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The Fabric Of Violence Colonial Legacy In J.M. Coetzee's "Dusklands"

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Abstract
This paper delves into the intricate weave of colonial violence as depicted in J.M. Coetzee's *Dusklands*, exploring how the novel articulates the enduring legacies of oppression and brutality inherent in colonialism. Through a critical examination of the dual narratives, the study uncovers the mechanisms by which colonial power dynamics and violence are not only enacted but perpetuated across time. The first narrative, *The Vietnam Project,* offers a poignant critique of modern imperialism, paralleling colonial methods of domination with contemporary military intervention. The second, *The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee,* transports readers to the 18th-century Cape Colony, exposing the stark realities of settler violence and the subjugation of indigenous peoples. By juxtaposing these two tales, Coetzee underscores the cyclical nature of violence, highlighting how historical atrocities continue to shape and inform present-day ideologies and conflicts. This analysis situates *Dusklands* within the broader discourse of postcolonial literature, emphasizing Coetzee's use of narrative as a tool to deconstruct colonial myths and challenge the reader's complicity in systems of oppression. Ultimately, the paper argues that Coetzee's portrayal of violence serves as a critical lens through which to examine the persistent echoes of colonialism in contemporary society, urging a re-evaluation of historical narratives and their impact on the present.

Keywords: Colonial Violence, J.M. Coetzee, *Dusklands*, Postcolonial Literature, Imperialism, Narrative Analysis. Historical Atrocities, Power Dynamics, Settler Colonialism, Legacy of Oppression.

INTRODUCTION:

J.M. Coetzee's *Dusklands,* a seminal work in postcolonial literature, serves as a profound exploration of the mechanisms and impacts of colonial violence. Through its dual narratives—*The Vietnam Project* and *The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee*—Coetzee dissects the persistent and pervasive nature of colonial aggression, drawing unsettling parallels between historical and contemporary forms of domination. The novel confronts readers with the brutal realities of empire, illuminating how the atrocities of the past echo through time to shape modern ideologies and power structures.

Dusklands is structured as a diptych, with each narrative shedding light on different facets of colonialism. The first part, *The Vietnam Project,* follows Eugene Dawn, an American propagandist whose work on psychological warfare reveals the insidious ways in which modern imperialism perpetuates the violence and oppression characteristic of colonial rule. Dawn's unraveling psyche and eventual descent into madness serve as a metaphor for the moral and ethical corruption inherent in the exercise of power over subjugated peoples. This narrative critiques not only the Vietnam War but also the broader imperialistic tendencies of Western nations, suggesting that the methods and mindset of colonial domination are far from relics of the past.

The second part, *The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee,* transports readers to the 18th-century Cape Colony, where the eponymous protagonist embarks on a journey that starkly contrasts with the ideological warfare of Dawn's narrative. Jacobus Coetzee's account of his expedition into the African interior offers a raw portrayal of settler colonialism, characterized by violent encounters with indigenous populations and a ruthless quest for control over land and resources. This narrative highlights the dehumanizing effects of colonialism on both the colonizers and the colonized, exposing the brutal reality of expansionist ventures and the inherent violence that accompanies the quest for domination.

Coetzee's juxtaposition of these two narratives underscores the continuity of colonial violence across different historical periods and geographical contexts. By presenting both a contemporary and a historical perspective, Coetzee reveals the underlying structures of power that sustain colonialism, demonstrating how these structures perpetuate cycles of violence and exploitation. The novel's exploration of these themes is not merely a reflection on historical events but a critique of the ongoing impacts of colonial ideologies in the modern world.

The concept of colonial violence in *Dusklands* extends beyond physical aggression to encompass psychological and cultural dimensions. Coetzee's portrayal of violence is multifaceted, encompassing the overt brutality of military conquest and the more insidious forms of coercion and manipulation employed by imperial powers. This nuanced approach allows Coetzee to examine the complexities of colonialism and its enduring legacies, challenging readers to confront the uncomfortable truths about the nature of power and its abuse.

This paper aims to dissect the intricate fabric of colonial violence woven throughout *Dusklands,* focusing on how Coetzee uses narrative to critique and deconstruct the myths of colonial benevolence and progress. By analyzing the thematic and stylistic elements of the novel, the study seeks to illuminate the ways in which Coetzee's work challenges dominant historical narratives and offers a critical lens through which to view the enduring impact of colonialism on contemporary society. The analysis will explore how Coetzee's depiction of violence serves as a powerful tool for examining the moral and ethical dimensions of colonialism, and how it urges a reevaluation of the historical legacies that continue to shape the present.

Through this exploration, the paper will demonstrate that *Dusklands* is not only a reflection on the past but a vital commentary on the present, urging readers to recognize and challenge the enduring influence of colonial ideologies in the modern world. By unraveling the threads of violence that run through Coetzee's narratives, the study will underscore the importance of confronting and understanding the complex legacies of colonialism in order to address the injustices and inequalities that persist today.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To analyze J.M. Coetzee's depiction of various forms of colonial violence in *Dusklands*, highlighting both physical and psychological dimensions.
2. To investigate how the historical and contemporary narratives in *Dusklands* illustrate the persistence of colonial legacies in modern contexts.
3. To critically examine how Coetzee's narrative deconstructs and challenges dominant colonial ideologies and traditional historical narratives.
4. To explore the psychological effects of colonialism on both colonizers and the colonized as presented in Coetzee's novel.
5. To assess the relevance of colonial themes in *Dusklands* to current global issues, linking historical critique with modern implications.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW:

This literature review explores scholarly discourse surrounding J.M. Coetzee's *Dusklands,* focusing on themes of colonial violence, the psychological impact of colonialism, and the enduring legacy of imperialist ideologies. The critical analysis of Coetzee's work in this context illuminates the novel's role in postcolonial literature and its contribution to broader discussions on power and historical narrative.

J.M. Coetzee's *Dusklands* is frequently lauded for its incisive portrayal of colonial violence. Scholars such as Derek Attridge (2004) and David Attwell (1993) emphasize Coetzee's adept use of narrative to expose the multifaceted nature of violence inherent in colonial practices. Attridge argues that Coetzee's dual narrative structure in *Dusklands* effectively juxtaposes historical and contemporary forms of violence, thereby underscoring the continuity of colonial aggression across different time periods and contexts. Similarly, Attwell highlights the visceral depiction of violence in The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee and its role in illustrating the brutal realities of settler colonialism.

Nadine Gordimer (1984) and Sue Kossew (1996) have also explored how Coetzee uses violence as a means to critique colonial power dynamics. Gordimer notes that *Dusklands* starkly presents the dehumanization of both the oppressor and the oppressed, revealing the moral decay that accompanies colonial conquest. Kossew extends this analysis by examining the psychological dimensions of violence, noting that Coetzee's portrayal of characters like Eugene Dawn in The Vietnam Project highlights the corrosive impact of colonial ideologies on the individual psyche.

The psychological ramifications of colonialism are a central concern in Coetzee's *Dusklands.* Scholars such as Rosemary Jolly (1996) and Stephen Clingman (1986) have investigated how Coetzee's characters embody

the mental and emotional consequences of living within and perpetuating a colonial system. Jolly's analysis focuses on the character of Eugene Dawn, arguing that his psychological disintegration represents the inevitable outcome of internalizing and enacting colonial violence. Clingman, on the other hand, examines Jacobus Coetzee's narrative as a reflection of the psychological estrangement experienced by settlers who must reconcile their identity with the brutality of their actions.

These analyses align with Homi K. Bhabha's (1994) concept of the "colonial mimicry" and Frantz Fanon's (1963) exploration of the psychological trauma inflicted by colonial domination. Bhabha's theory that colonizers often adopt a façade that mimics the power and control they seek to impose resonates with Coetzee's depiction of Eugene Dawn, whose psychological breakdown can be seen as a collapse of this mimicry. Fanon's work on the mental health impacts of colonialism further contextualizes Coetzee's exploration of the internal conflicts and identity crises faced by both oppressors and the oppressed.

Coetzee's *Dusklands* is also noted for its critique of the enduring legacies of imperialism. Critics such as Elleke Boehmer (2005) and Laura Wright (2006) have examined how Coetzee's work reflects and challenges the narratives that sustain colonial and postcolonial power structures. Boehmer's analysis highlights the novel's depiction of historical events and their continuing influence on contemporary political and social contexts, arguing that Coetzee's work serves as a powerful commentary on the persistence of imperialist ideologies.

Wright explores the intertextuality in Coetzee's narratives, noting how *Dusklands* draws on and subverts traditional colonial texts to challenge the myths of progress and benevolence often associated with empire. This subversion aligns with Edward Said's (1978) notion of "contrapuntal reading," where the reader is encouraged to see the hidden narratives of oppression and resistance within seemingly benign colonial discourse.

Coetzee's engagement with historical narrative and its implications for contemporary society is a focal point in the literature on *Dusklands*. Critics such as Dominic Head (2009) and Patrick Hayes (2010) emphasize Coetzee's use of narrative as a means to critique and reframe historical events from a postcolonial perspective. Head argues that Coetzee's portrayal of historical figures and events forces readers to reconsider the accepted versions of history and recognize the ongoing impact of colonialism on modern society.

Hayes extends this discussion by examining how Coetzee's narrative strategies, including his use of irony and unreliable narration, challenge the reader to question the validity and bias of historical accounts. This aligns with Hayden White's (1973) theories on historiography, which suggest that historical narratives are inherently subjective and shaped by the perspectives and intentions of their authors.

4. RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

J.M. Coetzee's debut novel, '*Dusklands,*' published in 1974, critically examines themes of violence, desensitization, cruelty, and complicity, showcasing the darker facets of human civilization. Through the portrayal of violence for dominance, Coetzee underscores the inherent aggression within human beings, which is often restrained by the civilizing rules of society. '*Dusklands*' comprises two distinct yet thematically connected novellas: 'The Vietnam Project' and 'The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee.' Coetzee skillfully juxtaposes these seemingly disparate narratives to explore common threads of violence and complicity.

The first section, titled 'The Vietnam Project,' is narrated by Eugene Dawn, who is tasked with preparing a report to promote the American military's role in the Vietnam War. Eugene is portrayed as a sensitive individual, initially contemplating the ethical implications of his report. His supervisor, Jacobus Coetzee, a meticulous and demanding figure, expresses dissatisfaction with the report's preparation, subjecting Eugene to constant pressure. Despite Jacobus Coetzee's ambiguous feedback and persistent calls for modifications, Eugene strives to meet his expectations.

Eugene's report is complex and laden with technical jargon, rendering it challenging for those with limited literacy or slower comprehension. Recognizing this, Eugene emphasizes the need for simplicity, advocating for a report that can be easily understood by the average reader and military personnel alike. In an effort to redraft the report, Eugene immerses himself in the resources available at the Harry S. Truman Library, delving into books on mythography and propaganda to better grasp the cultural context of Vietnam and enhance the clarity of his work.

Eugene Dawn's narrative of his relationship with his wife, Marilyn, reveals a deeply troubled and tense situation. Eugene feels that Marilyn does not understand his emotions, which exacerbates their disconnection. Despite having a son, Martin, Eugene distantly refers to him as "Marilyn's child," underscoring his estrangement. His mind is plagued by suspicion, leading to a persistent state of anxiety. He perceives Marilyn as a conformist,

unyielding in her views and resistant to change. Eugene believes that his involvement in the 'Vietnam Project' has significantly disrupted their marriage.

Marilyn, grappling with depression, attends weekly therapy sessions. While Eugene expresses love for her, he feels that his affection is not reciprocated. He even imagines the scent of another man on her when he embraces her, which deepens his mistrust and sense that their marriage is on the brink of collapse. Eugene laments that the essence of their marital happiness is fading, largely due to his inability to spend sufficient time with his family.

Eugene's psychological turmoil is compounded by his exposure to graphic and disturbing photographs from the Vietnam War. One particularly harrowing image depicts a U.S. soldier sexually assaulting a young Vietnamese girl. Other photographs show soldiers proudly displaying severed heads of Vietnamese men as trophies, and another shows a Vietnamese man confined in a cage. These horrific images reveal the brutal and dehumanizing realities of war, which would be unbearable for any sensitive observer.

In the latter part of the first novella, Eugene Dawn undergoes a profoundly humiliating period marked by deep anguish expressed in a meditative manner. His assignment consumes an enormous amount of his life, requiring him to spend countless hours in the library gathering relevant references. His boss, characterized by an argumentative and fault-finding nature, shows little willingness to listen to others. Eugene attempts to call his wife, Marilyn, to rejuvenate his mind, but she never answers, further isolating him. He feels as though his time is being wasted between the demands of his boss and the emotional distance with his wife.

The main source for 'The Vietnam Project' is a collection of Hudson Institute reports published in 1968, titled 'Can We Win in Vietnam? The American Dilemma.' This collection includes contributions from five writers, and the epigraph for the report is taken from one of the contributors, Herman Kahn.

The novella portrays arrogant American military officers and political leaders who are determined to secure victory over the small nation of Vietnam. Their actions have devastating effects on the organized village life in Vietnam, leaving a terrible impact. The Vietnamese people are exploited psychologically, sexually, and physically. The novella explores the two fronts of war: one involving direct combat on the battlefield and the other focused on planning and disseminating propaganda to demoralize the opponent. J.M. Coetzee's novel takes a bold stance in highlighting the destructive capacity of war.

The psychological violence depicted in the novel is the result of intractable politicians, power-hungry individuals, and warmongers. For their own establishment and gain, they are willing to suppress any individual, region, or country. The novel exposes the ugly face of imperialism. At the beginning of the novella, Eugene Dawn seeks mental peace and stability. He states: "Conflict brings unhappiness, poisons existence. I cannot stand unhappiness; I need peace and love and order for my work. I need coddling" (1).

Although Eugene is part of the campaign and the regime, he still suffers greatly on a psychological level. The novel vividly illustrates the terrible impacts experienced on both sides of the conflict. The basic principle that violence begets violence is reflected throughout the narrative.

Dawn's supervisor, who lacks understanding of the 'New Life Project's realities, has been thrust into a leadership role, subjecting him to immense pressure. This prolonged stress has devastated his personal, social, and married life. Despite his earnest efforts, he feels misunderstood, enduring inhumane scolding from his boss. The psychological toll of warfare and the relentless demands of report writing have ensnared him in a complex situation, leaving him unable to reconcile with his current position. He yearns for happiness and fulfillment, yet the 'Vietnam Project' remains at the core of his existence, exacerbating his sense of helplessness.

Dawn openly expresses his apprehension about confrontations, admitting his discomfort with such situations. He acknowledges his initial impulse to yield and seek approval from his adversary but rejects this inclination, having learned from his marital experiences that concessions often prove futile. This introspection reveals contradictions within his personality and suggests a wavering mental state, perhaps indicative of a form of psychological turmoil.

His deep commitment to the project compels him to work tirelessly without making excuses. His superior, characterized as power-hungry and consistently demeaning towards subordinates, exacerbates his plight. Within the hierarchy of power, Dawn's boss epitomizes oppression, using tools and mechanisms to impose dominance and ideology at any cost.

Dusklands (Page 120) vividly portrays the methods by which suppressors wield power and manipulate

ideologies, showcasing the profound impacts on individuals caught within such systems.

"In his book 'Mythologies', Roland Barthes explores the concept of myth as a tool for propagating hidden agendas, particularly by imperialists to assert dominance. The creation of myths requires painstaking efforts to ensure they are easily comprehensible to the general public, with report making being one such aspect. Barthes posits three readings of myth: the journalist's straightforward depiction, the mythologist's distorted justification, and the dynamic, ambiguous response of the Barthian reader. The first two readings demystify myth while reconstructing the spectacles from which it originates. Barthes suggests that this spectacle, as discussed in his other works, can be intriguing, educational, or even compelling. The mythic 'other' becomes, in essence, a 'pure object', a spectacle embodying unredeemed exoticism. Only the third reading both consumes and remystifies the myth, thereby critically producing the most effective weapon against it (New York: Hill, 1957).

The text further examines Dawn's mental stability. His wife suspects him of being addicted to violent and perverse fantasies, while his friends believe that if he were to stop subjecting himself to the brutalization of report making, he might recover from his plight. The narrative explores how war-related activities have triggered profound psychological changes in his personality. Dawn increasingly devotes himself to report making, becoming deeply immersed in it without any apparent means of escape. He vividly describes his experience: 'From head to foot I am the subject of a revolving body. Only the organs of my abdomen retain their blind freedom: the liver, pancreas, gut, and, of course, the heart, squelching against each other like unborn octuplets' (p. 11). His complete absorption in this work has profoundly affected his behavior and mental state, leading to a dissociation from both personal and professional life that underscores a serious psychological turmoil.

Physical violence is a pervasive aspect of war, employed by warmongers through various mechanisms to instill terror in opponents or enemy nations. American forces utilized diverse strategies of physical violence during the prolonged American-Vietnam War, which stands as one of the longest conflicts in U.S. history.

In *'Dusklands',* J.M. Coetzee exposes the severe measures taken by the American military to subjugate the Vietnamese people. Dawn, a character in the novel, carries shocking photographs depicting the inhumane aspects of the Vietnam War. Describing one such image, he remarks: "Wilson holds the severed head of a man, while Berry grasps two heads by their hair. These heads, taken from corpses or near-corpses, are Vietnamese. They serve as trophies now that the Annamese tiger has been exterminated; only men and certain hardly lesser mammals remain. They have a stony appearance, as severed heads always seem to do." (pp. 23-24)

The image of American sergeants proudly carrying severed Vietnamese heads as trophies reflects a disturbing sense of joy in their brutal actions. Despite their ruthless killings, there is no sign of remorse or fear on their faces; instead, they appear to revel in their cruelty. J.M. Coetzee condemns these barbaric acts, which have systematically eroded and disrupted the indigenous culture of Vietnam.

Another photograph captures a scene from a film on Hon Tre Island, showing Vietnamese prisoners of war confined in cages labeled 'Bad man' and 'communist'. Thousands endured such imprisonment, with one striking image depicting a Vietnamese person held in a birdcage. Through these photographic examples, Coetzee exposes the grim realities of war, highlighting egregious violations of human rights and freedom of expression—cornerstones of the post-modern world's ethos.

These depictions reveal the haunting mentality of imperialist ideologies, which prioritize victory at any cost, disregarding the profound human suffering caused by their actions. Coetzee's bold narrative sheds light on America's darker realities, a stance that reportedly drew scrutiny from the American government following the novel's publication.

Dawn satirically reflects that Americans might have embraced the Vietnamese if they had acquiesced to American policies. However, because the Vietnamese resisted, they endured extensive destruction. Dawn poignantly states, "In the heart of the flames, their bodies glowed with heavenly light; their voices rang in our ears. But when the fire died down, they were reduced to ash. We lined them up in ditches." (p. 27)

He suggests that if the Vietnamese had approached Americans singing songs of submission, Americans would have sought peace and revered them. Yet, the Vietnamese stood firm in defense of their fundamental rights and refused to submit to the formidable American military. Americans seek global dominance and employ any means necessary to achieve it—mass killings, exploitation of culture, language, and nature. This reflects the feudal mindset of colonizers and imperialists who wield immense influence over global political and economic affairs. They are willing to wage war on any nation that challenges their interests.

The 'Vietnam Project' serves as a stark example, revealing the darker aspects of imperialism—a struggle for political dominance and hegemony. Thomas R. Bates, in 'Gramsci and the Theory of Hegemony', observes: "The 'normal' exercise of hegemony within a regime involves a delicate balance of force and consensus, ensuring that force does not overwhelm consensus, thereby appearing as though the majority consents to the use of force." (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975)

Propagation is a powerful mechanism used to implant falsehoods and negative perceptions in people's minds through various modes of communication. Hegemony, a concept central to Marxist ideology, describes how imperialists maintain dominance by manipulating textbooks, narratives, and propaganda to blur distinctions between justice and injustice, good and bad. This institutionalized propagation of myths perpetuates social, economic, and political systems favorable to the ruling elite, hindering revolutionary change. Coetzee's novel boldly exposes the mechanisms of imperialism and its impact on societies worldwide.

Sexual violence is one of the instrumentalists to use against enemy nation for demoralizing the political leaders and people of the country. Women and children have been the most vulnerable from sexual violence. American forces used same technique against Vietnamese people. Opponent must be capitulated, that is mere desire of the war imposer, for that, they could utilize severest mechanisms. Dawn possessed photographs, it shows that the women and children succumbed for the sexual violence. A military officer has been doing sexual intercourse with tiny girl. These photographs have been circulated in the society for creating terror. This is the effective technique to defeat the opponent.

Sexual exploitation is the severe form of brutality, where enforcement compels to accept the defeat. Dominant and ruling class make an arrangement to muzzle voices of dissent, with dishearten heart suppressers fail to overthrow the established regime. They do not remain any alternative except to accept their exploitations.

American military played various strategies to register victory over Vietnam. They exploited environmental resources of Vietnam. Planner seated in library and gave order bombing round the clock. He says, “For years now, we have attacked the earth, explicitly in the defoliation of crops and jungle, implicitly in aleatoric shelling and bombing” (45). Bombing made the land barren and devastation took place in large manner. Making control over territory is important. It is required to destroy the morale of the enemy. Though Psychological warfare is the negative functions of the war planning. Propaganda has strong and positive functions. It creates confidence in the mind of political authority. Psychological warfare one of the remarkable measures to hold on position and to defeat the enemy’s morale. Unless military get strong support from the planning wing of political department, military cannot carry out their agenda. But problem is there, he says: “ we cannot expect guide the thinking of rural Vietnam until we recognize that rural Vietnam is non-literate, that its family structure is patrilineal, its social order hierarchical, and its political order authoritarian though locally autonomous”.(31) he tries to analyse the homogeneous social structure of Vietnam, it should be studied diligently to defeat them, otherwise efforts would be wasted.

Atrocities cannot be prevented through planning alone, as military personnel are tasked with executing decisions in various ways. The notion of avoiding casualties during war is a myth without practical viability. Ninety-five percent of the village was obliterated by military-led bombing campaigns, forcing Vietnamese civilians to migrate from one place to another. Describing the bombing and devastation, he writes: 'Atrocity charges fall flat when they cannot be proven. Ninety-five percent of the village we wiped off the map was never marked on it. There is a troubling lack of realism about the impact of terrorism among senior military ranks. Questions of conscience are overlooked. We must assume that the military genuinely believe their operations are purely military in nature' (pp. 34-35).

The turmoil has left him unsettled, deepening its effects on his psyche. He yearns to conclude his wartime duties swiftly, feeling inadequate in his ability to care for his family. Occasionally, he demonstrates a keen awareness of the true causes of conflict. His fluctuating thought processes suggest psychological dissociation, evident in his lack of mental harmony. Profound changes have occurred. He reflects: “I am a hero of resistance, no less than that, properly understood metaphorically. Standing tall in my bloodied armor, alone on the plain, besieged yet with my papers in order. I sit composed and write. I make fine distinctions. The world pivots on these distinctions. I discern between obedience and humiliation, and under the fire of my discerning intellect, mountains crumble' (p. 43)."

Despite intensive efforts, America failed to subdue Vietnam. The planning wing pushed for a technical victory. According to Encyclopedia.com: "When Ho Chi Minh declared war against South Vietnam to reunite the country, President Kennedy sent a small contingent of Marines in 1961 to train soldiers and build fortified camps

in the jungles to halt North Vietnamese troop infiltration into South Vietnam. U.S. involvement rapidly escalated from there. At the peak of the war in 1968, over one thousand U.S. soldiers died each month. After fifteen years of conflict, the last U.S. soldiers departed Vietnam in defeat. It marked the first war the United States had ever lost. More than two million Americans served in Vietnam, and nearly sixty thousand lost their lives" (p. 03).

Even after fifteen years, America failed to achieve victory in Vietnam. Over sixty thousand American soldiers perished, with millions of Vietnamese casualties in this prolonged war. Large swathes of Vietnam's arable land lay barren and deserted, with devastating impacts on both human and natural life. Despite this, military plans persisted, with discussions of initiating further air attacks. Referring to this, he remarked: "I dismiss Phase IV of the conflict. I anticipate Phase V and a return to total air warfare" (pp. 43-44).

It is crucial to develop alternative narratives to counter established myths. "The highest form of propaganda is the creation of a new mythology" (p. 39). To demoralize the enemy, a new mythography is essential to address the psychological dynamics of the Vietnamese. The use of chemical weapons against the enemy transformed arable soil into poisoned land, posing a significant environmental threat. Such actions do not align with humanity's values, inevitably leading to dire consequences.

Eugene Dawn's descent into desensitization is a central theme in the novel, reflecting his strained relationships with colleagues, his wife, and his son, which illustrate profound psychological suppression. Dawn encounters horrific photographs that desensitize him, altering his behavior significantly. For instance, he recounts an incident where American soldiers casually carry severed heads of Vietnamese as if they were groceries from a supermarket, a grim contrast that prompts an unsettling reaction from him.

In a particularly chilling episode, Dawn narrates his attempt to kill his son in clinical detail: "Holding it like a pencil. I push the knife in, the child kicks and flails. A long, flat ice sheet of sound takes place" (page 67). This detachment from his family underscores a severe psychological disorder where his thoughts and actions are entirely disconnected.

Eugene's relationship with his wife remains strained, marked by emotional disconnection and an instrumental approach that only satisfies physical needs. Their disconnect highlights the breakdown of traditional familial bonds.

Upon his arrest for stabbing his son, Dawn's desensitization becomes evident as he expresses surprise at feeling pain inflicted by the system: "Now I am beginning to be hurt. Now someone is really beginning to hurt me. Amazing" (page 68). This inability to connect actions with emotions portrays a complex persona that defies simplistic characterization as a mere monster. It challenges readers to empathize with his inner turmoil despite his monstrous actions.

Edward W. Said, in "Orientalism," discusses how dehumanizing others, such as the West's view of the Orient, serves to maintain dominance and control. This critical perspective sheds light on Dawn's own internal struggle with dehumanization, both of others and himself.

In advocating for a strong family institution, Coetzee underscores the profound impact of its disintegration on societal stability. Dawn's narrative powerfully illustrates this, urging readers to confront the complexities of human nature beyond black-and-white judgments.

Eugene Dawn's relationship with his wife, Marilyn, is fraught with turmoil, exacerbated by his demanding work which consumes his time and mental energy. He laments his inability to fulfill his duties as a loving husband, feeling trapped in the relentless demands of his sensitive job. This imbalance breeds suspicion in his mind, as he reflects: "I plough like the hero and Marilyn froth like the heroine, the truth is that the bliss of which the books speak has eluded us. The fault is not mine. I do my duty. Whereas, I cannot escape from suspicion that my wife is disengaged" (page 11).

Suspicion, Eugene realizes, is a destructive force in their once happy and close relationship. It acts like a cancer on the peace and trust between them, constantly escalating tensions. Despite their initial happiness, the pressures of Eugene's work have devastated their marriage, leading to profound emotional and psychological strain.

In every family, 'home' symbolizes a sanctuary of joy and support. Marital relations can experience fluctuations akin to music, where varying patterns can either harmonize or lead to discord. Coetzee underscores the delicate nature of these relationships, emphasizing how suspicion erodes trust, love, and ultimately disrupts

societal harmony.

Eugene's work on the Vietnam Project exacerbates his psychological turmoil. His boss, a fault-finding authority figure, compounds his stress, leading to an inferiority complex and emotional desensitization. Marilyn becomes increasingly resentful of his work commitments, feeling neglected and voicing her frustrations. The Vietnam Project emerges as a wedge between them, intensifying their suspicions and causing irreparable rifts.

Reflecting on their tumultuous relationship, Eugene describes the ongoing battle to maintain his composure amid Marilyn's emotional outbursts: "My life with Marilyn has become a continual battle to keep my poise of mind against her hysterical assaults and the pressure of enemy body. I must have peace, love, nourishments, and sunlight; those precious mornings when my body relaxes and my mind soars must not be laid to waste by whining and shouting between Marilyn and her child" (page 12).

The relationship between Eugene Dawn and his wife, Marilyn, remains severely strained, characterized by ongoing conflict that has deeply destabilized their bond. Marriage, often likened to the connection between hand and eyes, where each supports and cares for the other, is portrayed in the novel as lacking the essential warmth and trust needed to sustain happiness.

Coetzee's novel explores the impact of their troubled marriage on broader societal and political landscapes, suggesting that dysfunction within personal relationships can contribute to larger societal chaos. The author points out how disorder in both social and political realms can stem from personal turmoil, illustrating a cyclical nature where life often circles back to its starting point.

Dawn is depicted as a victim of the psychological and emotional ravages of war, representative of countless others who suffer under the inhumanity of dominant powers. This theme highlights a disregard for victims in pursuit of maintaining dominance, which destabilizes society and impedes social progress.

In Dawn's introspective moments, he reflects on the differences between individuals in relationships, suggesting that great marriages learn to appreciate these differences. However, trust, love, and respect are conspicuously absent in his character. He attempts to reassure Marilyn, noting: "She is a conformist who hoped to find in me her conformist twin. But I have never truly been a conformist at heart. I have always been biding my time. Marilyn's greatest fear is that I will lead her away from suburbia into the unknown. She believes any deviation leads to wilderness, because she has a misguided view of America. She cannot fathom that America is vast enough to accommodate its nonconformists" (page 13).

In the contemporary context, it is crucial for dissimilar personalities to cooperate and mutually accept each other with respect. Eugene acknowledges their differences, while Marilyn fears that his work nature will destroy their life. Eugene counters by expressing his belief that America is expansive enough to encompass diversity, contradicting Marilyn's apprehensions.

Eugene Dawn's suspicion intensifies when he discovers Marilyn's nude photograph tucked away in the innermost space of her wardrobe. He begins to compare Marilyn to models and attempts to contact her by phone, but she doesn't answer. His mind becomes consumed with doubts, compelling him to leave the office and check if she is home by peering through the window. His thoughts reflect his growing paranoia about his wife's fidelity: "Unhappy young wives who leave for vague appointments often engage in extramarital affairs. I know how the world works. I am eager to uncover the truth, very eager. What could another man see in this tired, defeated woman? As an exercise, I observe her through the eyes of a stranger" (page 17).

This passage starkly illustrates Eugene's dominance in his approach, as he disparages women and implies treachery in a demeaning manner. He paints a picture of unhappy wives seeking illicit affairs to fulfill their sexual desires, portraying them as beaten down and morally loose. His perspective reflects a patriarchal view where men seek to dominate women sexually, while women safeguard family honor. In cases of suspicion, women often become victims in a male-dominated society, vulnerable to exploitation by men who take advantage of social norms.

D.H. Lawrence, the renowned English writer and philosopher, posits in his book "Morality and the Novel" that the fundamental relationship for humanity is that between man and woman (Longman, 1972). David Knox, in "Exploring Marriage and the Family," defines marriage as a social contract where two adults of opposite sexes commit emotionally and legally to living together (Foesman Scott, 1979). However, in the case of Eugene and Marilyn Dawn, their relationship lacks this bond. Their interactions are strained and lack warmth and kindness

toward each other.

He struggles to resolve the central conflict of his life: choosing between his job and his family. His job is essential for livelihood, while his family provides safety and emotional support. However, he lacks the multitasking skills necessary to balance both responsibilities. Life is not a straightforward journey; it is complex and fraught with uncertainty. Concentrating solely on his job jeopardizes his family's well-being. Faced with this dilemma, he is unable to make a constructive decision. The pressure of deep contemplation has taken a toll on his nervous system, impairing his ability to think rationally and practically. This has ultimately led him toward psychological disassociation. He confesses: "I am in a bad way as I write these words. My health is poor. I have a treacherous wife, an unhappy home, and unsympathetic superiors. I suffer from headaches. I sleep badly. I am eating myself out. If I knew how to take holidays perhaps, I would take one. But I see things and have a duty toward history that cannot wait" (46-47).

Eugene Dawn finds himself completely overwhelmed by his circumstances. His boss is dissatisfied with his performance in report writing, exacerbating his frustration. He feels that he has lost the foundation of his family life, accusing his wife of disloyalty, which undermines any hope for a healthy family dynamic. His intense mental anguish is evident.

In a desperate act, Eugene confined his son in a motel. When the police arrived with a court order, Eugene's response indicated a significant loss of mental stability. He is deeply insecure about his son Martin's future and lives in constant fear that his wife Marilyn will take Martin away, leaving him utterly alone. Eugene is convinced that estrangement is inevitable, given Marilyn's behavior.

Surveillance phobia is a pervasive issue; anyone subject to it must live under the intense pressure of constantly being watched. This persistent fear of observation breeds a cycle of doubt, leading to a chain reaction that ultimately disrupts rational thinking and understanding. Imperial powers have historically used various mechanisms to record people's daily activities to exert control. These activities are often documented from both reliable and unknown sources, highlighting the pervasive nature of surveillance in the digital age. Even though Eugene is part of the surveillance project, he harbors a deep-seated fear that someone is constantly monitoring his daily routines. His anxiety is particularly acute, as he reflects: "Sometimes I ring the little bell in my wife's home. When she picks up her end I put down, or breathe heavily, as described in the newspapers. All calls are monitored by Internal Security" (52).

Eugene has lost control of his mind, with his nervous system completely breaking down. His paranoia leads him to hide his son in a hotel, trying to evade Marilyn's watchful eye. When the police eventually arrive, Eugene, driven by fear and delusion, tragically stabs his son. He shows no sign of remorse, entirely detached from reality. He describes his actions in a chilling manner: "Holding it like a pencil, I push the knife in. The child kicks and flails. A long, flat ice-sheet of sound takes place. That is what he was talking about, the thing he wants me to put down. It is the fruit knife from the bedside table. The ball of my thumb still carries the memory of the skin popping" (67-68).

Psychological violence is more severe than any other form of violence. J.M. Coetzee highlights this issue in "The Vietnam Project," exploring the psychological damage inflicted by colonizers who employ various forms of violence. Dominic Head notes that criticisms of the text have often focused on the "obliquity of the book's method." Some critics have even suggested that Coetzee is complicit in the very colonial projects he critiques, accusing him of indulging in the "excitement of colonial self-aggrandizement." In "Doubling the Point: Essays and Interviews," Head argues that "complicity is a theme of the novel, and is inevitably enacted in the sequence of first-person narratives, where each narrating subject is exposed as a product and perpetrator of colonial projects" (University Press, 1992).

Eugene Dawn is insecure, insensitive, and emotionless. The way he inserts the fruit knife into his son is indicative of a deeply disturbed mind, exhibiting symptoms similar to those seen in individuals with schizophrenia. He believes that women are the root cause of most of the troubles in his life, and he considers Marilyn to be his gravest mistake. His perspective on women reveals a strong patriarchal bias, generalizing all women based on his experience with his wife. This attitude can be seen as a form of ethical violence. He states: "As for Marilyn (to wrap up the past), we all agree that my health is too precarious to allow me to dwell on her. I wrote her a letter once, a remarkably balanced and temperate letter, an effect of the drugs perhaps, but did not send it. I am glad I do not have to think about Marilyn. Most of the trouble in my life has been caused by women, and Marilyn was certainly my worst mistake" (71).

Eugene Dawn expresses a profound inability to find solutions to his current plight. He contemplates that

he should have informed Marilyn about the side effects of the drugs he takes daily. Yet, he contradicts himself by blaming women for the troubles in his life, and labeling Marilyn as his worst choice. He is unable to maintain a healthy relationship with her. A strong relationship between a husband and wife is essential for fulfilling emotional and physical needs.

Eugene acknowledges that his life has deviated from the right path due to prolonged work commitments. The Vietnam project, a major undertaking, demands special attention and diligent work. The constant labor involved in the project has created chaos in his daily activities, leading to turmoil in both his personal and social life. Man, being a social animal, requires interaction and companionship. However, this project has confined him to a very limited space, making socialization difficult. This isolation has made him a dissident within his own family, which is detrimental to both personal well-being and societal harmony. Such conditions are not conducive to a healthy society, leading to broader social chaos.

The protagonist of the novel expresses deep remorse for his barbaric act. He stabbed his son with a fruit knife, ostensibly to protect him from his wife Marilyn. Now, he is introspecting, trying to understand what drove him to commit such a heinous deed. He insists that he is a sound-minded person, yet he is unable to fathom the reasons behind his grotesque action. In an interior monologue, he searches in vain for valid explanations for his behavior. J.M. Coetzee skillfully focuses on the maladies of social institutions through this introspection.

Eugene Dawn conveys a message of humanity for consideration. He suggests that war is not a solution to problems; it destroys the social, economic, and cultural fabric of both nations involved. War brings about a sense of guilt, which acts like a black poison, devastating natural and human resources on a large scale.

At the end of the novella, Coetzee presents a universal message for the preservation of humanity. Dawn, a servant or representative of imperialism, reflects on the futility of war and its dire consequences. As a writer, Coetzee comments on highly political subjects in a praiseworthy manner. David Attwell notes in "Doubling the Point: Essays and Interviews" that “J.M. indicates that the book is his response to the Vietnam War and to South African history” (Harvard University Press, 1992). The modernization of warfare has led to significant environmental devastation. Chemical weapons have rendered lands barren, disrupting ecosystems, harming civilian populations, and destroying dense vegetation. It is believed that the U.S. military used over 20 million gallons of herbicides to defoliate forests and destroy enemy crops, posing a serious threat to Mother Earth.

For the enduring survival and perpetual growth of human civilization, a philanthropic approach toward the Earth is essential. This approach is necessary to achieve sustainable development; otherwise, Doomsday looms imminently. The effects of environmental destruction are not confined to Vietnam but have global repercussions. Humanity is under threat, and the peace of Mother Earth is disturbed. Environmental violence poses the greatest risk to the sustainability of our planet. As Rosemary Jane Jolly states in her book, "Colonization, Violence, and Narration in White South African Writing": André Brink, Breytenbach, and J.M. Coetzee, “Dawn points out that ‘we’ no longer live by cultivating the earth, but by decimating ‘her’, and that ‘we’ should recognize that ‘we’ have forsaken the earth-mother for the goddess of technology, a daughter of ‘our’ own making. Dawn uses the figure of Athena to represent the age of technology. ‘We have the capacity to breed out of our own head’” (Ohio University Press, 1996).

Eugene Dawn’s narration in the novel vividly depicts the horrors of warfare and highlights the American failure to subdue the resilient Vietnamese people. The story reflects the darker realities of imperialism and its relentless effort to establish dominance and power.

The second novella, *The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee,* delves into the eighteenth century, chronicling an expedition for elephant hunting that uncovers the uncharted territories of South Africa. This story is narrated from the perspective of Jacobus Coetzee, an eighteenth-century Boer frontiersman living in South Africa in 1760.

In the second part, *The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee,* begins with a "Translator’s Preface," presenting it as the journal of Jacobus Coetzee. His encounters with the native tribes of South Africa reveal the process of colonization and the exploration of the previously unexplored regions of South Africa.

During his expedition, Jacobus interacts with the Hottentots and the Boers. Despite sharing a similar environment, these groups adhere to different religious beliefs: the Boers follow Christianity, while the Hottentots do not. Many tribal members converted to Christianity to gain favor with the White colonizers. The Bushmen, another indigenous tribe of South Africa, also feature prominently in his narrative.

The novella explores the treatment of indigenous people by the colonizers. The Bushmen are depicted as

being hunted down and treated like animals by the settlers. The brutal mentality of the colonizers is encapsulated in the saying, "A bullet is too good for a Bushman," reflecting the heinous belief that they were the masters and the African tribes their slaves.

Further, the story exposes the opportunistic nature of humanity. Individuals often seek out opportunities, even taking significant risks. In this novella, Jacobus falls ill, and during his sickness, almost all his servants turn disloyal. Upon recovering, he discovers that his servants have been indulging in drinking and sexual activities, and he is even attacked by these estranged servants. This novella underscores the opportunistic tendencies of humans, which often become the root cause of conflict.

This research further investigates the spiteful nature of colonizers, particularly their systematic killing of innocent tribal people. Jacobus Coetzee organizes a second journey to the land of the Great Namaqua, driven by a desire for revenge over his perceived trivial humiliation. He arrives fully prepared, leading a formidable army, determined to inflict a lasting lesson that even future generations would remember. Jacobus's goal is to punish all those he considers disloyal. He empties entire villages, forcefully assembling all men, women, children, and even the blind and bedridden, including his disloyal servants. He executes them in a barbaric manner, carrying out a brutal massacre against the Namaqua tribes. This reflects the colonial mindset of using terror to create safety valves for their domination.

The narrative illustrates how colonial powers adopted various policies to unleash economic, political, and social violence to establish and maintain their dominance. They manipulated substantial natural and human resources, meddling in the traditional cultures of indigenous people, which created ripples of insecurity even within their homeland. Colonialism destroyed South Africa's traditional lifestyles and cultures, introducing multifaceted violence. Collective violence, in particular, is seen as a tool for establishing supremacy. The term "Collective violence" is defined by Etienne G. Krug and colleagues in the World Report on Violence and Health as: "The instrumental use of violence by people who identify themselves as members of a group—whether this group is transitory or has a more permanent identity—against another group or set of individuals, in order to achieve political, economic, or social objectives." (Geneva, 2002)

The research examines the process of subjugation, highlighting how colonizers exploited the poor, powerless, and tribal people for exploration and discovery. They used power dynamics and modernity to impose their will. The tribal people of South Africa, lacking awareness of collective power and segregated from modern advancements, were unable to comprehend the injustices being inflicted upon them. Jacobus Coetzee, as a representative of colonial power, exploited all human and natural resources for his exploration-cum-colonization efforts.

Further investigation reveals that physical violence is ubiquitous in the struggle for dominance, with *Dusklands* serving as an explicit example of this brutality. Jacobus Coetzee encounters various African tribes, including the Bushmen, Hottentots, and others. The Bushmen are portrayed as a particularly violent tribe, known for their hunting skills and living in what is described as an elementary stage of civilization. The history of the Bushman tribe, as noted in Wikipedia, is as follows: "The San (or Saan), also known as Bushmen or Basarwa, are indigenous hunter-gatherer people of South Africa, whose territories once spread across parts of the African continent. They have significant linguistic differences regionally. The ancestors of the hunter-gatherer San people are considered to be among the first inhabitants of the region." (Wikipedia)

The Bushmen are characterized as vindictive; if farmers bore a grudge against them, they would retaliate by sneaking into the farmers' fields at night to destroy whatever they could. Their inherent cruelty is depicted as central to their actions. Jacobus reflects this sentiment by saying, "Bushmen are a different creature, wild animals with an animal's soul" (88).

Kynoch Gary notes that colonial pacification campaigns clearly demonstrated European military superiority over subdued nations. The Europeans, technologically advanced, used their superior weaponry to maintain dominance. They perpetrated violence to exert control over the indigenous populations. In his book, Urban Violence in Colonial Africa: A Case for South African Exceptionalism, Kynoch Gary states: "Colonial pacification campaigns in late nineteenth and early-twentieth century Africa clearly demonstrated European military superiority. For several decades thereafter, colonial states maintained an effective monopoly on armed force. Despite the relative scarcity of armed resistance to colonial rule until the 1950s, violence and the threat of violence remained intrinsic aspects of the colonial project" (Sep, 2008).

The Bushmen's nature is notably vindictive; if anyone opposes their way of thinking or acting, they seek

revenge. Confronting a Bushman is akin to facing a wild animal. They are highly adept in guerrilla warfare, and the only reliable way to defeat them is to catch them in an open space. They are incredibly agile in all their actions. Their culture is distinct; they leave their elderly family members in remote areas with a small amount of food and water, abandoning them to the mercy of wild animals. The aged are not kept with the tribe; they are left in unknown places with some provisions to survive until wild animals inevitably hunt them. This practice highlights the unique identity of every tribe. Each tribe is different from the others, and the South African soil is rich with heterogeneous cultural aspects. Colonizers exploited these differences, inciting the tribes to fight among themselves and then establishing their dominance through the principle of "Divide and Rule."

After his encounter with the Bushmen, Jacobus senses potential danger and plans to deal with unforeseen challenges. The only way to tame a Bushman is to capture them when they are less than seven or eight years old. They learn hunting skills at an early age as part of their culture. Once a Bushman surpasses seven or eight years of age, it becomes almost impossible to tame them. Any attempt to do so is likely to result in them escaping and causing significant loss. Even tamed Bushmen remain loyal only until they find an opportunity to escape. In contrast, the Hottentots are slightly more civilized than the Bushmen. The tribes' ignorance of broader civilization kept them segregated from the main pathways of progress. European colonizers and settlers exploited this, establishing colonies in South Africa and expanding their empires.

Firearms were the only tools that could weaken the Hottentots. Advanced defense technology played a crucial role in terrorizing and subjugating the people. The tribes, armed with conventional weapons, were no match for modern firearms and lost almost all their encounters with the colonizers. The colonizers used effective means to expand their businesses and expeditions.

At one point, while Jacobus was taking a bath, two Hottentot boys stole his trousers. When he tried to retrieve them, he became angry and slapped the boys, reacting violently. This incident infuriated the entire Hottentot village, and they warned him that he would no longer be welcome there. Jacobus was castigated and humiliated by the Hottentots for his behavior towards their children.

The Hottentots are described as assertive, strong, and obedient. Klawer embodies these qualities, whereas Dikkop is portrayed as violent, short-tempered, and a troublemaker. During his expedition, Jacobus Coetzee encounters these two contrasting personalities.

Jacobus arrives with various gifts to win favor and secure permission for elephant hunting and further exploration. He offers them tobacco and rolled paper, making a significant effort to smooth his journey by winning their hearts with multiple gifts.

The narrative reveals that colonizers viewed African tribes as uncivilized and obstacles to human progress. This perception gave them a free hand to perpetrate unchecked barbaric activities to subjugate these tribes on a large scale. Jacobus exemplifies this colonial mentality by breaking his promises and displaying the duplicitous face of colonialism. He inflicts mass violence as retribution for his perceived trivial humiliation, even though many members of the Great Namaqua had supported him wholeheartedly. When he becomes vulnerable, the people of the Great Namaqua loot his belongings. In retaliation, Jacobus returns with his military forces to punish them severely, seeking revenge for his humiliation. He criticizes the people of this land for lacking hospitality and etiquette and for being resistant to change. He remarks, "No, I would be a liar if I carried back such reports. For I know that the Namaqua are men, men of men, powerful, generous, blessed with great rulers" (108).

This highlights the conflict between dominant colonial powers and the powerless tribes, with one side exercising power for territorial expansion and the other struggling for survival. Bates R. Thomas, in his book Gramsci and the Theory of Hegemony, provides context for this conflict, stating: "It can be said that every culture has its speculative and religious moment, which coincides with the period of complete hegemony of the social group it expresses, and perhaps coincides exactly with the moment in which real hegemony disintegrates at the base, molecularly. But the system of thought, precisely for that reason (reacting to the disintegration), perfects itself dogmatically, becoming a transcendental 'faith'" (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975).

Jacobus fell ill with a fever, and proper medicine was unavailable, so he was treated with traditional herbal remedies known to the Great Namaqua people. He had a large carbuncle near his anus, accompanied by a high fever. His survival depended entirely on the goodwill of the Namaqua. His servants were deeply concerned for their master, who was everything to them. There was no one available to diagnose the cause of his illness. His

treatment began in a deserted hut, typically used for women during menstruation.

During his prolonged illness, Jacobus Coetzee became fed up with solitude and weakened. He lamented, "The ear cannot hear, the nose cannot smell, the tongue cannot taste, the skin cannot feel" (121). He recognized that all five senses need to function properly to achieve desired results. Without his strength, he felt helpless. Despite his vulnerability, he continued to exhibit an egoistic mentality, believing that the gun was essential to regain his lost glory. This attitude reflects a dreadful and feudal mentality toward the native people, suggesting that violence is necessary to establish dominance.

The tribes in this region were unaware of the effective use of modern weapons. The protagonist of the novella remarks that the entire future of their expedition depended on the gun. The local tribes relied heavily on traditional weapons like bows and spears. Jacobus boasted of his superiority, declaring, "I am a hunter, domesticator of the wilderness; a hero of enumeration. He who does not understand numbers does not understand death. Death is as obscure to him as to an animal" (123).

This statement reflects Jacobus's belief in his own superiority and the power of modern technology over traditional ways. His reliance on firearms and his disdain for the indigenous people's methods reveal his colonial mindset, which sees the imposition of his own culture and technology as a way to assert dominance and control.

The novella delves into the cynical methods employed by colonizers to fulfill their sexual desires. Jacobus Coetzee's savage mentality is revealed as he justifies witnessing copulation, whether among slaves or animals, without any sense of fairness. Disinterested in the cultural practices of the natives, he craves to witness raw sexuality. Had he not been debilitated by illness, he likely would have violently exploited native women, reflecting the colonial mentality of using women for sexual gratification. Jacobus's humiliating illness restrained him; otherwise, he would have taken advantage of them.

The narrative also highlights the Namaqua people's struggle to preserve their culture amidst colonial attacks. They are portrayed as strong, assertive, generous, and powerful, capable of adapting as necessary, making them difficult to defeat even with modern weaponry.

This paper underscores the colonizers' indifference toward tribal people. Klawer, Jacobus's loyal servant, lacks empathetic understanding. When Jacobus fell seriously ill, all the Hottentot servants cared for him. However, when the situation reversed and Klawer fell ill, Jacobus did not reciprocate the care. Due to his egoistic determination and superiority complex, Jacobus punished all the Hottentots, exemplifying the imperialistic mentality of exploiting subordinate people and their resources. His dissociation from empathy and philanthropy reflects Coetzee's critique of the colonizer's egotistical nature through Jacobus's character.

Sarma M. Parag discusses Coetzee's exploration of violent geographies in *Dusklands*, highlighting Jacobus Coetzee's brutalization: "Brutalization is often mutual, and Jacobus Coetzee has no qualms in narrating a piece of cannibalistic imposition. The irony lies in the Bushman being offered to the Hottentots, subtly indicating a pre-existing cannibalistic tradition. Cannibalism, like headhunting, in colonial discourse becomes the ultimate truth of degenerate natives, and hence the rationale for purging them from the face of the earth" (Pencraft International, New Delhi).

South Africa's vast regions were largely unexplored by European settlers, who consistently sought to establish colonies to expand their imperialistic ambitions. "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee" dehumanizes the indigenous people of the land and legitimizes Western colonial and imperialistic intrusions.

Jacobus Coetzee commits violent acts to fulfill his selfish needs without remorse for the suffering he inflicts on his servants and the people of the Great Namaqua. His emphasis on maintaining strict discipline among slaves reflects his uncompromising code of conduct for the campaign. Throughout the expedition, Jacobus adheres to a purely selfish motive, clearly reflecting his feudal mentality. He states, "Above all I did not want him to disturb my calm" (160), illustrating his self-centered approach.

Jacobus lacks a humanitarian perspective. When severely ill, it was the intensive care of the Hottentots that facilitated his recovery. Despite their assistance during his humiliating illness, Jacobus expresses a sense of victory upon recovery: "I am among you but I am not of you. I felt calm and exhilarated. I was leaving. I had not failed. I had not died, therefore I had won" (143). His failure to express gratitude highlights his rudeness and lack of empathy, characteristic of colonial mentalities.

Colonizers disrupted the natural balance of African lands, causing widespread environmental distress to

serve their self-interests. In "The Narrative of Jacobus," Jacobus exploits nature in every conceivable manner, contributing to environmental violence on a significant scale. The European colonizers' neglect of eco-friendly practices in pursuit of their strong determination is evident. Jacobus justifies his vindictive activities with a sense of grandeur, reflecting delusional reasoning to validate his atrocities. J.M. Coetzee adeptly uses this character to explore the atrocious mentality of colonizers.

Jacobus Coetzee, a Dutch conquistador who ventured deep into the interiors of South Africa, embarked on a ruthless campaign of annihilation and subjugation of both people and animals, a saga of reciprocal suffering. In '*Dusklands*,' there is a deliberate de-emphasis on chronological sequence, a departure from typical historical narratives. The Vietnam narrative precedes the Dutch narrative, challenging traditional temporal structures. Rosemary Jane Jolly explores this inversion in her article 'Colonization, violence, and Narration in White South African Writing': "The reversal of chronological order and the juxtaposition of Eugene Dawn, the theorist of conquest, and Jacobus Coetzee … suggest that their pursuits, though temporally distant, are mutually reflective. Both are colonizers, participants in a historical cycle of rising and falling empires; both are historians who interpret the past through the lens of self and other in colonial contexts; and both, through various layers of meta-fiction, are revealed to be products of their own narratives" (Ohio University Press, 1996).

J.M. Coetzee's critique in *'Dusklands'* exposes the profound impact of violence on the human psyche, illustrating dimensions of the colonial mindset. The novella serves as a literary masterpiece, challenging readers to confront the psychological defenses that justify violence, ensuring its enduring relevance in discussions of human values. Characters like Eugene and Jacobus exemplify societal realities, where individuals dissociate for self-interest and commit violence without remorse.

Violence is the central theme of '*Dusklands*,' manifesting in various forms: physical, sexual, environmental, dehumanization, lack of empathy, and desensitization. These themes are crucial for understanding human values in the context of civilization. Coetzee skillfully juxtaposes 'The Vietnam Project' and 'The Narratives of Jacobus,' despite their different historical settings, to explore themes of imperialism and colonialism respectively.

People often resort to psychological defense mechanisms to justify insensitive actions in their lives. Coetzee succeeds in shedding light on the complexities of society in 'Dusklands,' moving beyond simplistic binaries of Good versus Evil. The novellas undermine dominant historical narratives, challenging imperial propaganda and national myths. David Attwell explores this aspect in his book J.M. Coetzee: South Africa and the Politics of Writing: "The Vietnam Project is the work of propaganda agents allied to the Department of Defense during the American incursions in Vietnam, while the parodied documents in the second part of *Dusklands*, 'The Narratives of Jacobus,' critique colonial texts of expansion" (University of California Press, 1993).

Both Dawn and Coetzee grapple with an ontological problem: uncertainty about their own existence and their relationship to the external world. Vaughan Michel, in his article 'Literature and Politics: Currents in South African Writing,' observes:"They are identical not in character or experience, but in their mode of consciousness as they perceive their world and their place within it" (Journal of Southern African Studies, 1982). He further notes, "Dawn represents the contemporary intellectual ensnared in the 'doom-laden projects of latter-day imperialism,' while Jacobus embodies the early explorer-colonizer, living out the anarchic individualism and youthful vigor of Western imperialism."

'The Vietnam Project' reveals imperialistic ambitions, imposing cultural dominance over underdeveloped nations under the guise of democratic values. Colonizers and imperialists often adopt double standards, consolidating autocratic control in the name of democracy. The extensive devastation mirrors the horrors of the Holocaust, where oppressors and oppressed alike suffer profound suppression. Violence begets violence, a harsh reality underscored by nature's laws.

Meanwhile, 'The Narratives of Jacobus' exposes the whitewashing of eighteenth-century colonial history and its mythological use by South Africa's founding figures. It critiques the colonial mentality that exploits native resources while denigrating indigenous cultures as primitive and uncivilized.

In essence, '*Dusklands*' stands as a masterpiece in the literary domain, offering profound insights into the colonial mentality of dominance and oppression. It traverses substantial wavelengths, inviting critical analysis of historical narratives and their enduring impact on contemporary societal structures.

5. CONCLUSION:

In J.M. Coetzee's "*Dusklands*," the theme of violence is intricately woven into the narrative, reflecting a profound critique of the colonial legacy. Throughout the novel, Coetzee explores how violence becomes ingrained in the fabric of societies shaped by colonialism, leaving lasting scars on both the oppressors and the oppressed.

One of the key conclusions drawn from "*Dusklands*" is the cyclical nature of violence inherent in colonialism. The protagonist, Eugene Dawn, embodies the dehumanizing effects of perpetrating violence in the name of empire-building. His descent into moral decay and psychological fragmentation serves as a stark portrayal of how colonial ideologies justify and perpetuate brutality.

Moreover, Coetzee underscores the pervasive impact of colonial violence on indigenous cultures. Through the character of Jacobus Coetzee in the second narrative, "The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee," the author explores the ruthless exploitation and destruction inflicted upon the Khoikhoi people. This narrative exposes the brutal realities of colonial expansion, revealing how violence becomes normalized and perpetuated through institutionalized power structures.

Furthermore, "*Dusklands*" challenges the notion of historical progress linked to colonial conquest. Instead, Coetzee exposes the underlying brutality and dehumanization that accompany imperial ambitions, questioning the legitimacy of such endeavors. The novel forces readers to confront uncomfortable truths about the dark underbelly of colonialism and its enduring legacy of violence.

In conclusion, "*Dusklands*" by J.M. Coetzee offers a searing critique of the colonial legacy through its portrayal of violence. The novel's exploration of the psychological, moral, and societal impacts of colonial violence underscores the complexity and lasting repercussions of historical oppression. By interrogating these themes, Coetzee compels readers to reflect on the ethical dimensions of power, domination, and resistance, urging a deeper understanding of how violence shapes and distorts both individual lives and collective histories.

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