futility of hanging on to it. In Lucy, Coetzee presents a character who has remembered history. She remembers that even the money she used (or that was used) to buy the farm is irrelevant to the political atmosphere pervading the post-Apartheid South Africa. In terms of trade, "money does not exist since it is defined as credit and debt" (Giddens 1990: 24). Credit and debt in *Disgrace* becomes an equivalence of money that needs to be settled, where colonial sins have to be paid in full. Therefore, the land that Lucy possesses becomes a topical issue.

Re-membering in *Disgrace*

In 2001 six Salem community representatives filed a claim under *Restitution of Land Rights Act of 1994*, one of their documents concludes:

We believe that we were illegally disposed of land and all our rights to it and as such we are entitled to a restitution of our rights to this land. (Cornwell 2003: 52-3).

To this end, Salem remains a land of contestation. In *Disgrace* Salem is portrayed as a land of violence and disgrace (aided by the fact that Salem is positioned on a border). Smit-Marais and Wenzel (2006: 26) note that the Eastern Cape is at the border and that the “border has been a prominent site of historical conflict between white colonist and the indigenous black population.” Petrus comments to Lurie that the farm can be “dangerous” (Coetzee 2000: 64). Lucy presumes again that her armed neighbour Ettinger will be killed soon (Coetzee 2000: 204). Therefore, Salem as a dismembered land at the border becomes part of antagonism. Following the dispossession of the land alluded to by the six community leaders’ documents, it proves to be true, as Olaudah Equiano in *Equiano's Travels* observes, that “when you make men slaves you deprive them of half their virtue, you set them, in your conduct, an example of fraud, rapine and cruelty and compel them to live with you in a state of war” (Equiano in Memmi 1974: 27). It is the coloniser’s love of land that is at the centre of dismemberment in *Disgrace*. In his Jerusalem prize acceptance speech in 1987, Coetzee (1992: 97) said of apartheid South Africa:

At the heart of the unfreedom of the hereditary masters of South Africa is a failure of love. To be blunt: their love is not enough today and has not been enough since they arrived on the continent; furthermore, their talk, their excessive talk, about how they love South Africa has consistently been directed towards land, that is, towards what is least likely to respond to love: mountains and deserts, birds and animals and flowers.

Coetzee deals with the colonists’ greed of land that robs them of their humanity and makes them behave inhumanely – which lead them to lives without love. Therefore, it is

a necessity to trace the colonists' land possession as foundational dismemberment in South Africa, and in *Disgrace* since this dispossession of land is inextricably linked to the events in Salem.

Coetzee portrays South Africa as a country entangled in the historical dismemberment that resulted from colonial European settlement. Therefore, instances of re-membering through violence in Lucy's farm centre on the issues of land and these demand historical references. The European settlement in South Africa began in 1652 with the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck. In 1655 van Riebeeck proclaimed the land in the Cape of Good Hope property of the VOC - the Dutch East India Company, of which he was a servant. This establishment meant the displacement of the Khoi and the San who already lived there. The Dutch and later British (and German) settlements expanded: many battles and skirmishes over the land ensued between the settlers and the blacks all over South Africa. This culminated in the gun wars waged by Britain in the late nineteenth century. After Milner's reconstruction of South Africa following the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902), South Africa became a self-ruling Union (31 April 1910) under white rule. Many regulations were passed to protect land in the hands of settlers. However, the expansion of the European settlement led to the proclamation of the Native Land Act or what was commonly referred to as the *Black Land Act* in 1913.

Under the *Black Land Act*, the white South African government confiscated any land they desired and re-settled blacks to designated areas which were often less fertile and unproductive. In 1913, about ninety percent of the land was owned by about ten percent of the population. According to Adams et al (1999: 18) "the *Native Land Act* [also known as the *Black land Act*] segregated Africans and Europeans on a territorial basis by designing about 8% of the country's farm land as reserves which become the only areas that could legally be farmed by blacks." To protect the settler's land (and white people), the government came up with measures to regulate and track the movement of African people within South Africa. This practice culminated in the white-ruled South Africa's Nationalist Party legitimisation and policing of social relations between white and black people in 1948. That is, the official proclamation of Apartheid (an Afrikaans word for "apartness") signalled the legitimisation of racial segregation and sought to govern

social relations and control the politics, as well economically discriminate the blacks from participating in the main stream economy. Through the regulation of segregation policies like the pass system, blacks were compelled to obtain permission to travel even within the country. In most instances, blacks who did not have passes were forcibly removed from white areas and could face imprisonment. This practice was further reinforced in 1950 when the government instituted the *Group Areas Act*.

Indeed, it is clear that one of the purposes of racial discrimination was the settler's "love" for the African people's land (for farming and mining). It was, more significantly, about cheap African labour, especially on the mines, the backbone of the South African economy. Therefore, racial discrimination was an ideological superstructure justifying exploitation at the level of the economic base, which included owning the land. In the post-apartheid South Africa in *Disgrace*, like in the contemporary South Africa, this history of land dispossession is thematised, especially with reference to Lucy's farm. Therefore, Petrus is the symbol of black people's re-membering of historical facts in Coetzee's novel.

Lucy's act of giving away her land to Petrus may well be read as gender dismemberment because even her continued stay on the farm comes with conditions to become Petrus's wife. Her land is taken unconditionally without compensation and Lucy accepts this as legitimate. In South Africa today, land debates often centre on some aspects of the South African constitution which were drafted as political compromise. Therefore, in his repossession of Lucy's land Petrus seems to question the legitimacy of the South African constitution which came into existence as a political settlement. Petrus and Lucy are both aware that before 1996, most of the land was taken not following any constitutional means. He does not wait for the land to be returned through the constitutional frameworks. Ina Kerner in Broeck and Junker (2014: 146) notes Fanon's view on aggression as attributed to the effect of racist experiences. The frustrations of black servant figures (as witnessed in Petrus's land grab) signify their economic dismemberment which emanates from colonialism. Inferably, the black servant figures like Petrus may have a feeling that their government is not dealing with

South Africa's contemporary and societal issues. Memmi (1974: 136) writes of citizens whose voices are not heard and who feel that they may not "obtain from their elected representatives that for which they were sent to parliament." He expands that such citizens who feel angry may as well feel guilty of not revolting (Memmi 1974). That is, Petrus's land grab is a catching up logic to be the land benefactor as a result of his anger. It may be read as a revolt to the government's laws or methods of maintaining an unequal society. In a recent land debate at the University of South Africa, Tshepo Lephakga (2018, April) said, "The Europeans invaded Azania. Blacks grabbed the empty hole in a doughnut while whites got the dough. This has always been a black man's country." Therefore, Petrus's land grab is the re-possession of the land premised on the principles of re-membering and reclaiming of the land. By re-possessing Lucy's farm, Petrus can be seen to reject being settled in or compensated with infertile land.

The land has been at the heart of armed struggle against colonialism. According to De Villiers in Hunter (2004: 47) it was the Kenya's Mau Mau uprising where decolonisation struggle was first fought as a land restitution issue. In fact, a wing of the Mau Mau was called the Land and Freedom Army. The confiscation of land owing to the colonist settlement means that its inhabitants are violated. This brings the rape metaphor entrenched in the novel to the fore. While the rape metaphor refers more to the extraction industries taking raw resources from Africa to process in European factories, the confiscation of land, metaphorically speaking, is an act of rape. In other words, the idea of a black man being portrayed as a rapist is questioned in *Disgrace* despite Lurie's views on Petrus and Pollux. If anything, Lurie fails to realise despite his disgrace that rape is no longer a crime of a black man alone. In essence, the black man's rape of someone else mirrors that of a white man. Therefore, Lurie's attempts to depict Petrus and Pollux as rapists who violated her daughter (and not see the grossness of his against Melanie) should be read as colonial thinking of portraying a black man as a raping beast of white women. Smith-Marais and Wenzel (2006: 25-6) note that "the colonial mindset categorised black male sexuality and desire as deviant, uncontrolled and threatening, especially when directed at white women." Maldonado-Torres (2007: 255) notes the colonial depiction of black men "as aggressive sexual beast who desires

to rape women particularly white.” This goes in tandem with Lurie’s description of Pollux who has “piggish eyes” and is a “jackal boy and a swine” (Coetzee 2000: 202).

Lurie’s observation of bestial features in Pollux underlines the excessive violence often stereotypically attributed to a black man. As far as we know, Pollux is not ugly, but is branded as a heap of prejudice to exemplify some of the Western concepts of a black man. That is, Petrus has been portrayed, as (Mbembe 2017: 73) notes of the black man, as a “polygamist whose temperament and misery predispose him of vice, indolence, luxury and dishonesty.” Elsewhere, Lurie violently depicts the rape act as he says, “The man who raped [Lucy], the leader of the gang was like [...] a blade cutting the wind” (Coetzee 2000: 171). Even though Lurie is talking about a specific black man who raped Lucy, the black man here is seen as a rapist as Lucy remarks “I think they have done it before” (Coetzee 2000: 158). Not only are the black men depicted as violent rapists but black women are depicted as happy recipients of violence, specifically where a white male is the perpetrator. During her last encounter with Lurie, Melanie, is portrayed as “quick and greedy for experience” (Coetzee 2000: 29). That is, from Lurie's point of view, black women are seen as excessively erotic and exotic.

Coetzee employs his story telling talents to tell of Lucy’s rape, which we happen to read of it in its absence. Lucy’s rape scene dominates the better half of the novel (however, leaving out the details of the actual scene). By leaving out Lucy’s rape scene but having revealed that of Melanie’s encounters with Lurie, Coetzee seems to be the advocate of certain silences, which after all encourages critical perspectives. In reading Coetzee’s fiction, the impasse is always on what to focus more on, his writing style, his representation of characters or his portrayal of scenes or the lack of. However, it is tempting exploring the portrayal of Lurie in relation to women and servant figures. He views Melanie and Soraya as readily available to his sexual desires but questions the motives and thinking of Petrus after Lucy’s rape (and I must add that it is merely Lurie's prejudiced view that Petrus orchestrated the rape). In other words, his views are a way of discrediting the black men. Lurie views a black man through what Mbembe (2017: 28) calls the “identity of judgment.” That is, the black man is depicted as the shadow of

scandal. By making Lurie his narrative focaliser, Coetzee seems to be encouraging critical perspectives on the portrayal of a black man – who is portrayed as closed, unthinking or lacking consciousness. Besides Mathabane, who leads a powerless commission of inquiry that can only make recommendations, there seems to be dearth of ethical and moral black characters who can take significant roles of leadership in *Disgrace* or at least characters who readers can think through.

However, through his narrative strategy of using copious techniques in telling stories, Coetzee may be questioning the very model of the depiction of black characters in post-Apartheid South African novel. That is, Coetzee's problematisation of black characters is a way of re-membering through writing. Lurie's rape is tied to the reparation of the land and the colonists' historical crimes. However, it is very problematic to think that women like Lucy should be sacrificed to atone for the sins of the colonial ancestors. Glen in Horn (2012: 199) posits that her rape "seems to be a way of bringing recalcitrant whites to their senses, to making their peace with the new black power in the land." Such justifications (to some extent) of Lucy's rape, seemingly, hints on revenge which a decolonial approach is not all about. Bearing in mind what Lurie thinks of Petrus, Petrus, as the product of Apartheid, sets to delink by resorting to the same means of violence that oppressed or dismembered him. Mbembe (2017: 37) contends that, "if there is one thing that haunts modernity from beginning to end, it is the possibility of [...] the revolt of the slaves." Coetzee hence portrays violence as an equalising factor, metaphorically depicted as a demand for new forms of cosmopolitanism that permits egalitarianism on the land. Equality is that which makes Petrus indefinable. He is no longer a servant figure, and like Lurie observes, "it is hard to say what Petrus is, strictly speaking" (Coetzee 2000: 116).

Through the process of re-membering Petrus has found his voice and identity and rejects the zone of non-being. He declares, "I am not anymore a dog man" (Coetzee 2000: 129). Petrus's participation in the declaration of identity is an affirmation "of himself that he is that which cannot be captured or controlled" (Mbembe 2017: 28). Petrus does not join the zone of the *humanitas* either because by taking Lucy to be his

third wife, he practices a culture foreign to Lurie. The delinking of the servant figures is implicit in their rejection of the anthropos zone and neither do they join the humanitas zone. Mignolo (2013: 135) says of delinking, "So once you realise that your inferiority is a fiction created to dominate you, [...] then you delink. Delinking means that you do not accept the options that are available to you." Nevertheless, Coetzee portrays cultural dismemberment that often happens though deals signed as a compromised settlement. Therefore, rape followed by the marriage "deal" is a way of positioning the colonised people who act knowing that they have been described as less than human, and that they will never belong to the zone of humanitas.

Forms of re-membering in *Disgrace* are also portrayed in language usage. David Lurie as a communications lecturer questions Petrus's use of English language. While Lurie questions Petrus's intellect and humanity, he finds out that Petrus has domesticated the English language without any effort to comply with grammar rules. While it may be argued that his use of language reveals his level of education, Petrus's use of English language may be non-conformity and defiance of coloniality in the post-Apartheid South Africa. Therefore, Petrus's manipulation of English language, as Lurie observes to his disgrace, has rendered language meaningless. David Lurie remarks:

Stretches of English code whole sentences long have thickened, lost their articulation, their articulateness, their articulatedness. Like a dinosaur expiring and setting in the mud, the language has stiffened" (Coetzee 2000: 117).

While Lurie's views points to the turning of tables on the master, it also proves that the language of the coloniser has ceased to be universal. While Lurie anticipates hearing Petrus's story, he does not want hearing it in English because, he has realised, "English is an unfit medium for the truth of South Africa" (Coetzee 2000: 117). Therefore, the servant figures no longer fit any description because they "are very unlike African" (Coetzee 2000: 151). Wang and Tang (2013) observe that Lurie's disgrace is a result of being incorrectly mimicked by black people like Petrus. A case in point is when one reads Petrus's transformation from a farm labourer or a "dog-man" to his own master

(or, if one likes, Lucy's master). However, it is not quite the mimic as Wang and Tang (2013) believe, Petrus as a new man, the one who is no longer the "dog-man" is his own man (imperfect as he may be read). He becomes a self-styled farm-owner while Lurie becomes a "dog-man". However, both Petrus and Lurie seem to have cared for the "dogs" – a powerful image in *Disgrace* which calls for our attention.

In his narrative of dogs, Coetzee appears to "put forward the potential for humans to deconstruct their identities in response to the address of dogs" (Woodward 2008: 120). Indeed, it appears that one's humanity depends on the realisation that non-humans like dogs needs our caring, after all, as Ndebele (2006) notes, dogs are piteous than humans. Lucy views the killing of the dogs on her farm as a "massacre", a word associated with human genocide (Coetzee 2000: 110). In his response to the then African National Congress Youth League spokesperson Zizi Kodwa who had called for the "dogs to be hit very hard until their owners and handlers come out into the open", (and in which his name appears), Ndebele (2006) imagines a dog that has been hounded and beaten to death as having been "executed." In both instances, the images of a dead dog (a non-human) is metaphorically associated with atrocious deaths of human beings. It follows that even Lurie's way of caring for the dogs at the Animal Welfare Clinic by putting them to "rest" simply because they are too many become problematised in the novel. It may be argued that Lurie's killing of the dogs, even out of "love" constitutes violence. Ndebele (2006) observes that the "dog is a pervasive metaphor habitually used to justify righteous brutality." The reader will recall Lurie's imagination of Lucy's rape when he thinks of the rapists saying to her, "*Call your dogs! [...] Go on, call your dogs! No dogs? Then let us show you dogs!*" (Coetzee 2000: 160).

However, the image of the violent dog that Lurie imagines, and that Kodwa conjures appears contrary to the pet dogs and all other dogs the reader encounters in *Disgrace*. Metaphorically, if Lucy keeps the dogs again after the "massacre", and if Petrus was a "dog-man" once, and Lurie, by his own admission, has become a "dog-man, a dog undertaker, a dog psychopomp; a harijan" (Coetzee 2000: 146), then it is essential for all humans to associate with dogs or non-humans as it were and not despise them.

Ndebele (2006) poses a very pertinent question, "Considering that so many of us own dogs, which depend on us, why do we continue to own what we seem to despise so much?" In his narrative of dogs and the association it appears to create with the dawn of the new dispensation, Coetzee seems to be suggesting that South Africa should make a new start, with "nothing" for the nation's prosperity. Coetzee appears to be proposing for a "dog-country" that "[...] ought to start at the ground level, with nothing [...] like a dog" (Coetzee 2000: 205). In fact, Ndebele (2006) envisions that "the dog, so long denigrated, so long a symbol of abuse, should become a national symbol for the humanity of South Africans." People's humanity cannot only be deduced in the caring of living dogs, but even dead dogs. Lurie has taken care of the dogs even after they have died (Coetzee 2000: 91-2). His care goes further to show that he is "concerned about the honour of the bodies (and souls) of the dead dogs" (Woodward 2008: 138). In light of Kodwa, of *Disgrace's* three rapists and Lurie, and perhaps all South Africans:

Perhaps if we stop brutalising the dog, if we stop brutalising ourselves whenever we invoke the cruel image of the dog we have created, we may recover our own humanity, which we lost along the way of our history [...] let us now honour the dog. (Ndebele 2006).

In decolonially reading the metaphor of dogs, Coetzee may be calling for the end or the "fall" of "whiteness". In the beginning of the novel, "Lurie does not regard non-human animals with compassion, but colonises them, rather like the women he objectifies" (Woodward 2008: 129). Therefore, through Lurie's character, Coetzee has portrayed "whiteness" as an invention designed to dismember through the maintenance of categories where the anthropoi are seen as non-human or as animals. For "whiteness" to "fall" George Ciccariello-Maher²³ calls for "white genocide". Gatsheni-Ndlovu (n.d.)

²³ In 2016, George Ciccariello-Maher, a Drexel University professor tweeted that his Christmas wish was for a "white genocide". His tweet degenerated into a media circus within social media and his work place. The uproar was caused by the misreading of "white genocide". It took a San Diego State University scholar, Robert Hernandez to calm the storm and enlighten the world for a need of "white genocide".

views “white genocide” as a metaphor highlighting a need to transcend the invented identities of “whiteness” and “blackness”. Hernandez (2016: 1) says of white genocide:

White genocide would not only be good, it is necessary and even unavoidable, that is, if we are interested in the survival of the planet, humanity, and all life forms - though to be clear the phrase “white genocide” is a bit of a misnomer. Perhaps most accurate would be the concept of collective mass “white” ontological suicide or more simply put: the end of white supremacy. [...] ‘White genocide’ has little to do with violence or physical death of actual living ‘white people’.

The continued embrace of “white” and “black” identities is the maintenance of the abyssal line that seeks to push others to the non-human zone. In maintaining the “white” and “black” terms, racialisation becomes part of hierarchisation in the social strata. In *Disgrace* and South Africa at large, racialisation forms a prerequisite for the African people’s economic and educational exclusion among other exclusions. It may be argued that David Lurie’s participating in the extermination and incineration of dogs is a process of cleansing himself of his guilt (thus undergoing an ontological suicide). However, I have demonstrated that the killing of dogs is problematic on so many levels. Cleansing as ontological suicide also relates to Pollux’s promise to Lurie and Lucy that “we will kill you all!” (Coetzee 2000: 201). In a way, Pollux refers to the killing of “whiteness” in post-Apartheid South Africa. Therefore, the killing of dogs as a cleansing act reminds readers of a period of melancholia in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide that was characterised by the killing of all the dogs. During the genocide, dogs were seen feeding on Tutsi’s corpses. After the genocide, dogs had to be slaughtered accused of dishonour. Lurie’s killing of dogs, like Rwanda’s, earmarks a period of mourning for all the crimes he committed. In a sense David Lurie’s mourning is his instance of becoming animal (by becoming animal as discussed, one attains honour). Therefore, Lurie’s embrace of the animals that he sits with like “cats [...] and dogs: the old, and the blind, the halt, the crippled, the maimed, but also the young, the sound [...in a] desolate yard in Africa” is indicative of the death of whiteness in *Disgrace* (Coetzee 2000: 218).

Re-membering in *Disgrace* is a gradual decolonial process that is presented as indefinite. It took Lurie a while to undergo cleansing and mourning through taking care of the dogs. By taking care of the dogs, Lurie signals the abandonment of his unbending nature. At the end, he is prepared to raise Lucy's child of mixed race. David Lurie further stops playing Western lush orchestrations but instead experiments with the banjo – an African musical instrument which sees Driepoot respond to the sound with excitement (Coetzee 2000: 64 and 184). This is a signal that Lurie has lost his confidence in the Western tradition. Lucy too is prepared to live under Petrus's protection. Lucy's silence after her rape ordeal signals a colonial crossroads in *Disgrace*, perhaps to her, a new start. "Whiteness" has translated into the dilemma of white people in the new political dispensation. Lucy believes that she can overcome her "whiteness" by wearing a blackened mask indicated by her consent to marry Petrus, giving up her status as a "neighbour" in exchange for his protection. Furthermore, her decision to marry someone who she believes orchestrated her rape and later on bear the child of a rapist is rather her option to live as a martyr. She is prepared to start with nothing, like a dog (Coetzee 2000: 205-8). Her view that she is a "dead person", figuratively heralds the death of "whiteness" necessary for a possible rainbow nation. To build a rainbow nation and a world that we share, we must restore the humanity of those who have been historically subjected to processes of abstraction and objectification.

6. Conclusion

J.M. Coetzee's Writings, Dismembering and Re-membering as literary decolonial imaginations

Youth of Africa! Youth of Madagascar! Youth of the West Indies! We must, all of us together, dig the grave in which colonialism will finally be entombed!

Frantz Fanon 1964: 119)

For Europe, for ourselves, and for humanity, comrades, we must turn over a new leaf, we must work out new concepts, and try to set afoot a new man.

Frantz Fanon (1963: 316).

The relevance of literature. The relevance of art. The relevance of culture. What literature, what art, what culture, what values? For whom, for what?

Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986: 106).

In summation, this study is a decolonial reading of John Maxwell Coetzee's fiction through the use of Ngugi wa Thiongos' concepts of dismembering and re-membering.

In my decolonial reading of Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Foe* and *Disgrace* I have established the link between dismembering and Eurocentric modernity. In his portrayal of dismembering, Coetzee seems to foreground the effects of colonialism and colonality as principal vehicles of dismembering the colonised anthropoi. It has been demonstrated that modernity, as an expression of colonality, focuses on human labour, land and knowledge systems for capitalistic ends. That is, colonality as an imperial project is a colonist profiteering scheme that uses the matrices of power for its continuity. I have argued that, in Coetzee's novels, dismemberment includes questioning the "being" of the colonised people. That is, the hierarchisation of humans into either civilised or uncivilised zones gives birth to distinct forms of identification by one group from another.

However, through the decolonial reading of characters like the Magistrate, Lurie, Susan Barton and Lucy, one fails to account for the dismemberment of some characters who belong to or are descendents of the Empire. In a way, my dissertation has privileged a

view that Coetzee appears to critique or deconstruct coloniality on the colonised anthropos. In instances where Coetzee appeared to criticise coloniality from the inside, rather than focusing much on the effects of coloniality, the external critique of a decolonial approach seem insufficient. However, in order to effect this critique, I have explored protagonists like the Magistrate, Barton and Lurie as they are portrayed as moving from a position of relative privilege in the colonial structures to a position approximating that of the colonised victims. It is through this movement that Coetzee attempts to enter the experience of the colonised through an act of the empathic and “sympathetic imagination” (a term which Elizabeth Costello does use in *Coetzee's* [1999] *The Lives of Animals*). Therefore, grouping these characters as they are presented as colonists proper is what Pappas (n.d.) identifies as the limitations and dangers of decoloniality. By paying close attention to the silent or silenced characters, I have suggested that re-membering is the key to healing or empowering the colonised. Through their resistance, which sometimes is implicit in their silences, the voiceless figures seem to dismantle the fiction that certain human beings are superior to others.

Throughout my reading of Coetzee's fiction, a plethora of problems sprouts from Coetzee's way of presenting characters and the society. Coetzee seems to present his characters through his empathic imagination, like the Magistrate in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Lurie in *Disgrace*, Susan Barton in *Foe* and even Dostoevsky in *The Master of Petersburg*. These characters are presented as psychologically troubled and also affected by the power structures within their fictive societies. Such characters appear to live much in their heads rather than in the physical world and are affected by power relations in the novel. Therefore, one never fails to note, especially in *Disgrace*, what possibly could be the awakening of black servant characters. Petrus is gradually occupying Lucy's farm, yet Lucy thinks negotiation and amicable settlement is possible. Lucy's rape, or the theft of Lurie's car may explain the complicity of law enforcers that reveal disinterest in pursuing justice, acts which may be read as Manichean. That is, one limitation that may be a result of a decolonial interpretation and approach could be a reversal of the racial polarisation of good and evil. Yet again in *Disgrace*, there is a narrative of a nation breeding children of rape since Lucy is made pregnant by her

violators. That is, on the contrary to an ideal decolonial writing, Coetzee seems to present violence that is also directed to white people after the new political dispensation in South Africa.

Such events, if read decolonially, may present a simplistic view that the Empire is a representative of all evil, which is an over simplified position that ignores the dismemberment which often happened even between and within the African people. If anything, it is a view challenged by Coetzee in *Foe* in his portrayal of Friday. The mysterious discovery of Friday on the island is what Cruso says is a result of Friday's dislocation due to his cannibal tribesmen. I have argued that in *Foe*, Cruso is inventing Africa and its people just like Columbus' idea of African people. In an essay entitled *Columbus and the Cannibals*, Peter Hulme in Ashcroft et al (2007: 365 – 6) reads Columbus's 1492 journal of his discovery of cannibals in Africa and people who had one eye in their foreheads. However, simple formulas of Europe-evil/Africa-good binaries are not what Coetzee portrays in his fiction. Through his complex use of language, Coetzee avoids such simplistic binaries by creating plurality of text or multiplicity of stories (a concept which borders much on postmodernism). If anything, Coetzee illustrates that language itself is complex to signify any specific meaning with certainty. Therefore, it shall be noted through the disparities of most of Coetzee's characters that thematic aspects of individual consciousness are created (and not necessarily an external critique of coloniality as it were). Therefore, through Coetzee's depiction of his protagonists who are described as going through intense self-questioning, Coetzee forces the readers to engage in self-interrogation too. In this way Coetzee and his characters subvert dominant (imperialistic) discourses. For example, Fyodor Dostoevsky in *The Master of Petersburg*, tries to escape the dilemma of being versus non-being by creating his own character within a character, fiction within another fiction through which he can communicate and calls this character Stavrogin. Fyodor Dostoevsky is trapped firstly by the police who confiscate his travel documents and secondly by the spirit of his step son Pavel. This idea of imprisonment extends to most of Coetzee's characters as well where there is urgency of voice; yet the voice that echoes this urgency is voiceless.

In order to understand the novels, I have argued that J. M. Coetzee finds himself in a precarious position as an author where he can either be accused of not speaking for or speaking for the servant figures. I have shown that this is Coetzee's deliberate position to maximise the representation of dismembering pillars of coloniality. Coetzee does this by giving the reader some role in the interpretation of his dialogic novels. In other words, (to use Dostoevsky's words to Maximov) readers like Maximov should read properly. He says, "reading is giving yourself up, not holding yourself at a distance and jeering" (Coetzee 1994:47). That is, the act of reading Coetzee's fiction translates to interpretation which requires thinking oneself into multiple subject positions. Poyner (2009: 142) argues that Coetzee uses polyphony which allows him to "withdraw from identifying, with particular characters, to conceal their own point of view behind multiple consciousness and ironic voices, whilst it undermines any stable or coherent meanings."

Arguably, the concealment of character's points of views is Coetzee's conscious act of re-membering through writing. While Coetzee's servant figures may be considered dispensable within Coetzee's fictional world (as "mere" servants without names or states), they are indispensable to his literary project, since they are the loose threads that enable the colonial tapestry to be unraveled. Therefore, any reading of J. M. Coetzee's fiction should not be monolithic but should consider the multiplicity of stories and the plurality of truths even on the narrative level. For example, *Disgrace* is set in post-Apartheid South Africa. Most of the problems in the novel, if read decolonially that is, may be attributed to the colonial period, as it is often prevalent even today (understandably so, as a result of the legacies of colonialism). However, much still has to be asked of the decolonial aspirations of democratic South Africa. In fact, Coetzee portrays decolonial failure imminent in the post-Apartheid South Africa which leads to people as young as Pollux committing crimes. Davidson's (1992: 10) words apply here:

We have to be concerned here with nationalism which produced nation-states of newly independent Africa after the colonial period: with the nationalism that

became nation-statism. This nation-statism looked like a liberation, and really began as one. But it did not continue as a liberation. In practice, it was not a restoration of Africa to Africa's own history, but the onset of a new period of indirect subjection to the history of Europe. [...]. Liberation thus produced its own denial. Liberation led to alienation.

I have further contested in this dissertation the view that the histories of Coetzee's characters are either in the zone of being or in the zone of non-being. In fact, the portrayed reality see Coetzee's protagonists living in both zones, between the zones and or moving from one zone to the other. In other words, my reading of the novels is as if the histories of characters in each zone are the same. In particular, I have stressed the dismemberment of the servant figures in the zone of non-being as though their histories are homogenous. The barbarian girl, Friday and Petrus do not at all undergo the same dismembering experiences by the same coloniser. If one follows the order of these servant figures, it shall be noted that Coetzee shows a process of increasing individualisation, from a mere description (barbarian girl), through a name based on the day of a week (Friday), to an individual's name, Petrus. Perhaps this should be read as showing a broader development in Coetzee's writing from less individualised servant characters in his earlier novels to more individualised in his later. If this is so, then Coetzee is engaged in a larger project of re-membering.

Furthermore, it must be noted that the Magistrate, Cruso, Susan, Foe, Lurie and Lucy are almost read as if they are portrayed as the same. Neither is the Magistrate similar to the Colonel nor Cruso similar to Susan Barton and Foe. While I have argued that the Magistrate in part can be compared to the Colonel, and Cruso to Susan and to Foe, as well as Lurie to Lucy, the reality of their presentation is not similar. In fact, as illustrated, characters in both zones appear to be dismembered. Dismemberment here is read as isolation and psychological fragmentation. Pappas (n.d.: 10) identifies this as "lumping" which is a lack of limits to the thinking. Lumping becomes one of the limitations of decolonial approaches. That is, lumping these characters as either belonging to the zone of being and non-being borders on "decoloniality colonising all other categories of analysis of concrete injustice" (Pappas n.d. 10). Therefore, the pith of the argument,

especially when it comes to literary characters like Petrus (who are and resist being contrasted to others) is whether they are dismembered, when ultimately, they are portrayed as re-membering. By resisting “lumping”, can it be possible for such characters to re-member without being dismembered? In the beginning of the novel, Petrus seems to move from an offstage position of dismemberment to one of re-membering (of being), since he gains more land. Lurie and Lucy seem to move from a position of privilege (zone of being) to non-being. This perhaps is evidence enough that literary characters, through their dynamism and ability to be constructed on many levels defy and deconstruct the decolonial approach’s argument of permanent zones.

In contrast to permanent zones, as I have demonstrated in this dissertation, there appear to be dismembering in both zones. I have shown for example that the presentation of Susan in *Foe* and her method of storytelling seem to be an act of re-membering from a dismembered position. Yet still, Foe who is supposed to tell the story in the privileged position is himself dismembered by capitalistic expectations (as he runs away from his creditors and his creativity is canonised) and appears to want to dismember Susan’s story. Without overstressing Ngugi’s (2009) concept of dismemberment, it cannot be that Susan is dismembered in relation to Foe and a colonist in relation to Friday at the same time. This also goes for Foe, for the Magistrate and to some extent Lurie and Lucy. While I have succeeded in qualifying Susan or the Magistrate to be in the lighter zones, the dynamics of Coetzee’s storytelling appear to be far more complex. After Crusoe’s discovery of Friday, it is Susan who rescues and then takes him to Britain, not that she views Britain as civilised zone (even though it is) but because she is going there to search for her daughter Roxanna. In as much as she rescues him to imprison him further with Foe, the reality is that Friday has been presented as a homeless, stateless and most probably a nameless African since he cannot talk. In other words, Susan’s hesitancy in releasing Friday to Africa (which after all is not a country) is not an inconsiderate decision.

While I have also established an important reading of re-membering as portrayed by the barbarian girl’s restoration to her people, Coetzee’s portrayal of these servant figures

appears to be not that simplistic and straightforward. For example, Petrus's remembering evokes a sense of mimicking and imitation which appears to be a way of life. That is, mimicking is seen in the dressing of the Petrus's relatives and the pricing of symbols as he "wears a dark suit and, around his neck, a gold chain from which hangs a medal the size of a fist", to Petrus's use of language and mastering well his farming skills (Coetzee 2000: 135). To this end, if Petrus or the Barbarian girl or Friday, for instance, have to be read as thinking decolonially, then their positions have very little to offer on how specifically to resist the injustices in terms of offering decolonial solutions. What Petrus assumes as his position (if he is indeed responsible for orchestrating Lucy's rape) appears to border on revenge and hate (of course as Lucy noted of her rapists). However, Mpofo (2017) says that decoloniality is liberation not racism, nativism, xenophobia, tribalism or hatred. Therefore, locating Petrus's dismemberment as isolation or even landlessness or denial of education or even proper accommodation still borders on ideas of modernity. In other words, Petrus is presented as relying on the same knowledges fronted by modernity because, as exemplified through his remembering, he cannot think outside coloniality. To some extent, Petrus, and the fatalistic Friday, both on the island and in Britain, as well as the Barbarian girl's destitution and conformity to the modes of the Empire's outpost signify that it is difficult (but not impossible) to think outside the given framework.

Arguably, in his article *On Pluriversity*, Mignolo (2013) posits that decoloniality is a diverse horizon of liberation of colonial subjects by colonial subjects themselves. While this has been argued in my decolonial reading of Coetzee's selected fiction, the question that always remains is how one may think outside coloniality since there is no periphery of the global order (I am mindful here that there is no monolithic global order). However, as a decolonial critic, and as I write, there is conflict in trying to avoid words like "civilisation", "barbarism", "colonialism" which often have their origins in Western philosophies. While this may appear trivial, decoloniality also purports to liberate critics from such terminologies and languages. The continual use of such terms emanates, especially in Coetzee's fiction, from the fact that the space that the servant figures occupy is not definite and defined. If they are not barbarians (not in the strict sense)

who are they? This is to say re-membering in terms of knowledges is largely influenced by the same modernity that decolonists denounce. To read decolonially, then, is not only to locate a zone or position that Coetzee's characters occupy in their de-linking endeavours but it is to examine and identify all the options they have in their quest to de-link from coloniality or forms of Western modernity and identify all the spaces occupy and they ought to occupy.

The alternative that a decolonial reading seems to provide relies much on the inferences that one may draw within the narration and the narrative itself. However, it is sometimes misleading to rely much on the "unsaid" (what is between the lines) in light of the silent servants or Coetzee's characters who seem to live much in their heads. While in particular I have stressed the dangers of speaking for "others" as silencing through writing and representation in Coetzee's fiction, I realise a danger for speaking for and attempting to speak about the silenced servant characters, which may include speaking for Coetzee the author. Although I have particularly stressed oppression resultant from silencing, silences and being advocates for the silenced or silent characters, there is danger that the history of oppressed figures (as noted) are read as analogous. Pappas's (n.d.: 7) projections is that when a theory assumes a God's view of history, there is danger of slipping back into a form of universalism such that the theory becomes non-falsifiable and non-empirical. Universalism is one concept decried by decolonists in favour of pluriversalism (a belief in multitudes of truths – which again may result in the serious philosophical problems of unrestrained relativism). However, the idea of reading privileged position through colour (black and white) shows contamination of universalising the theory. Coetzee's fiction seemingly resists this idea of universalism at the level of characterisation (as in lumping) even on the oppressed characters themselves. For example, and as illustrated in this dissertation before, the injustice done to Friday is so complex that a simple explanation of master/slave or coloniality dismemberment would not suffice. Like the barbarian girl who is saved from destitution, Friday is saved from isolation on the island by the arrival of Cruso and later Barton. Therefore, since he has lost his voice (be it his tongue) the injustices to which he has been subjected before he is "discovered" cannot be attributed to colonialism or agents

of coloniality. Therefore, solely reading Coetzee's fiction within the ambits of decoloniality may expose academic laziness. Furthermore, a decolonial approach in literature (as noted in some instances in this study) tends to ignore the literariness of the text. This is to say, decoloniality is a radical political approach which when used as theoretical framework tends to overstress the politics in a work of art, which may be read as political reductionism. The danger may be a presentation of a narrow view of the lived experiences in the fictive world. As Hutcheon (1980: 90) notices, "fiction is not a way of viewing reality, but a reality in its own right."

However, to this end, my dissertation has privileged the view that dismembering is a result of coloniality. I have shown how European and North America's modernity and forms of "civility" have come with undesired consequences for those in the zones of non-being, and to some extent for those in the zones of being too. With caution, I have traced the effects of various modes of coloniality in Coetzee's fiction and unearthed adverse effects of dismemberment both in the Coetzee's colonies and ex-colonies. By utilising various modes of coloniality, I have established a link between Eurocentric modernity and Ngugi's concept of dismembering. I have also found that decoloniality and dismemberment are not concepts restricted to one zone than another. In fact, the continual use of the zones as forms of hierarchisation antithetically reveal how difficult it is to speak outside coloniality. Decoloniality, for all its insights as when applied to J. M. Coetzee's novels, seems trapped in these colonial discourses unable to escape them or to liberate themselves. The mode of making the barbarians and all silent servant figures human requires justice which spells out the truth of equal dignity and humanity among those living in ex-colonies. This is to assume again that all those in the categories of the *humanitas* are all human and humane.

I am suggesting that while a decolonial reading in literature is illuminating, a decolonial reader has to be aware of the challenges which come with such a theoretical framework. The decolonial narrative of white and black persons categorised in different zones, in a world where we seek equality and sameness is rather an adoption of a colonist position. However, such realisation emanates from treating decoloniality as a

theory, perhaps as Pappas (n.d.) does in his article about lessons from Villoro. Decoloniality ought to be treated as a “perspective” and not a theory. If one accepts decoloniality as a perspective, as I have demonstrated in my analyses of Coetzee’s novels, it therefore permits analyses of any novel from one’s locus of enunciation. The goal of decolonially reading Coetzee is to locate and create a pluriversal world where the anthropos too may live without suffocation. This is to locate multiple truths, and realise that those different from the “self” are also human whose knowledges are linked to their “being”.

The decolonial truth is rather a question of ontology (the reality of being). This is to say, if the servant figures and all the oppressed characters know their history, then they begin to ask ontological questions implicitly or explicitly on the nature of things and on their “being”. This makes decolonial transformations possible, which includes, but is not limited to thinking, doing, living, feeling and existing in the process of delinking from coloniality of power. Coetzee portrays such decolonial transformations as the re-membering of the anthropos. In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Foe* and *Disgrace* the decolonial transformation hinges on servant figure’s restoration to their livelihood, land and knowledges. For instance, the wellbeing of the barbarian communities in *Waiting for the Barbarians* symbolically hinges on the wellbeing of the barbarian girl. Her restoration to her people constitutes a decolonial healing to her as an individual and for the barbarian community at large. Such reading follows the African concept of humanity (*Ubuntu*). The concept, which is often distorted in its translation does not mean “I am because you are” as the Senegalese poet Leopold Segnhor once said. Instead it says that one’s humanity is dependent on society. Therefore, I am a human being because of the humanity of others. Decolonial readers and critics alike ought to unearth the humanity of the “othered” in order to move to a foreseeable future premised on delinking from all forms of modern paradigms. For me, as a reader and critic, a decolonial reading is a way of unmasking the metaphysical empires and finding decolonial justice implicit and explicit in any work of literature.

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Opsomming

Hierdie studie benut Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (2009) se dekoloniale begrippe van verdeling en herindeling in 'n kritiese beskouing van J. M. Coetzee se geselekteerde fiksie. In my vertolking van die romans *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Foe* en *Disgrace*, bring ek die begrippe van verdeling en herindeling in verband met dekolonialisme. In Ngũgĩ se vertolking verwys verdeling na die verplasing en onteining van die gekoloniseerdes, en hul geestelike koloniserings deur kulturele imperialisme. Herindeling word die dekoloniale poging om fisiese en sielkundige herindeling ongedaan te maak. Op dieselfde manier wat Afrika verdeel, gekarteer en gekoloniseer is sedert die Berlynse Konferensie van 1884/5, is Afrikane se kulture en geskiedenis verdeel en gedomineer. Kommer oor die grond word te kenne gegee in die kartering en konfiskering van grond – soos uitgebeeld in die boorling se woestynverblyf in *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Cruso se opruiming van die grond in *Foe* en Petrus se oornam van Lucy se plaas in *Disgrace*. Verder is Coetzee se taalgebruik 'n belangrike verhalende strategie wat bestudeer word om vas te stel hoe Coetzee die gekoloniseerde ontken of vir, van en oor die gekoloniseerde praat deur middel van die verteller/fokaliseerder. Hierdie studie openbaar die refleksiewe aard van die geselekteerde romans en soek vir antwoorde op die vraag van waarom Coetzee geneig is om sy “swart” karakters stemloos en wortelloos (en soms, naamloos) te maak. Suggereer Coetzee dat hulle deur die geskiedenis, deur kolonialisme, stilgemaak is – of suggereer hy dat hy, die outeur, nie die reg het om namens hulle te praat nie? Wil Coetzee deur sy manier van skryf en vertelling, aan die hand doen dat dit onmoontlik is dat die koloniseerder vir die gekoloniseerde kan praat; of, wanneer hy van hulle praat, gee hy aan die dienaarkarakters 'n stem en kan dit hulle stem wees, of kan dit as betroubaar beskou word? Hou Coetzee die kraag van passiwiteit voor as 'n vorm van weerstand en herindeling? Hierdie studie ondersoek, vanuit 'n dekoloniale perspektief, die komplekse wyse waarop Coetzee stem en die vraag van die tussenkoms van die gekoloniseerde hanteer.

Sleutelwoorde: *Dekolonialiteit, Kolonialiteit, Moderniteit, Kolonialisme, Postkolonialisme, Verdeling, Herindeling, Ontkoppeling en J.M. Coetzee.*

Ucwaningo lwamanje luchitha imiqondo ka-Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (2009) yokuqothula nokujoyina kabusha ukungabuswa ngelinye izwe ekuhloliseni ngokucophelela ukuqamba okukhethiwe kukaJ.M. Coetzee. Ekufundeni kwami amanoveli i-*Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Foe and Disgrace*, ngichaza imiqondo yokuqothula futhi ukujoyina kabusha ekungabusweni ngelinye izwe. Ekuhumusheni kuka-Ngũgĩ, ukuqothula kubhekisela ekufudukeni nasekuthunjweni kwalabo ababuswa ngelinye izwe, kanye nengqondo yabo ekubusweni ngelinye izwe ngokusebenzisa imiphakathi yamasiko. Ukujoyina kabusha kuba wumzamo wokungabuswa ngelinye izwe ukulungisa ukuqothula kokukhubazeka ngokomzimba nangokwengqondo. Ngendlela efanayo lapho i-Afrika ihlukaniswe ngakhona, ihlelwe ibalazwe futhi ibuzwa ngelinye izwe kusukela kwiNgqungquthela yaseBerlin ka 1884/5, amasiko kanye nemilando yabantu base-Afrika yaqothulwa futhi yabuswa. Ukukhathazeka kwezwe kuboniswa ebalazweni nasekuthunjweni komhlaba - njengoba kuboniswe ezindaweni zokuhlala zasogwadule ku- *Waiting for the Barbarians*, ku-Cruso ukhlanzwa komhlaba-enovelini i-*Foe* nakuPetrus ukuthatha ipulazi likaLucy enovelini i-*Disgrace*. Ngaphezu kwalokho, ukusetshenziswa kolimi lukaCoetzee kuyisisindo esisodwa esibalulekile sokulandisa esihloliswayo ukuze kuqinisekise ukuthi uCoetzee uphikisa kanjani noma ukhuluma kanjani, futhi mayelana nababuswa ngelinye izwe ngokusebenzisa umlandisi. Lolu cwaningo lwembula uhlobo oluthile lokucabanga lwamanoveli akhethiwe futhi lufuna izimpendulo embuzweni wokuthi kungani uCoetzee ejwayele ukwenza "abalingisi" bakhe abamnyama bengabonakali futhi bangenasisekelo (futhi ngezinye izikhathi abangenalo igama). Ingabe uCoetzee uphakamisa ukuthi baye bathuliswa ngumlando, ngukubuswa ngelinye izwe, noma ingabe uphakamisa ukuthi yena, umbhali, akanalo ilungelo lokukhuluma egameni labo? Ngendlela yokubhala nokuxoxa ngezindaba, ingabe uCoetzee uphakamisa ukuthi akunakwenzeka ukuba obusa elinye izwe akhulumele ababuswayo kulelo zwe noma, uma ekhuluma ngabo, uyabanika abalingiswa abayinceku izwi futhi leli zwi lingaba ngelabo, noma lingathathwa njengelethembekile? Ingabe uCoetzee uveza amandla okungahambisani njengendlela yokumelana nokujoyina kabusha? Lolu cwaningo, kusukela embonweni wokungabuswa ngelinye izwe, luhambisana nendlela eyinkimbinkimbi uCoetzee alawula izwi kanye nombuzo wokumela ababuswayo.

Amagama asemqoka:**Decoloniality:**

Ukungabuswa ngelinye izwe

Coloniality:

Ukubuswa ngelinye izwe

Modernity:

Isimanje

Colonialism:

Umqondo wokubuswa ngelinye izwe

Postcolonialism:

Ngemuva komqondo wokubuswa ngelinye izwe

Dismemberment:

Ukuqothulwa

Re-membering:

Ukujoyina kabusha

Delinking:

Ukucabangela