

KARADENİZ TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY * INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

**NARRATIVE LEVELS AND TEXTUAL LAYERS IN J.M. COETZEE'S
ELIZABETH COSTELLO (2003) AND *DIARY OF A BAD YEAR* (2007)**

PhD DISSERTATION

Nimetullah ALDEMİR

AUGUST - 2022

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Thesis Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Zeki ÇIRAKLI

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APPROVAL

Upon the submission of the dissertation, Nimetullah ALDEMİR has defended the study titled “Narrative Levels and Textual Layers in J.M. Coetzee’s *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) and *Diary of A Bad Year* (2007)” in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Language and Literature at Karadeniz Technical University. The study has been found fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis by unanimous / majority vote on 23.09.2022.

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ABSTRACT

J.M. Coetzee is directly or indirectly always concerned with the multi-layered narrative texts problematising the concept of authorship and narration. This study treats the two novels as “narrative texts” and “textual narratives” simultaneously. From a postclassical narratological perspective, the study investigates the narrators and narrative levels in J. M. Coetzee’s *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) and *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007), two sophisticated narratives with authors without authority. The characters in these novels occupy the roles of authors, narrators, and characters with remarkable intellectual, self-conscious and reflective capabilities. The implied author, playing with the evasive links between the biographical connotations and fictional denotations, elucidates the fictional status of the novels regarding various narrative and authorial strategies. The study aims to reveal that both novels complicate the narrative levels and narrative voices, and further incorporates them with that of the implied author. The study, therefore, foregrounding the narratological insights into literary representation of the characters, narrators and fictional authors, explores how Coetzee questions the notions of fiction and history, textuality and metatextuality amalgamating the elements of narrative representation, writing, ideology, politics (ecopolitics) and literary theory. The thesis concludes that Coetzee undermines the hierarchical concepts and binary oppositions (textual, fictional, cultural, historical) assumed or produced through the act of writing or representation.

Keywords: Narrative Levels, Textual Layers, Authorship, Narrative Strategies, Irony

ÖZET

J.M. Coetzee doğrudan veya dolaylı olarak her zaman için yazarlık ve anlatı kavramını sorunsallaştıran çok katmanlı anlatı metinleriyle ilgilenmektedir. Bu çalışma, J. M. Coetzee'nin *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) ve *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007) romanlarındaki anlatıcıları ve anlatı düzeylerini incelemektedir. Bu romanlardaki karakterler, yazar, anlatıcı ve dikkate değer entelektüel, öz bilinç ve düşünümsel yeteneklere sahip karakter rollerini işgal etmektedirler. Örtük yazar, biyografik çağrışımlar ile kurgusal düzenlamalar arasındaki kaçamak bağlantılarla oynayarak, romanların kurgusal durumunu çeşitli anlatı ve yazar stratejilerine göre ayrıntılandırmaktadır. Çalışma, her iki romanın da anlatı düzeyleriyle anlatı seslerini karmaşık hale getirdiğini ve bunları örtük yazarın romanıyla bütünleştirdiğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamaktadır. Dolayısıyla çalışma, anlatıcıların ve kurgusal yazarların edebi temsiline ilişkin anlatıbilimsel içgörülerini ön plana çıkarıp; Coetzee'nin anlatı temsili, yazı, ideoloji, siyaset (eko-politika) ve edebiyat teorisi unsurlarını birleştirerek kurgu ve tarih, metinsellik ve üst-metinsellik kavramlarını nasıl sorguladığını araştırmaktadır. Tez, Coetzee'nin yazma ya da temsil etme eylemi aracılığıyla varsayılan ya da üretilen hiyerarşik kavramlarla ikili karşıtlıkların (metinsel, kurgusal, kültürel, tarihsel gibi karşıtlıklar) altını oyduğu sonucuna varmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Anlatı Düzeyleri, Metin katmanları, Yazarlık, Anlatı Stratejileri, İroni

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DBY : Diary of a Bad Year
EC : Elizabeth Costello
EL : Eight Lessons
JMC : J. M. Coetzée
SO : Strong Opinions



INTRODUCTION

“As historias se cuentan a si mismas, no las cuenta uno”¹

John Maxwell Coetzee (9 February 1940) addressed a distinguished and curious audience in 2003 Nobel Prize winner speech and raised critical questions about the role of the intellectual in a humorous way. This question touches upon acute challenges and paradoxes, particularly in the wake of the 21st century. How many hats does an author wear in life and in his/her books? He shared a funny dialogue with his mother when he visited his parents after the Nobel prize and saw her mother was more interested in his meal on the table than the prize itself. This was not because she did not care about his success but because her role as a mother was culturally implanted. He makes fun of himself and simply calls into question the authors' role as an intellectual and storyteller. His words remind us of the central characters in his two novels *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year*, which represent two intellectual elderly authors writing novels and essays as Coetzee does. In both novels, these characters appear in various roles in life, and are represented in serious and ludicrous situations. Coetzee, the South African-Australian novelist, deconstructs the very notion of identity in person, bringing together the elements of north and south and the sensibilities of white and black. He himself as an author questions these categories all his lifetime as an essayist, a novelist, a linguist or a translator. As one of the most acclaimed authors in the English language from critical and cultural aspects, his works have attracted not only critical interest but also raised philosophical and political issues (Head, 2009).²

Coetzee grew up in African culture. His family lived in Cape Town in Cape Province. A son to Afrikaner parents, he spent his youth in South Africa but he currently lives in Australia. He became a citizen in 2006 after he moved there in 2002 (Collins, 2009: 46).

Coetzee's parents were educated people. Coetzee's father, Zacharias was an attorney working for the government and his mother, Vera was a teacher. At home, the family mainly used English, but they also spoke Afrikaans with their relatives. He is descended from Dutch, German and Polish immigrants.

¹ Translation: “Stories tell themselves, you don't tell them” *Diary of a Bad Year*

² Inner of the 2003 Nobel Prize in Literature. He has won the Booker Prize (twice), the CNA Prize (thrice), the Jerusalem Prize, the “Prix Femina étranger”, and The Irish Times International Fiction Prize, and owns a number of additional accolades and honorary doctorates.

He attended St. Joseph's College, received a Catholic education at school, and studied mathematics and English at the University of Cape Town, receiving his BA degree (1961). He worked for IBM as a computer programmer in London, and he received his MA from Cape Town University in 1963. Coetzee recounts his boyhood in Cape Town and youth in London in his autobiographical novels *Boyhood* (1997) and *Youth* (2002). His academic journey started in the US at University of Texas, and flourished into his PhD degree in 1969. The topic of his PhD dissertation was still engaging as it was a “computer-aided stylistic analysis of Samuel Beckett's English prose” (Head, 2009). He began his first novel in Buffalo, US, when he taught English Literature between 1968-1971. Upon his involvement in some of the protesting movements against the Vietnam War, his permanent residence was rejected by the government and arrested for criminal trespass and expelled from the country. The charges against him only were to drop in 1971. Once he returned to South Africa in 1972, he became a lecturer at English Language and Literature Department, the University of Cape Town. He became Professor in 1984 and became a Distinguished Professor in the Faculty of Humanities until his retirement in 2002. After retirement, he moved to Australia and became a citizen.

Coetzee is always interested in the issue of intellectual resilience and individual relationship with society and the experience of writing as much as the position of the intellectual as an author/orator in the public eye. Since he favours and enjoys allegories, in fact, he is more concerned with human beings and social organisations with strange, inconsistent and conflicting measures that degrade and disgrace the human being. Even though his most known parable is *Disgrace* (1999), which represents the 1999 South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (Poyner, 2006), his other novels cannot be discussed without this frame of allegory. Regarding disgrace, Coetzee argues that “Having no official religion, the TRC was an anomaly: a court founded in significant part on Christian doctrine and accepted by only a small percentage of the population, which made it a little strange. Only time will tell if the TRC was able to accomplish what it set out to do” (Poyner, 2006), but he is always concerned with ludicrous impositions, strong opinions and vain judgements and has continued to write allegorical representations. In *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year*, for example, he explores two public intellectuals and explores their opinions, sensitivities, sensibilities, and social inadequacies alongside with authorship, politics, daily life and their intellectual responses throughout the narrative frames. In these novels, it can be said that Coetzee rewrites *Ulysses* or *Don Quixote* in the wake of the 21st century and repositions the intellectual/author in a new context. The difference resides in the lack of ambition as Coetzee's characters are not so passionate to ‘save the world’. Rather Coetzee calls into question these intellectual authors.

Coetzee is a man and writer of “inclusion”, always striving to bring together the diverse aspects but almost always failing to fuse them. His sincere statement during his citizenship ceremony gives some clue about his resistance to abandoning: “I came to Australia rather than abandon South Africa,

where I have deep emotional links. After my first trip to Australia in 1991, I was captivated by the people, the country, and the elegance of Adelaide, the place I now call home. It was only natural that I should return” (*JM Coetzee Becomes an Australian Citizen - The Mail & Guardian*, 2006). This biographical detail is also a clue for his attitude in his writings. “Coetzee’s novels are carefully interwoven and intertextual in a way that continues an essential discussion about the frailty of human beings, weakness of narratives and poisonousness of strong judgements. He switches or moves to a new country, a new mindset, a new narrative technique, a new concern but never abandons the previous one. Similarly, even though he uses metafictional, metatextual, metanarrative strategies, he brings with him history and extratextual notions and controversies and keeps dealing with reality (Çıraklı, 2022). For this reason, history and politics, and their strong conceptual roots are almost always lie at the heart of Coetzee’s novels. He, therefore, dedicated his Nobel award to South African country and the continent of Africa (“Coetzee Receives Nobel Honour,” 2003). Coetzee never abandons his interest in politics but carefully avoids making out his political views, displaying in his *EC* and *DBY*, how “the vocabulary of politics has become more [and more] repulsive” (Poyner, 2006). Critics argue that, for example, *Diary of a Bad Year* (*EC*), which has been described as “memoir with fiction, academic criticism with novelistic narration” and refusing “to recognize the border that has traditionally separated political theory from fictional narrative” (Hope, 2007) and his persistent concern about animal rights and animal abuse marks his not “abandoning” reality to deal merely with fictionality. In fact, he wants to represent the deficiency of intellectual speculations.³

Coetzee, as an academic, author and intellectual served as “the director of a seminar at the Universidad Nacional de San Martin on the literatures of the South.” (*Cátedra Coetzee: Literaturas Del Sur*, n.d.) He was part of a seminar programme with so many important and remarkable “heavyweight” authors with the aim at developing “comparative perspectives on the literature and journalism” (Halford, 2017). The present study also aims at highlighting the parody of these “intellectual networks” and the intended “corpus of translated works from throughout the South.” (Halford, 2017)⁴

During an interview in 2015, Coetzee expressed his criticism of the practice on moral grounds and requested that it be given to Iranian journalistic organizations, which do not respect international copyright agreements.

³ Coetzee criticised the current animal husbandry industry in a speech made on his behalf by Hugo Weaving in Sydney on February 22, 2007. In 2004, Coetzee became the patron of Voiceless, an Australian non-profit animal protection organization, for which he delivered a speech. Coetzee’s works, such as *Disgrace*, *Elizabeth Costello*, and *The Old Woman and the Cats*, have often addressed animal cruelty and animal welfare. He does not consume meat.

⁴ In addition, he concurrently taught a course entitled “Everyday Pleasures” for the Australian research project *Other Worlds: Forms of Global Literature*, which also focuses on South American literature.

He is a man with nearly monkish self-discipline and determination, according to South African writer Rian Malan. He abstains from drinking, smoking, or eating meat in any form. He rides long distances to stay in shape and spends at least an hour a day at his writing desk. A co-worker who has known him for over a decade claims to have only ever seen him laugh once. Coetzee has not spoken at many dinner events attended by an acquaintance (Cowley, 1999).

Anyone acquainted with Coetzee's novels realises the fact that they pose challenging questions regarding the reality, representation and textuality. The elusiveness of reading in *EC* and *DBY*, even resisting to biographical criticism, is based upon his genuine experiences and observations as an author himself. So, his fiction, is rich in intriguing narrative accounts, contradictory narrative levels and striking ideas open to conceivable, yet unsettling possible readings, many of which are provocative and disquieting. The study analyses how narrative accounts and textual narratives are organised as part of the parables of aged public intellectuals. The notion of aging is not only a motif in the narratives but also a reference to their public image and strong opinions as experienced and influential opinion makers.

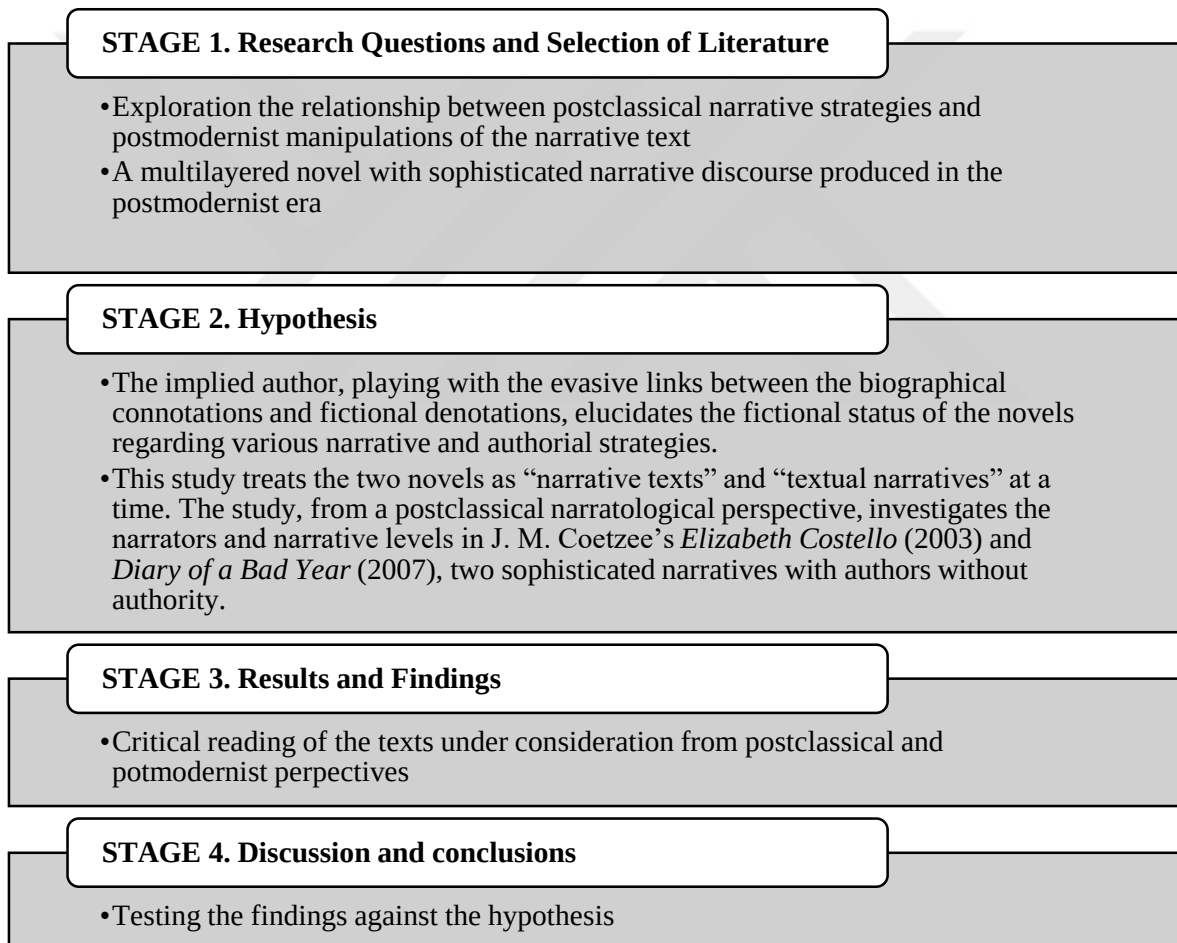
This study argues that J. M. Coetzee's novels under consideration can be analysed in terms of narrative strategies, and that these strategies undermine hierarchies of representation, fictionality and the very discourse of realistic concerns. This is a transformation not only on the aesthetic level but also on the level of what we call reality. Hence, the author does not simply foreground the playfulness of the author, self-reflexivity or impossibility of representation he also denies the possibility of a reliable discussion of the serious problems of humanity. These novels, therefore, problematize the "postmodern attitude of problematization" (Çıraklı, 2022). The characters and orators of the novels are so serious, but the readers cannot take them seriously as they, and their discourse of strong and acute issues, do not indicate either an epic quest, or a distressed modernist non-epic journey. These narratives are neither the signs of fictionality nor the death of the authors, who revive, yet, are not adequately alive. So, these novels cannot have a genuine touch upon reality. The final undermining of these novels is directed to the very idea of binaries or hierarchy by leaving the discourses to "decentredness." His ongoing manipulation of the readers with overt and covert self-references to history, reality, biography and politics.

CHAPTER ONE

1. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

In the introductory sections, operational terms and concepts are explained and background about the concepts of authorship and narration are foregrounded.

Figure 1: Subtitles and Developmental Stages of Analysis



The following sections comprise research proposition, argument and aim, selection of literature, significance of the study, research questions and thesis outline.

1.1. Research Proposition, Argument and Aim

Harold Bloom, in his well-known book “Anxiety of Influence” refers to the Oedipus myth as a model to understand the creative situation of an author and compares it to a struggle against the precursor authors (Bloom, 1997: 10). In this ground-setting argument, the critics stress authorship as a manifestation of the individual who attempts to provide a new organisation of the word by using the verbal apparatus. The creative experience of the author is highlighted in this kind of understanding where one of the most confusing and difficult problem arises. Authorship and author’s authority appear to be one of the most challenging conundrums for critics who deal with the dissenting aspects of the act of writing: Individual experience and imagination on the one hand; historical and cultural manipulation on the other.

- This study analyses J. M. Coetzee’s novels *EC* and *DBY* in terms of narrative strategies and storytelling and explores hierarchies of representation, fictionality and the very discourse of realistic concerns.
- The author does not simply foreground the authorial playfulness, self-reflexivity or impossibility of representation since he questions the possibility of a consistent discussion of the serious problems of humanity.
- The study represents the author within a dramatic medium as well as a narrative.
- As the novels under consideration problematize the “postmodern attitude of problematization”, it also deals with author-narrator-characters
- These narratives get beyond fictionality and the death of the authors, who seek to recuperate from void representation, nor adequately achieve textual resurrection.
- So, these novels, let alone having a genuine touch upon reality, rather, they undermine the very ground of existence for themselves on various narrative levels and textual layers.
- The eventual “decentredness” depicted by the written or oral discourses of the aged intellectuals marks an ongoing manipulation of the readers with overt and covert self-references to history, reality, biography and politics.

1.2. Selection of Literature

This study deals with “J. M. Coetzee's two characters, who occupy different roles as authors, narrators, academics and public intellectuals. Drawing on the issue of authorship, narration and narrative levels, Coetzee questions the power of intellectuals in the contemporary world. Elizabeth Costello in the novel *Elizabeth Costello* (2003) and Senior JC in *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007) represent Coetzee’s view of these authors who have little to do with human beings and current state of affairs.

Born in Cape Town J.M. Coetzee's parents were not of British descent, but he grew up speaking English. He holds a PhD in Germanic languages, linguistics, and English, and he began his writing career in 1969. One of his works includes the *Diary of a Bad Year (DBY)*, published in 2007. The book is a deliberation on the world's current state. It starts with a brief essay about "The State." Coetzee narrates to the reader a story of a rich man who is a writer and is obsessed with a female neighbour. Another work is titled *Elizabeth Costello (EC)*, published in 2003. The novel is about a celebrated ageing Australian writer named Elizabeth Costello. This writer travels worldwide, giving lectures on topics including literary censorship and the lives of animals. Although the audience applauds her presentations, they do not understand what she believes in and her point of view, which also confuses her family. These books are significant in that it raises critical questions about not only ethical issues of storytelling and but also novelistic awareness (Collellmir, 2009: 46). This investigation analyses these two books by Coetzee (*EC and DBY*), outlining their similarities and differences.

1.3. Originality and Significance of the Study

The study is a critical contribution to Coetzee studies. The present study is significant since it analyses the literary texts that have mostly been investigated thematically with theoretical elaborations on text and authorship. However, this study sets up a relationship between the theme and technique, author as narrator and writing as performance, and draws attention to "how" Coetzee represents the "drama of narration" and explores the amalgamation of narrative levels and textual layers. There are quite a few studies about Coetzee's intellectual authors, but the thesis will draw on the original narratological perspective and provide an original and conducive discussion of the issues.

1.4. Research Questions

- a) What are the narrative strategies used in the novels?
- b) How does narratology relate to the contextual and textual, historical and fictional, authorial and narratorial realms?
- c) What are the binary oppositions deciphered and deconstructed in the texts?
- ç) What do the novels imply from a postclassical perspective?

1.5. Thesis Outline

This study is divided into five chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction and research proposition, argument and aim. It explains the reason for the selection of the novels to be analysed and highlights the significance of the study. Chapter two provides a detailed background and review of literature about the Coetzee studies. This chapter also forecasts in what way the present dissertation differs from the previous research, accenting the originality of the present research. Chapter three,

positing the study on a theoretical background, explicates the terminologies and concept set. The theoretical background provides the operational terms and concepts used for the analysis of the works, focusing on various theoreticians such as Foucault, Bourdieu, Barthes, Genette, Currie and Culler (Barthes, 2001; Currie, 2011; Ellrich & Foucault, 1978; Genette et al., 1983, 1988) who have raised critical ideas about authorship and narration. The chapter concludes with the research guideline and methodology required for the progress of the study and delivers the definitions of operational terms. Chapter four examines *Elizabeth Costello* and Chapter five deals with *Diary of a Bad Year* regarding authors as characters and narrators.



CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Chapter Outline

This chapter is primarily composed of literature review that provides the research or survey data about Coetzee and his books. At the end of the literature review, there is a *résumé* that sums up the previous studies and discusses the impetus behind this study. The aim of providing a literature review for this thesis is to explore the research *niche* that justifies the need and ground for this further research, which supports the originality of the study.

2.2. Review of Literature

The writings of J. M. Coetzee are full of interesting concepts that may be interpreted in many ways, many of which are disturbing and upsetting. He touches on many subjects, including public intellectualism and old age. Many of the subjects he chooses to explore in his writing are informed by his upbringing and life experiences, both in South Africa and abroad. “*Disgrace*,” for example, is influenced by the political climate in his own country, with the novel's events evoking those of post-apartheid South Africa. His own experiences and the historical setting of his own country greatly impact the topics, characters, and writing style he employs in his writings. This investigation examines Coetzee's life and works to see how it informs the stories he tells in his books. It is kind of research which attempts to understand more about the man behind the stories.

2.2.1. J. M. Coetzee as Author

J. M. Coetzee has followed a direction that positions his fiction within local settings but at the same time transforms it into universal narratives. In this regard, the work of J.M. Coetzee has always included some significant degree of self-referentiality. *The Vietnam Project* and *The Narrative of Jacobus Coetzee* are two novellas included in *Dusklands* by Coetzee. For example, A Dutch frontier dweller in South Africa in the 18th century is the subject of the second book, which tells the story of an explorer who abuses the indigenous people of the land as enslaved people and punishes them severely. One J. M. Coetzee is credited with discovering and translating Jacobus Coetzee's manuscript from Dutch and Afrikaans (Kossew & Harvey, 2019: 43).

In addition to *Diary*, readers will find notable self-referential methods in more recent publications. Rather than the triadic narrative voice, the key approach in *Summertime* (2009), for example, is its post-mortem structure, which prevents ersatz ethical deliberation in the novel (Kossew & Harvey, 2019: 91). It is because of the (potentially dangerous) self-reference literary techniques that Coetzee employs in his books that he can defeat ersatz ethical thought, and because defeating ersatz ethical thought is of equal importance to literature. This study in many ways focuses on the narrative techniques in Coetzee's novels.

To elaborate his approach to narrative one needs to look at the way he uses reflection. Coetzee uses reflection in his novels to criticize how the South African government performs racial segregation. Reflection is used in the writing of the novels to point out the political decay where crime and racism are used as a means of ruling South Africans. This method of reflective writing is philosophical since it differentiates nature from religion. This form of writing used by Coetzee in his essays effectively seeks the truth about human relationships and ethics in society (Kossew & Harvey, 2019: 41).

Furthermore, he alludes to a recurring theme in his work: the link between fiction, critique, and autobiography in his writing (Effe, 2017: 53). His autobiographies, which were still in the works at the interview, may give a variety of critical fiction if he believes that his critique and fiction portray variations of the self. By challenging their limitations, these versions of autobiographies attract attention to writing traditionally seen as justified by a “metaphysics of presence,” according to John Sturrock (Effe, 2017: 56).

In his literary pursuits, several aspects of story structure are of importance. Firstly, the notion of narrative continuity is an issue to consider. Unlike typical autobiographies, these publications do not provide a full or even representative account of the author's life but a collection of pieces. Between the ages of 10 and thirteen, *Boyhood* follows the main character and his family as they grow up in Worcester, a tiny rural town on the outskirts of the Karoo (Effe, 2017: 60). The protagonist's youth spans the years from his last years of university to his three years working in England. Each work's narrative is similarly episodic, lingering for extended periods on some events while leaving numerous gaps in the timeline. One existence does not correspond to the story's logic of cause and effect, which inscribes a discontinuous subject. The events of this life are subject to the whims of “local circumstances” and “unstable memory” depicted in this life.

Therefore, the authenticity of Coetzee's books is not the aim, and the interaction between text and psychological person, as well as narrative and event, is complicated, rich, and sometimes difficult. Coetzee's first three novels are modernist objects of great complexity (Effe, 2017: 112). The eighteenth-century “exploration” and colonization of Africa (*Dusklands*), colonial life and

native-colonizer relations (Dusklands), and the relationship between violent and power occur in almost all of his novels and certainly the first three.

The way Nadine Gordimer and J.M. Coetzee tackle the land and language in their literary corpus exemplifies the link between politics and fiction in their works. As the writers examine the failures of colonial discourse to allow a “true exchange,” they shed light on a wider understanding of politics concerned with human relationships, both with each other and with the environment, as well as the effects of power relations. Writing about the oppression of the black majority in South Africa by the government and its police force posed an almost unique ethical and artistic challenge to its authors. During apartheid, South African literature faced many challenges (Leist & Singer, 2010: 200). These included many contentious political, ethical and social issues and based on this understanding literary acts are also seen as political acts (Leist & Singer, 2010: 234). According to Coetzee, South African literature is “less than entirely human, unusually obsessed with power and the torsions of power, unable to transcend beyond basic relations of contestation, domination, and subordination to the immense and multifaceted human reality that lies beyond them.” (Leist & Singer, 2010: 213).

In his look to narrativity a character's pursuit of the truth can cause him to lose contact with the outside world. Social immediacy can either dissolve the individual into collectives or lead to a wordless acceptance of social phenomena, the reality of other beings, and their demands on our attention. When pushed to the brink, all three of these tendencies may descend into catastrophic self-destruction (D. Attwell, 2016: 43). Coetzee treats each character in their plays differently. In his novel, *Boyhood and Youth*, Coetzee uses dialect margin to show the process of searching for oneself in an emotional society. Coetzee pulls off some impressive intellectual acrobatics in this passage. He moves the subject of autobiography onto the topic of truth to begin with. He argues that autobiography is just another form of writing the subject, and it's no different from criticism or fiction since the subject is formed in the writing process regardless of the topic or genre. His article “Fictions of the truth,” which deals primarily with autobiography, subsequently identifies two separate types of reality in writing: “historical truth” and “poetic truth”. For these reasons, the author concludes that the topic can never be completely accessible in any writing, whether it be an autobiography or any other form, regardless of the medium (D. Attwell, 2016: 71).

As with any human social reality, it has actors whose pursuit of its purposes inevitably limits what others may otherwise achieve, frequently directly competing with other pursuits, and is constrained in resources and space (Effe, 2017: 112). Suddenly, it's a question of who will be in charge and who will be in charge. On the other hand, individual agents are limited in their ability to accomplish most of their goals without the assistance of others. The biology of human development ensures a strong family dependency throughout infancy (Effe, 2017: 90). The diversity and breadth of the dispersion of human skill and the fragility and susceptibility of human existence all promise

that it will be difficult to escape different social dependence. People have known for a long time that human civilization is both intensely competitive and extremely conflictual. Humans are born with a strong desire for independence and freedom from subjection to the will of other self-regarding actors, as well as a compelling urge to acquire some stable form of dependency or relative trust. Our nature assures a perpetual tension. Politics is the primary, but not exclusive, arena in which answers to this fundamental challenge are suggested and tested (Effe, 2017: 101).

Likewise, through the questioning of language and communication, another method Coetzee has investigated the link between politics and the novel is Coetzee has dedicated much time to thinking about the topic of communication. Is there a language in which persons of European or South African colonial background may talk to Africa? questions Coetzee. In South African literature, the lone poet in an empty area is not a peripheral character. He seeks a conversation with Africa, an exchange of ideas with Africa, that would enable him to have an identity beyond that of a mere visitor, tourist, or transitory. Writing by Coetzee, the author explores the question of whether or not there is or could be a language that would allow for a meaningful questioning across the socio-political divisions of South Africa.

As for his narrative strategies, metalepsis is demonstrated to cause strains and ambiguities in the author's writings, illustrating ethical effect as dependent on a fictional and dialogical communication between the writer and the audience. In the chapter-length introduction, "Metalepsis as Ethics" serves as the theoretical foundation of Effe's thesis. This critical intervention describes and analyses Coetzee's self-reflexive style and expands "the narratological idea of metalepsis on the basis of his literature" (Effe, 2017: 156). Self-reflexive speech, according to Effe, is dangerous because it may tyrannize its audience since it is preoccupied with the self rather than the larger world. However, she demonstrates that the author's self-reflexive narrative tactics represent an ethical commitment to debate, ambiguity, and responsibility towards others.

Poststructuralist explanations of literature's ethics inform this book's idea of ethics. Derek Attridge's ethical description of reading as an act of creation spurred by a conversation between text and reader in *The Singularity of Literature* also plays a significant role in this analysis (Attridge, 2004a). Although Effe's literary theory is notable for its poststructuralist assertion of utter uncertainty, his rhetorical definition of authorial purpose and prepared reader responses make him distinctive (Effe, 2017: 142). Form and substance are equally important in her view of ethics. The ethical implications of certain narrative tactics might then be discussed about the impacts on readers that Effe believes Coetzee's books have (Effe, 2017: 120). As a writer of post-colonial generation, Coetzee cannot escape postcolonial and postclassical themes either.

2.2.2. Postcolonial and Postclassical Assumptions

Much has been written on postcolonial dimension of J.M. Coetzee's literary corpus. As this research focuses on his narrative pursuits, postcolonial themes of Coetzee will be tackled relatively short.

In the *Heart of the Country*, land ownership is seen as fundamental to pastoralism's power dynamics. For the colonizer to love the land, he or she must possess it; Magda explains, "I am the heir of a portion of primordial ground that my ancestors deemed desirable and enclosed." We have just one reaction to the impulse of desire: to catch, contain, and retain (Leist & Singer, 2010: 71). It is paradoxical that the reaction to finding the earth good is to govern, control, and claim it as a property; this is reminiscent of the creation myth in Genesis 1, a reversal of the original intent. As far as Coetzee is concerned, the only chance for depicting land is in a figure that does not strive to exert influence over it, a "trackless" life on the ground (Leist & Singer, 2010: 45).

From *Life & Times of Michael K* (1983) to his most recent work, *Age of Iron* (1990), Coetzee's main preoccupation has been the character and crisis of literature in South Africa now, the South Africa that Nadine Gordimer has referred as "the period of interregnum." Less a debate, more a "The discursive-political repercussions of the country's protracted pain militate against fictionality, which is more of a "stand" than a prerequisite of Coetzee's work. For what kind of power can the fiction generate if it is to speak in contemporary terms? What kind of address is conceivable in such circumstances? Questions like these highlight the more reflective crisis of modernity and its so-called paralysis before historical past, but Coetzee's success is to have found a way within fiction to investigate this paralysis—indeed, to keep moving beyond it to a recreated role in which fiction starts to speak to the party politics on its own terms. Coetzee achieves this by incorporating the skepticisms and symptomatic sensitivities of post-structuralism into his work, as well as by looking for methods in which the novel might reclaim an ethical base while remaining fully aware of the political situation (Sulk, 2015: 7–9). a

All these attempts to explore human condition and author experience indicate a "period of transition" which incorporate, as stated above, discursive-political ramifications of ongoing human suffering against fictionality rather than being a feature of Coetzeean narrative. The question above "what kind of address is possible under these circumstances?" calls for further questions and extremely oblige to focus critical attention on the more "representational and reflective crisis of postmodernism" and its so-called paralysis of history (Coetzee, 1992: 4). Coetzee's lifelong investigation of this representational paralysis continued in his later works like *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year*, in which the questioning of "novel's ethical foundation" on the fringe of death of humanism and humanities.

As of February 1990, circumstances in which a distinct notion of the nation-state appears to be surfacing, in which, at least, a discussion between the main antagonists over the significance of nationhood has started to emerge, with the legalization of the adversarial activity, the release of a large number of political prisoners, and the overturn of racist and discriminatory legislation. Coetzee's accomplishment appears to be pertinent in this environment. In drawing to light the standpoint that underpins any attempt to envisage the collective, his battle with the issue of agency is exemplary. Furthermore, both narrativity and nationhood are weak constructions in Coetzee's work: the disintegration, and the susceptibilities, are shown through a fundamentally ethical prism of equality and reciprocity. This accomplishment would not have been possible without Coetzee's nearly unshakable scepticism and steadfast adherence to the demands of his artistic profession (Coetzee, 1992: 13).

2.2.3. Conventions and Strategies

The fiction by Coetzee always leaves people uncertain regarding the difference between the author's life and writings. In his writings, Coetzee employs a series of perceptive readings to initiate a conversation having a moral force on the reader. The author unfolds the profound uncertainties in his texts and the doubtful nature of the characters' feedback. Moreover, no author figure in Coetzee's oeuvre can effectively assume the duties they encounter and administer the required care because the discursive and intersubjective responses are limited. Consequently, the writer's texts do not disregard the responses as worthless. Coetzee's texts disagree with the demands frequently directed by writers, including Coetzee requiring them to be accountable for their texts in terms of effect and function. In other words, the authors should be political and write engaging social realist fiction.

Although Coetzee's work has several reviews and fine crafting, they are not without vagueness, uncertainties, and ambiguity. Coetzee adopts self-reflective strategies in his work that governs how the audience should read through the text. Similarly, these strategies help Coetzee to neglect authority when his works feature inconsistencies, vagueness, text failures, and other fiction-based writing limitations. In this context, the author combines source neglect and rhetorical control to reveal the ethical potential of his works. For this reason, rhetorical and poststructuralist techniques to narrative ethics can successively analyze Coetzee's works. The former focuses on referential intention and how particular narrative approaches unfold the readers' specific responses, while the latter hypothesizes the worth of the responses' uncertainties. Coetzee's works guide the reader by creating an interaction between the reader, text, and author through well-crafted dialogue and rhetoric approaches.

Coetzee's works, including *Elizabeth Castello*, have more to offer than just surrogate characters and willingly project particular suggestions to the general public. Similarly, the audience can perceive the *Diary of a Bad Year (DBY)* as a fascinating text investigating public and private

questions about a specific historical time despite its complex structure and content. For instance, this narrative touches on U.S. trespass in Iraq, neoliberalism victory, Abu Graib and Guantanamo Bay's historical time, and the emergence of electronic communication, which rekindled the new world economy. Furthermore, a novelist like Zoë Wicomb is aware of a writer faced with a character who contributes less to the flow of a story. *Slow Man's* writings are a perfect example giving a similar circumstance following Elizabeth Costello's responsiveness to Paul Rayment.

Zoë Wicomb borrows multiple teachings about reading and writing from *Slow Man* to assess Italo Calvino's fiction and Rachel Whiteread's scriptures. Nonetheless, other authors like Michael Valdez Moses adopt Elizabeth Costello's protean conventional and multi-generic properties to demonstrate how Coetzee's assessment involving literary forms is distinctive in aesthetic, political, and philosophical debates. According to Mark Sanders, Coetzee attempts to reproduce reality by representing human action in literature through authorial doubling. Moreover, Nancy Ruttenberg explores how Coetzee's books present takeover by the activities, ontological priorities, readership interests, and ethical allusions of reading. The narrator in his *DBY* seems to reflect chances of novelistic authority. In this novel, Coetzee captions Dostoevsky and Tolstoy with indisputable standards that can appeal to any serious novelist. In addition, the author acknowledges that Russian writers make batter artists under novelist authorities.

The ideas by Elizabeth Costello are always at the extremes of art. This writer translates modernism to realism and uses animal slaughter as a simile for the holocaust. She does this in the aftermath of human tragedies from a post-colonial, post-modernist, and post-realist viewpoint (Carstensen, 2007: 79). This writer believes reading and writing are infectious based on her old belief. Most characters in Elizabeth Costello's text doubt her assumptions, interests, competencies, and motives. Consequently, no character entirely agrees with Elizabeth Costello wholeheartedly. For instance, Elizabeth Costello's son, David, defends her mother only because it is his filial duty to stand by the mother. Surprisingly, the novel by Elizabeth Costello meets antagonists whose decisions are against the writer's voice even when such conflicting perspectives provide helpful devices for a comprehensive dialogue novel. These characters tend to contradict each other, especially those characters that Elizabeth Costello keeps silent. It is beyond unshakable belief for Elizabeth Costello to survive through opposition from her feelings despite her trendsetter role.

Verisimilitude or authenticity are not worthy standards to express how Coetzee portrays Australia. This continent is sketch and schematic but sounded geo-physically in most books like a *slow man* and Elizabeth Castello through intellectual schemas, mainly colonial paradigm. Notably, Coetzee intriguingly seeks to mark and specify Australia by developing analogies between the southern creative evocations or homologues between Australian and South African portrayals present in colonial writings. Australia can assume two spaces depending on the prevailing circumstance. This continent can be a transnational formation if it is under a decolonial area which aligns with Benedict

Anderson's conclusion, this continent is identified and recognized as a southern space. In Coetzee's narratives, the author uses authorial creative style within the fictional world to establish uncertainties to show discomfort and anxiety about the type and limitations of the storytelling process.

When one considers fiction as a type of language whose usage relies on real-life scenarios, one can possibly argue that Coetzee weakens the novel's place and culture in his prose narratives. The narrative sense gets involved in a persistently name change structure which parallels how characters get engaged in migratory displacements without any reassurances. Immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, colonizers, and stateless in a vaguely strange and threatening environment define individual characters' political quickness (Varsamopoulou, 2014: 383). Moreover, 'On Raiding' reflects the *DBY* that mentions the looting of other people's belongings, particularly goods, as a behavior embraced by the colonial era and continues to be South Africa's contemporary crime. Similarly, J.C. expresses similar views regarding state origins. Allan is right to suggest that J.C. has no ideas about contemporary global politics and should return to Africa.

Furthermore, the correctness of Allan's suggestion makes him an appropriate and truth-telling counter-voice. Most importantly, Allan fails to sufficiently appreciate that J.C. can be an upcoming African model and a world state template even when J.C. migrated to Australia on multiple torture and censorship occasions which form a subject of several reflections, J.C. assumes *déjà vu*'s condition when he witnesses apartheid-era become a world norm. Fleeing the state is impossible for people born and raised there. For this reason, inner emigration remains the solution proposed and developed by marginalized South African intellectuals. Arguably, the novel seems to suggest that contradictions cause enlightenment principles involving the rule of reason and the right to speak to collapse. Most of J.C.'s categories present in his reflections are salvaged premodern terms like the curse, honor, and shame. The postmodern critique invokes this category.

Through narrative exhibitions in earlier novels like *Waiting for Barbarians*, Coetzee engages in quarrels with the world in a more direct and intense form rather than peaceful observation from literary popularity associated with Olympian vantage. After experiencing death, Coetzee reflects on his remorsefulness and assumes his father could not see him as a selfish child. Moreover, Anya realizes that the bookshelf has less healthy titles like *Russian Dolls* apart from the classics of *Dostoevsky* and *Tolstoy*. Even late enthusiasm changes to complete disgrace. For this reason, it is possible to receive some kind of redemption. While his subjectivity diminishes, the character is given a voice. In a deep thought on aspiration, *DBY* is thus a complicated late fictive autobiography form in which the author deconstructs a self-commemorated persona.

It's also a worthwhile read for anybody interested in the ethical aspect of Coetzee's literary works and how it relates to the writer's and audience's moral involvement. This research provides some strong theoretical foundations for analysing metalepsis and its ethical implications as a

narrative event. It's a valuable contribution to literary and narratological scholarship today. Therefore, it'll interest more than just Coetzee experts and students. As Coetzee makes clear, intertextuality is not an ontological component of every book; rather, it is a textual method that authors use. This demonstrates a preference for some texts over others. Intertextual studies have always been an element of research on Coetzee's writings, but they've always been limited to tightly defined connections (D. Attwell, 2016: 44). There are few outliers in the literature of non-English literary traditions whose authors have gotten the attention they deserve concerning their importance to Coetzee. This issue is dedicated to his relationship with those traditions and their writers.

Whether or not one is interested in literary philosophy and ethics as a profession, there exists another book in literature that anybody who enjoys Coetzee's writing and who is curious about the search for truth may turn to. *J. M. Coetzee and ethics: philosophical ideas on literature* is a fascinating read on every level. Even if some of the pieces seem to be a little off-base or unconvincing, they nonetheless pose important issues, and the work as a whole is clear and approachable. More than one study argues that Coetzee's works and characters promote certain ethical stances, including those on government-sponsored torture, animal welfare, and "politically acceptable" but morally bankrupt behaviour (D. Attwell, 2016: 90). These articles may be accused of ignoring the intricacies that context raises. Many readers won't be as interested in learning about Coetzee's ethical beliefs as those that lay aside Coetzee's literary context. Coetzee has been attacked for being morally "hands-off," These pieces help address that criticism.

In this respect, the book *Elizabeth Costello* gives this manifestation via humanism and rationalist notions as the primary metaphor of life concerning human perceptions of animals. We must emphasize that in the study under consideration, all creatures were ranked in the moral hierarchy, highlighting the concept that humans believed they had a stronger claim to live than other living things. Animal cruelty is revealed as the gravest sin of human existence; the author emphasizes that meat-eating people are regarded as genuine accomplices in the stupefying enormity of crime in factories, slaughterhouses, farms, and labs all over the globe. In a series of lectures on animals, Costello's literary talents have been vividly portrayed. Her philosophy holds that all animals have embodied souls and that all humans are also animals (D. Attwell, 2016: 67). What's most horrifying about this is that it highlights how "killers refuse to put themselves in the shoes of their victims." It implies that humans don't treat animals as if they were living in reality.

Furthermore, it's worth noting how much emphasis is placed on the spiritual portrayal of animal rights, including terms such as "western cultural hubris," "sentimental utopia," and "philosophical flaws" such as promises of equal human-animal comprehension. Costello's views and opinions are anchored and represented by various cultural traditions and practices, even though she wanted to keep her personal experiences of her relationships with pet animals private. In contemporary literature, animals' images and symbolism are often used to emphasize key philosophical ideas.

In one of the lecture segments, Costello's philosophical exposition looked to be “poor argued,” albeit it was rationally associated with high cultural and scientific practice. According to the author, most people's daily routines contain emotional interactions with animals that have the ability and intensity to produce unexpected results. It was discovered that the closeness of animals' and humans' emotional ties is the primary source of human empathy and sensibility. For Costello, a string of societal bans on animal-loving behavior was a way to show that we should be more sensitive to other people's enjoyment of and feelings for animals (D. Attwell, 2016: 78).

Coetzee detailed Costello's views of numerous trials and tests to determine whether animals had any intelligence. One of the animal experts in Coetzee's lectures, Barbara Smuts, was interested in animal awareness since she had grown up in an animal-filled environment. In her daily existence, she was often accompanied by animals and worried about the animals' state of mind. For centuries, philosophers have sought to identify the significance of animals for humanity by examining how animals are seen in various cultures.

Elizabeth Costello, one of Coetzee's most significant characters, is a professional writer. Her comments about the literary form and its confusing and probing influence might help us understand the relevance of the literary mode. She is a strong proponent of empathy and the ability to enter another person's experience through open hearts and sympathetic imagination. Costello sees this empathic openness as akin to poetry and creative fiction rather than philosophical discourse (D. Attwell, 2016: 245). At this point, the writings of Elizabeth Costello are peculiar, as is the book's publication history. Coetzee had brought together prose episodes in the beginning of 2002, and through those episodes Costello, a fictional character, attempts to express her ideas in the form of lectures delivered at different institutions. In a nutshell, there are many ways to look at the characters' behaviour in Coetzee's writing, as indicated previously. It is important to analyse whether the protagonist's present wickedness is a consequence of her prior humiliation.

The analysis of J.M Coetzee novels that the author was using philosophy and literary styles to describe the daily experiences of South Africans. Through this analysis it is clear that the works of Coetzee have a great significance in literature and daily lives because the novels reflect on the social, political and economic lives of many individuals.

2.2.4. Biographical Details and Personal History

John Maxwell Coetzee is recognized as an author who has embraced self-reflexive methods and tactics. J.M.C.'s writings read like a straightforward political commentary piece that aligns with Coetzee's. It is correct to say that Anya's view about J.C. is an authorial analysis piece because she says that J.C. cannot escape Africa. It is possible to miss multiple fictional elements, especially the context where J.C. reprimanded a journalist for sharing misinterpreted reports regarding his

comments in *waiting for the Barbarians*. Such moments make the *DBY* grant Coetzee the luxury and opportunity to put forward his strong opinions. Still, this author can explore the war on terror and a state of shame emerging from the civilian population guided by hostile governments. J.C.'s essays provide sufficient clues for one to recognize that the novel's motive is to ponder the complicated relationship between non-fiction and fiction aspects.

Most of J.C.'s essays, like *On Terrorism*, feature complex poetic languages and metaphors that make interpretation difficult and the possibility of unforeseen reading. For this reason, people find foundations to start debates over the matter because these difficulties signal experimental idea treatments. A better example is the argument critiquing literary theory, which summarizes *On Al Qaida's* essay. According to J.C.'s summary regarding the BBC summary, the U.S. is deemed guilty of disregarding the myths about the survival of a hidden terrorist association termed Al Qaeda. *DBY* can seem more inclined toward fiction rather than works of fiction. Self-conscious interrogation blurs the connection between non-fiction and fiction aspects. In another instance, Coetzee drags the novel's limits in a way that crowns the personal authorial character of interest.

Coetzeean work borrows ideas from previous jobs and manipulates them to take a new shift that wrongfoots the casual reader. This writer argues for a position filled with post-colonial rewinding of histories. Coetzee's talks discuss how history and the novel are different and competing discourses while arguing that his foremost duty is to resolve the historical claims to importance. However, this suggestion is not post-colonial revisionism, where the typical model forms a ground to resurface the decolonization process because the novelist seems to be establishing a challenge to historical ideology. Following this challenge, some commentators may conclude that the challenge has no political edge even though it does not discriminate between anti-apartheid revisionism and Afrikaner myths. In this case, the merging of postcolonialism and postmodernism emphasizes power discourse. Most novelists like Coetzee are vital because they change how people perceive problems. In many ways Coetzee and his fictional world are enmeshed.

2.2.5. Socio-political parameters in South Africa

Coetzee is not a conventional realist author; however, his literary pursuits certainly relate to South African socio-economic parameters. He does not engage in social realist literary framework but he attempts understand human condition by bringing together myth, reality and other important fictional works. For example, throughout *Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka, whose influence is obvious in Coetzee's *Michael K.*, the protagonist's metamorphosis into a bug is examined to highlight the anguish of a human being living in a world of non-humans. The author's goal was to show how humans and animals see the world differently because of their shared environment. Modern people's treatment of animals is based on prejudice and hatred, which a changed person experiences due to living in the family (D. Attwell, 2016: 87). The parallels between human life and our reliance on

animals mirror Kafka's implementation. This painting might be seen as a metaphor for the death of the human world, in which all individuals are subjected to the suffocating pressures of animal existence and behavior. The creatures are shown as having their distinct strength in the art. All transformations are characterized by a deterritorialization in which people behave like animals.

Allowing for emotional and introspective content in modern literary works like Coetzee's *Diary*, they show truths like the one mentioned above when an appeal to the intellect alone is patently inadequate. By adding their philosophical theory, they can expose the logical inconsistencies of such statements. These kinds of allegations may be countered by attaching importance to the unique style of narrative performed in a book like *Diary*, which exposes an approach to resolving concerns about ethics. There are two ways that *Diary* can accomplish both when it comes to transmitting ethical thinking in writing: by showing how easy it is for real ethical thought to devolve into ersatz ethical thought and by providing guidance on both how to live and how to read and appreciate the material in issue. Replacement ethical thinking replaces true ethical reasoning that, although cognitively understandable, does not truly impact how we shape the world or our behavior. "Strong Opinions" and the author's attitude toward his book's audience are characterized by this kind of thinking.

In this regard, the discussion presented by John C. unfolds his critical attitudes toward the world he is living. This man is skeptical about democracy because he refers to democracy as a totalitarian system of the western society from which no one escapes. In addition, any criticism concerning the present political situation must occur within a democratic society's limits. For instance, such critics can only happen if people volunteer themselves as candidates in elections to bring novelties. From this point of view democracy also has a totalitarian side as it precludes people to go beyond the system. Furthermore, John C. is convinced about political insincerity involving two different value standards holding other merits. These two standards are relative and absolute standards. The former covers ideologies of morality, natural law, and religion. These ideologies are relative values implemented to uphold self-preservation interests.

The most challenging task and immediate puzzle for the reader are to uncover the authentic portrayal of John C in the *DBY* novel. From a shallow description, this is not just an indirect picture of Coetzee but a clear projection of himself. In other words, J.C. and Coetzee are south African writers sharing book ownership when the latter mentions "...essays on censorship" as 1990s publications. However, both writers are new residents of Australia. It is important to withhold the concern regarding slow man's statement that the metafictional operation hides creative exhaustion levels for consideration in the *DBY*. Nonetheless, people imminently think about how far they should take J.C.'s solid claims in relation to Coetzee's, given that the book requires them to establish the equation between these authors. In the text, *On Terrorism*, J.C. reflects his anger from the disapproval of anti-terrorist ruling in various areas, including Britain, the USA, and Australia.

Furthermore, Coetzee is more informed about how historical ideologies work, which amplifies the primary argument in *The Novel Today*. So far, there is no universally established prohibition on Coetzee's use of pictorial representations associated with south African material history. Still, Jean-Philippe Wade contends that these visual representations take the form of the realist writing critique to affirm its location and its discursive specificity rather than signaling the texts' denial of history". In Coetzee's novel is where Wade finds how the apartheid state translates to a military choice in Soweto Uprising. For this reason, Wade's essay is a helpful example of a critique tailored to revise *Waiting for the Barbarians* and its symbolic interaction with the apartheid's history. My chapter explores the link between the apartheid body's future and Coetzee's pictorial representations.

Nevertheless, this chapter denotes a shift in the book. For instance, the first two chapters focus on the power of a text to absorb disastrous figures in its accession ground. However, the current chapter examines how Coetzee's narrative provides a boy and writing mode which withstands incorporation and inscription powers. In addition, Coetzee uses characters and creates a fictional story, *Disgrace*, to unfold the implications behind the new regime rather than writing directly about the apartheid regime's life experiences. This story uses diverse characters with different behaviors and backgrounds to express their thoughts and views. *Disgrace* features David Lurie as the main character who succeeds at his job before things begin to go wrong. This character loses everything after a short affair with Melanie, his student. The losses David Lurie faces make him feel sorry for himself.

David Lurie is self-centered, and his interest, love, and affection for Melanie blind him to forget his morally wrong behavior. There even comes a time when David Lurie realizes that the same affair with Melanie is not working, and Melanie does not want him, but Lurie fails to terminate the relationship. This ignorance and decision to continue the matter lands David Lurie into trouble and banishment, making him flee and seek refuge in Eastern Cape Town. The book shows that the old South African dregs were overthrown and replaced by the white supremacist by tribalism, whose general morality legacy lies in the self-blame of the surviving whites. According to Lurie's discoveries, a new banning on cross-generational sex replaces the previous restriction on racial miscegenation when not well paid for. Consequently, Melanie's partner comes in to end the affair, and this lady's father and boyfriend ensure that she faces disciplinary allegations for Lurie's banishment.

Lurie escapes and travels to Eastern Cape Town, where his daughter Lucy owns a farm. This character's motive behind fleeing is to seek refuge because he outlasted his erotic enchantment. It seems Coetzee's work gives female characters an excellent and likable aspect. Through his characters, Coetzee writes the story to show how the changing south African conditions influence different societies and their occupants. This author paints a cheerless picture of a post-apartheid South Africa that will probably comfort no one regardless of their differences in gender, race, views, and

social classes. *Disgrace* covers the conflict that involves race interactions in the contemporary rural setting. This conflict is evident in the relationship between Petrus and Lucy, Lurie's daughter. The story consistently creates tension between the whites and South African blacks.

Moreover, Lurie finds his calling in Cape Town by engaging in mercy killing of undesirable animals and ensuring hospital incinerators burn their bodies. His understanding regarding a decent death adopts a rural perception of the continuity between animals and human existences. Coetzee overstates the rising problematic relationship between professional colleagues and the aging Elizabeth Costello and her lineage. According to Elizabeth Costello, fellow humans are criminals because they claim that she wants these humans to change how they treat animals, yet Elizabeth Costello has no right to make such demands. Similarly, the criminals have no desire and obligation to conform to Elizabeth Costello's needs.

From another angle, Coetzee narrates how Elizabeth Costello went to Appleton College and introduces the kinds of treatment by humans that best suits animal. This story has philosophical and empirical arguments that align with the relevant ethical issues of ideal human-animal medicines. Humans, unlike animals, can live without meat. In other words, there are many healthy options that humans can choose. It is ethical and morally right if animals receive sympathy treatments because of their sensation of existing. According to conclusions made by Elizabeth Costello, which constitutes Coetzee's first lectures, there is no excuse that human beings can have for not sympathizing with animals because it is limitless for humans to think of themselves as existing of one another. Sympathetic imagination has no boundaries. Unfortunately, humans find it difficult or choose not to extend the limits of their imagination with regard to other creatures.

These people claim that they can do whatever they desire to animals, including merciless killing. Elizabeth Costello concludes that people have closed their hearts to animals because their twisted minds dictate the hearts' actions and sympathy decisions. Furthermore, Elizabeth Costello argues that philosophy cannot guide people toward the right choices or direction because it does not include people's sympathy. Such limitations become a burden to something other than people's rational faculties appealed by philosophy. Elizabeth Costello argues that people's sympathetic thoughts to which fiction and poetry appeal more than philosophy should stretch to animal settings (Barnard, 2013: 445). Coetzee's fictional texts feature an ethical role requiring humans to extend their sympathy to animals. Perhaps, philosophy will only extend its sympathy to animals if fiction does the same. Otherwise, such sympathies may not exist for philosophy.

Coetzee employs an aging, intelligent, increasingly alienated, and articulated novelist to stir people's imagination because this novelist cannot help but be concerned about how fellow humans have failed as beings because they do not pity animals. The novelist claims that people like being cruel to animals and apparently rather than admittedly embracing cruelty. Coetzee's story urges

people to reason as a universal value and reconvince their devotion. Most influential arguments seek to establish whether the universe is based upon reason and if animals are thing-like rather than godlike because humanity is as such. However, Elizabeth descends such arguments and perspectives, asserting that reason does not entail the likeness of anything (Barnard, 2013: 446). In my view, the reason seems to be a human thought, and such an idea determines how they act around animals.

The actual question is whether morality motivates people to think their way into animals' lives. What motivates Elizabeth Costello is the desire to save her soul rather than a moral conviction. Elizabeth Costello absorbs the critics' opinions by highlighting that these people lost sight of their souls, yet she is far from being presumptuous to succeed in saving her soul. This novelist denies the compliments by Appleton College's president, which highlights that he likes Elizabeth Costello's way of life. Elizabeth Costello responds by suggesting that she lifts a leather purse and wears leather shoes. In defense, the president asked if someone could draw a line between wearing leather and eating meat. According to Appleton College's president, Castello's uncompromising feedback is the extent of obscenity.

Although the presence successfully increased tension, Castello did not accept admiration for a response. The novelist's actions and sensibilities may not only remain as a source of internal agony but also superior compared to other beings. Instinctive and unselfish nature of care is pushed to their imaginative and ethical bounds. For instance, Elizabeth Costello links such concepts to a too morally ambiguous tale to write. She employs the imaginary and unwritten letters to Blanche, her sister, to describe multiple scenes where she nakedly staged favors to Mr. Phillips, her mother's hospitalized friend. This episode, later on, bothers Elizabeth Costello following her irrepresentability and questions the taboos regarding sexuality and aging. The third-person voice heightens the bodily and brutal narration tone.

In the subsequent texts, Coetzee's novels, after moving into Australia, focus on and reflect the specific preoccupation with aging and care issues in an established and modernized nation. Notably, Coetzee's texts are not dealing with the social construction of care and ethics exploration. This author's earlier writings were written under the South African apartheid regime and explore the complex aging and disability issues. *Waiting for the Barbarians* introduces a female character, in a town which has no name, who can testify to her suffering and torture that left her central body with dark marks, half-blind eyes, and twisted feet. A similar focus regarding the body surface and scars is present in a novel, *Morrison's Beloved*, which features eye marks on a magistrate's body. The writer of this novel says, "Too much...Little...is she...I want or...her body bears?" (Coetzee, 1980: 88). The magistrates' body exists together with the political and historical landscape in which she resides.

Foe (1987) discusses enslavement and traumatized figures with some boy deformations like tongueless characters and an enslaved barbarian girl. Symbolic readings denote that black South

African people's voicelessness and violent experiences exist because most locations and places do not have a name. Unlike the impaired bodies and aging bodies highlighted in Coetzee's subsequent novels, other novels depict individuals inflecting on disabilities rather than suffering from a gradual aging process or accidents. *Foe* and *Waiting for the Barbarians* are examples of the "other novels" discussed. In this case, only certain sections of the society and racial groups enjoy the luxuries of living to old age, like high-quality care and critical space, which renders other racial groups and institutions voiceless.

DBY has innovative physical staging where each page has triple bands of writing distinguished by horizontal lines. Moreover, the top band has J.C.'s voice with German-publicized series of critical texts. In this context, strong opinions make up the first section on matters of topical interest, while the second diary constitutes more colloquial reflections. The middle band depicts the first-person account of J.C.'s relationships with a young female character, Anya, who he recruits as a typist. This woman's first-person account appears on the third band, which provides an overview of Anya's relationship with J.C., how she ends things with Allan, her boyfriend, and conversations around her work. The essay does not conform to conventional theater protocol because the characters do not engage in face-to-face communication or direct communication and listing.

Anya does not address J.C. by his name but rather by a series of titles like mister C and senior C. J.C. asserts that Anya refuses to mention his name and keeps using professional designations. Allan is another character that employs similar titles in indirect discourse through reports to address J.C. *DBY*'s narrative's point of view seems to change in the exact phrase and sentence by utilizing the first-person voice and the writer's proper name. Moreover, the top band of the texts seems to house a double narrative perspective that transgresses the differences between narrated and speech utterances established by Roman Jakobson. The uttering speech appearing in Coetzee's work and his intended audience covers the addressee and speaker's context. By uttering the speaker, the characters of the conversation discuss other people and what they do in a way to express themselves. These characters reproduce the speaker's exact statements without indirect words.

On the contrary, narrated utterance entails the topic of dialogue within the direct report. This narration type involves part of the author's approach to speaking directly to the reader using the third person narration. An example of narrated utterance appears in the story of Anya and J.C. (Clarkson, 2009: 84). Thus, when the target audience reads through texts where J.C. talks about something, the purpose of the writings requires the reader to read it according to the narrated utterance and in a way that attributes fictional fiction to a fictional character. Through fiction within fiction, Elizabeth Castello gains popularity, particularly in works like the *House on Eccles Street* (Clarkson, 2009: 84). It is almost impossible to distinguish between the historical writer and fictional character when J.C. says, "my novel". Such impossibilities mean that the text slipped into speech utterances rather than narrated utterances.

Furthermore, Coetzee discusses anecdotes of his professional encounters claiming that an Australian magazine misquoted his views. The book's title *Waiting for the Barbarians*, encompasses several writers and Coetzee appears in most of J.C.'s works and authorship (Clarkson, 2009: 85). Coetzee puts himself and his readers to the test. The writer acknowledges the nobility of those contributing to it and the holistic atmosphere. However, Coetzee's *DBY* is not without limitations. The story lacks an actual dialogical deformation of its constituent discourses. Its pictorial representation is neat but lacks the mark of exceptional writing and the control for which J.C. venerates. Perhaps, one might suggest that Coetzee's texts are just texts with no truth. In other words, it is hard to tell the artistic context of these writings. It is a dead-end lower than all opinions maintaining its form.

The deception in the novel employs many different opinions for the audience as a conventional proposition rooted in this novel. Characters pretending to persevere within the story is the most prominent kind of deception. The book equates literary equate regular novel consumption to routine opinion consumption. There is a relentless sound reasoning about a chain of books like *DBY* and Elizabeth Castello's fiction that fail plainly to be novels, increasing the failure to justify why they exist as texts (Murphet, 2011: 7). This logic encompasses the relentless exactness of the novel as a structure severely capable of genuineness even when the most outstanding role is to unfold that power from within. In other words, the primary task is to disband the history of the novel's truth and strip off its truth approaches.

In its pre-eminence of the outdated discourse book network, and of literature, this metaphorical operation indicates a dropping of the old- fashioned close reading, where the "opinions" could even have been read for their novelistic self- perceptions. Instead, a spatially distributed, and rather obvious analogous tracking of an up-to-date discourse network, which is just as dialogical as the outdated version. The three bands are textual where they are literally materialized in the same way, in an arranged page view that brings out clear symbolic indications: overweening dogmatic universalism created on "the ground floor" on the page's upper part, and the sordid maneuverings of a penthouse-inhabitant at the bottom. In between, the erotic event and actual desire is squeezed. Therefore, ideas are seemingly detached and "free- floating", while the narrative itself is split and internally separated into two aspects: feminine and masculine, demonstrating that sexual differences are inescapable and inflexible (several ironies flourish in the interval between the second and third bands). As we continue to read, "we realize that a feedback mechanism exists in the story (of desire) as well as the journal of Anya from below (also into the *thoughts proper*)" (Murphet, 2011: 7). This, correspondingly shows that these speculative feedbacks and manipulative elaborations on the act of storytelling has not only to do with writing (as writerly significations) but also with aging intellectual author regarding his/her writing performance.

Noticeably, *Diary of a Bad Year* suggests a formal strain between its supposed *raison d'être* (an “opportunity to grumble in public . . . to take magic revenge on the world for declining to conform to my fantasies,” *DBY*, 22) in addition to its formal endorsement as a literary work of art. To avoid becoming what the narrator is formally writing, which is a series of assertions on “the troubles of the world today,” or a factual *J'accuse* in the esteemed Zola tradition, Grelling and Greene — as well as leavening its unwieldy rumblings with the fiction spirit, the “novel” operates an open intrusion with the refined expression of its self-important views, an interfering that looks similar to dual journals, penned down without giving thought for one another. However, it is dependent on the logic of an occurrence to which both authors (JC and Anya) remain more or less faithful and committed. The dualism is suggestive. Opinions, perfect and unbroken, benefit from a spatial authority here. On the other hand, fictional journals that are aligned in writing and interconnected by an act of desire, encounter brawls in the underbrush where they invent methods of adapting the oracular opinions’ tone, presuming that it is not their context (Murphet, 2011: 6).

In the last of Elizabeth Costello's eight lessons that make up the writing that has her name she occupies the space of power and is neglected to a shape that is incoherent to the precise location, in space or time, of her figurative placement in a city in which the custodian of the entrance don't ever falls asleep and the individuals in the diners also have nowhere else to go (Coetzee, 2003: 195). As Attwell has so persuasively demonstrated, we are firmly in the realm of metafiction, an appropriate setting for Coetzee's piece (D. Attwell, 1993: 20). As a result, it's not uncommon to witness the fiction of reversing direction to take a detour (Derrida & Spivak, 1976), which concentrates on fictionality rather than the imaginary world. At the Gate, the name of the piece, is an example of an imagined deflection: intertextuality's diversion – or enjoyment. Derrida retells Kafka in a homonymic style in *Devant La Loi*, which, like *At the Gate*, purposely crosses Kafka's *Before the Law* or *récit Vor dem Gesetz*, which can easily be drawn into this argument. According to Jacques Derrida, one title can sound like a quotation from another. It is beyond purely citing when it identifies something else. Instead, one name differs from another to create a homonym. Without some type of prejudice or takeover, none of this would be feasible. Derrida emphasizes the paradoxical uniqueness of intertextual quotation before beginning his interpretation of Kafka. Its addition of a naming agency signals the emergence of a particular event, a term I adopted from how Attridge did for Coetzee via Derrida (Bethlehem, 2005: 236).

Costello's implementation of the ram, which equates to a profoundly literal interpretation of its being (Attridge, 2004c: 39-40), mirrors the metaphorical transition one which we, as readers, do when we infuse the text with our own mortal beings in order to bring her story to life. The ram is more than a concept; it is alive, as the condensation of the subtle body is not the only activity visible here (Attridge, 2004c: 211). This part should be considered as forming a reading episode, in the context of literary production, that is strongly linked to the concept of reading in literature (39) and whose growth, according to Attridge, distinguishes the very course of moral rules in writing (39).

(Attridge, 2004b: 654) The irruption-into-text of the physical body is inextricably related to the development of this work. What does that really imply for Derek Attridge to establish a concept of 'literature in the event,' like the label of his Coetzee compilation implies, that combines ethics with literariness? Attridge argues in his book *The Singularity of Literature* that a work of literature is never wholly separate and distinct mostly from the acts events of composing that helped bring this into becoming as presumably textual content, not ever completely shielded from either the uncertainties of the historical past into which it is displayed and within that which is published (Attridge, 2004a: 59). It accomplishes the unique feat of bringing into action – while simultaneously evaluating and altering – the set of conventions or codes that constitute the foundation of writing and the larger societal development of it being a part (106). According to Attridge, shape is vital to the literary work's ability to move beyond simple affirmation of allusion and to stage meaning (109, emphasis in original) (Bethlehem, 2005: 243).

In many ways, a meta-discursive mode in Coetzee's fiction is progressively growing. The mode overlaps with his South Africa to Australia departure in 2002. Similarly, it marks a shift in the work from the postwar paradigm, paradoxically in 1994, at the time when SA was properly postcolonial after attaining democracy. So, while these latter works may appear to have less significance in a work regarding postwar writing, they do offer significant contribution to postwar discussions on intellectualism and authority in authorship. Coetzee's own procedures are undermined by a self-conscious twist which reminds us in fiction, author power must be earned. J.C. in *Diary* goes ahead and criticizes the decrease of author power of Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault to nothing more than “a bagful of rhetorical devices”. In *On Having Thoughts*, J.C. questions his freedom to express his viewpoints because he has “never found his way with abstract ideas reasoning”, however, in these words, he rejects the rightness of the conventional scholar that Antonio Gramsci and, later, Edward Said have turned down. Coetzee, in his novels and articles, repeatedly expresses his view that he has not earned this right. *Slow Man* (2005) is a more standard novel, centered in Australia following Paul Rayment tale after a bicycle accident where he lost his leg. Focusing on the lectures and lives gathered from Costello lectures (*Elizabeth Costello*) and *Diary of A Bad Year*, *Slow Man*, set in a aftermath environment of the colonials, investigates immigration and economic migrancy challenges that fall under the ambit of the “postmodernism”

For Coetzee, the experimental novel's sheer form – its anti-realist techniques and genre acts – may constructively counterbalance conventional discourses. We should not have to be reminded that Coetzee's *The Novel Today* is argumentative and debated politically, especially in the colonial setting and period of South Africa when the discourse was presented. History, as refereed by the state, is a part of the national awareness and lends validity to the concept of national beginnings, in this case working to buttress colonial ideology. The experimental novel exposes the functioning of storytelling and the author-function by upsetting realism's norms – the agreement between author and audience. What are the consequences of this line of thought for Coetzee's central character public interventions

in the *Costello lectures and Diary*? In other words, how does fictionalization process affect the legitimacy of Coetzee's forays into political public discussion?

Elizabeth Costello, like the imagined memoirs of John Coetzee, shares a number of characteristics with J. M. Coetzee, not least her standing as a cosmopolitan scholar. Unlike the fictional hero John Coetzee, dedicated to the thorough self-evaluation needed of the logical cosmopolitan, Elizabeth Costello rejects self-criticism in favour of a live, instantaneous, and inclusive sympathetic imagination. Costello, in particular, emphasizes the concept of cosmopolitan sympathy that, while revolutionary in its application to nonhuman animals, evokes both the compassionate promise and implied threat of visceral sensations of “humanity” found inside the affective cosmopolitan theory. Sympathy is seen as a fundamental orientation toward, and receptivity to, others: it is a type of openness analogous to an author's complete sympathy for her characters, or that may tie a reader to her novel. But, just as John Coetzee's complex relationship with J. M. Coetzee enacts the boundaries of logical cosmopolitan sympathy, Elizabeth Costello's complex relationship with J. M. Coetzee enforces the limits of affective cosmopolitan sympathy (Hallemeier, 2013: 81).

Following that, Coetzee expanded on the issue of Afrikaner national identity development *In the Heart of the Country* (1977) through the depiction of Magda's quest for an individual identity. *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) is a powerfully metaphorical novel. Coetzee attempts to evaluate, albeit obliquely, the present South African situation, criticizing the discourse of suffering that appeared to rule the prevailing system's policy of discrimination and injustice in those years. Despite some critics' claims that Coetzee's failure to participate in the South African predicament more openly is due to his unwillingness to provide an exact temporal and spatial context to his text, which portrays the life of an unnamed magistrate on an undisclosed frontier settlement in an undefined moment of history, the novel indeed points to emerging realities in South Africa. Gestures like 'emergency powers' (WB, 1), 'detainees must be held incommunicado' (WB, 18), the interpretations given for the prisoners' deaths (WB, 6), the lack of official records of persons' imprisonments (WB, 125), Empire titles and institutions like the 'third Bureau' (WB, 7), or the involvement of the judge himself (WB, 8) all recollect South African reality, as Gallagher correctly observes (Canepari-Labib, 2005: 24).

In addition to their context, the novels share a number of themes that recur across Coetzee's work. For example, he is known for focusing on solitary, passionate characters. In the very first novella of *Dusklands*, Eugene Down, for example, secluded himself totally while compiling his assessment of the Vietnamese combat. Even so, as we will see below, his separation is not solely due to his mental disaffection but also to the physical alienation caused by getting relegated to a mountain Motel and then to a mental hospital, where he desires to find an answer for his present state and attack on his son's life in his early life and his job.

Things become even more complicated when this quotation is put back into context. It appears towards the end of a series of questions regarding the relationship in both politics and writing posed by David Attwell in *Doubling the Point*, which began with Attwell's analysis that white South African writing 'has been preferable at undermining colonial customs than at substituting them with the imaginative prospect of a moral community (Coetzee, 1992: 339). Coetzee concurred with this assessment, albeit he disagreed with the notion that writers are obligated to explore such a possibility. Coetzee argued between two types of political duty, each of which equates to a different perspective about what makes for a healthy community after embracing the idea of 'duty' on a provisional basis. The first is a duty arising from a society's dominant self-understanding and the requirement for this knowledge to be replicated in art: it is "a duty put on the writer by society, by society's soul, by society in its ambitions and dreams." The second is a duty that Coetzee 'tentatively' refers to as a 'transcendental imperative': a vision of society that transcends cultural specificity, presumably in the pursuit of a universalist ideal (Hayes, 2010: 8).

As a result, one must ask the following questions: Why would it make sense to apply the Coetzeean method to discussing the relationship between politics and writing through a succession of incomplete disavowals and ironic disclaimers in the late twentieth-century political atmosphere of South Africa? Why are notions like community and freedom portrayed as incomplete and baseless rather than in their 'perfective' form? Also, what attitude should a novelist take toward the form in order for it to be receptive to this strategy?

Coetzee's writing has always had a good number of references to theoretical traditions and idioms since *Dusklands* (1974), as well as his latest work, has shown philosophic problems in progressively explicit manners. His novels *Elizabeth Costello* (2002), *The Lives of Animals* (1999), *Slow Man* (2005), his volumes of correspondence with Arabella Kurtz (2015) and Paul Auster (2013), as well as his latest works of fiction, *The Schooldays of Jesus* (2016) and *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013), all actively involved in unsubtle philosophical debates about, among other topics, the notion of justice, individual experience, reason, the decent society, and the decent life. Through (*J. M. Coetzee and the Ethics of Reading* [2004]), which is Attridge's writing on Coetzee as well as ethics to Stephen Mulhall's explanation of how philosophy connects with Coetzee's' modernist realism, there have been some outstanding studies on Coetzee's interaction with philosophy (Mulhall, 2009: 161). However, no paper has yet been able to bring together all of Coetzee's worries about literature and philosophy or to analyze what is genuinely at issue in the ways of reasoning that his fiction invites (Hayes & Wilm, 2017: 1).

In a study titled *Realism and the Realistic Spirit*, Cora Diamond explores some of the dialectic's subsequent history. This article offers itself as an effort to comprehend Wittgenstein's statement, "neither empiricism and yet realism in philosophy, that is the hardest thing," and it begins with a grasp of what realism implies outside of philosophy—specifically, in the realm of literature

(Diamond, 1995: 39). In short, it appears to be entirely consistent with Watt's classic work's intellectual alignment; thus, a close inspection of it may help to dispel any unchallenged assertion that early modern rationalism and empiricism are the greatest modern challengers for embodiments of a genuinely realistic spirit in philosophy, and thus the most appropriate points of contrast for highlighting realist works in literature like Coetzee's (Mulhall, 2009: 46).

Coetzee's female protagonists are also remarkable characters, they are typically mothers—writing, thinking mothers, and this is no coincidence. Ceridwen Dovey, in her 2018 book *On Coetzee*, praises the intellect of the Elizabeths who are Coetzee mothers, namely Elizabeth Costello and Elizabeth Curren: The two mothers, especially, leave a cognitive as well as an affective legacy to their child, giving their physicality (breasts, wombs) as well as their entire thoughts (Dovey, 2018: 9). Mrs Curren in a message to her daughter who happens to be missing states that her thoughts come from both her womb and heart, and it's a purposeful echo of that (Coetzee, 1990: 133). Dovey's own mother, Teresa Dovey, is one of the real-life mother-daughter relationships depicted in her work. Coetzee's books are their primary means of communication: the books are studied and argued in nurseries as well as at the dinner table, and they have been a continuous part of the family during the family's repeated migrations to Sydney from Pietermaritzburg. A full-length critique of J. M. Coetzee was first written by Teresa Dovey. As her daughter points out, Coetzee's *Books: In 1988, Lacanian Allegories* was released. Teresa Dovey is credited with coining the phrase that states J.M. Coetzee's works of fiction did theorize on themselves. Ceridwen Dovey explains that it was the kind of finding that academics dream about, an understanding that, once it is transferred to many, becomes evident to others because of its apparent accuracy (Kossew & Harvey, 2019: 4).

Despite his apparent involvement with some parts of feminism, Coetzee's feminist status has sparked debate. Most notably in the light of the debate about the female authors of his early works based in South Africa. Benita Parry is a perfect example as she criticizes Coetzee for emulating women's writing, oddly recreating the male dominance he criticizes: Women's writings, such as *Elizabeth Curren's letters in Age of Iron*, are relics meticulously produced by a manly author striving to investigate the conceivable outcomes of a language that is not privileging on the masculine (Parry, 1996: 50). Notwithstanding the poststructuralist acrobatics (Kossew, 1998: 157), Josephine Dodd questions Coetzee's supposed newness to South African writing on the grounds of sexual orientation; the novels are nevertheless rooted in a sexist portrayal of women. She accuses him of “vampiris[ing]” the works of Virginia Woolf and Adrienne Rich, as well as perpetrating the practice of patriarchal writer domination that he has sought to decry (Kossew, 1998: 161). Paul Stewart delves into Dodd's harsh critique of Coetzee's literary creation of woman in her young age, which he views as a self-aware articulation of Joyce and Beckett's interpretations of what it means to recognize and comprehend women (Kossew & Harvey, 2019: 6).

The amount of research done Coetzee can be tackled on the large scale. There are a lot of books, dissertations, articles, interviews and bookreviews about Coetzee's oeuvre. What is more, Coetzee's own books and interviews, public address and autobiographical books, seminar notes also shed light on his own work.

Moreover, Dominic Head's survey of Coetzee's work provides a user- friendly introduction to Coetzee, in which he provides an up-to-date survey of his "fiction and context, written accessibly for those new to his work." Head discusses the novels and short stories of Coetzee, opening up a fresh framework for those who want to study Coetzee. His work to a great extent draw on the thematic contents and the prevailing themes of the "brooding presence of the political situation in South Africa." The book is important as it provides "a comprehensive account of the author's main influences." Regarding the issues of authorship and narration, Head's latter chapters devoted to the Coetzee's confessional account and writing helped develop a critical view of how an author's mind works (Head, 2009).

Lastly, we should note here Blažena Kotrsová in her MA study "J. M. Coetzee's Ageing Public Intellectuals" (2012) explores the two intellectuals Elizabeth Costello in the novel *Elizabeth Costello*, and Senior JC in *Diary of a Bad Year* from the perspective of "the interplay of Coetzee's representation of public intellectualism alongside advanced age, and in dependence on gender of the two characters" (Kotrsová, 2012: 95). The thesis mainly focuses on "ageism, double standard of ageing and the "beauty myth" (Kotrsová, 2012: 95). The study argues that Coetzee "mocks the very essence of public intellectualism" in these novels. The study also highlights one of the premises raised by Coetzee that "aged writers would have anything of importance to say about the current state of affairs" (Kotrsová, 2012: 109).

CHAPTER THREE

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Chapter Outline

This chapter is mainly divided into four parts: Theoretical framework as to authorship and narration, mapping of enquire and research guideline, and operational definitions. In the first chapter, the history of the concept of authorship and narration is provided and the understanding of the categories of author(s), narrator(s) and character(s) are highlighted.

Elizabeth Costello and *Diary of a Bad Year* are presented in a way that produces ironic situations, dramatic and situational ironies, concerning the genre, there is no dramatic representation but there is a recurrence of dramatic scenes of “lecturing.” It marks a strategy of the implied author to create a dramatic effect of “imitation of action,” in Aristotelian sense, and the depiction of the unreality of the real condition of the contemporary intellectual and novelist. As Khan discusses, “Elizabeth’s narratorial voice challenges the univocal signification of narrative structures” (2011: 1-19). This study suggests that these narratives are the representation of “author at stage” so the author’s rhetoric is about how the readers perceive the polyvocal story worlds where the author emerges as a narrator-character: “Her words are not so much about the subject of writing as about the practice of reading. She does not want to create differences between this or that, she wants the reader to engage with her story for the —plural (including the plurality of voices) that constitutes it, —unimpoverished by any constraint of representation— (Barthes, 1990: 5; Khan, 2011: 3).

Theoretical chapter explains the concept of authorship, narration, narrative levels and textuality, namely the fictional categories formed through storytelling. It also expounds on how Coetzee’s “strategy of reversal from fact to fiction and from fiction to fact” (Çıraklı, 2022) is discussed.

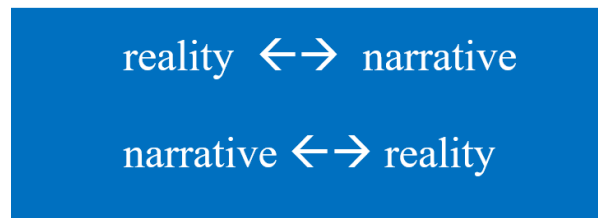
Figure 2: Structured Outline

5.2. Narrators / Narrative Levels / Narrative Strategies What is the role of narrators? Types of narrators? Manipulative narrators? What are
5.3. Ideology, Politics (ecopolitics) / Criticism, Literary Theory / Metatextuality The readers keep critical distance from the serious issues raised
5.4. Metatextuality, Intertextuality, Parody Intertextual references and self-reflexive speculations bring about sense of parody with the effect of irony
5.5. Undermining Binary oppositions Undermining Binary oppositions
5.6. History writing / History and fiction Blurring, diminishing, complicating and undermining fiction and history
5.7. Narrative Levels and Humour Between narrative levels and gaps arise these humorous, parody and irony parts

3.2. Theoretical Background

Authorship and author's authority appears to be one of the most challenging conundrums for critics who deal with the dissenting aspects of the act of writing: Individual experience and imagination on the one hand; historical and cultural manipulation on the other. Coetzee's "strategy of reversal" comes out as the violation of the signification process that operates upon the presumption of mutual correspondence between fact and fiction or reality and narrative. In the novels under consideration, however, this dynamic communication is violated and they fall apart from each other and never achieve any intended "function" (not meaning) as they continuously undermine each other. Coetzee, continuously, "narrativizes the texts and textualizes the narratives," each calls into question one another (Çıraklı, 2022). Çıraklı argues "the narrative and intertextual sections in the novels are separately meaningful and effective (functional). Yet, their presentation at the same narrative frame, if not level, subverts their function and intended (or possible effect)"

Figure 3: Strategy of Reversal



J. M. Coetzee's central themes and fictional problems revolve around the following terms, which indicate both conventional themes and authorial notions of the emerging concerns regarding fictional representation and authorship. These themes and notions, as suggested in the present study, can be analysed through the following operational definitions:

Table 1: Operational Terms and Definitions

3.1. Author(s) and Authorship, Criticism, Literary Theory
3.2. Narrators / Narrative Levels / Narrative Strategies (Effect of Narrative Levels: Irony, Humour, etc.)
3.4. Metatextuality, Intertextuality and Parody
3.5. Binary oppositions
3.6. History writing / History and fiction / Ideology, Politics (ecopolitics)

3.2.1. Author(s) and Authorship, Criticism, Literary Theory

The characters (Elizabeth and Senior C.) represented in the two novels appear to be authors, narrators, characters having remarkable intellectual capabilities. The texts undermine the fictional status of the novels by using various strategies related with “authorship (Coetzee as implied author, self-reflective, self-critical, exploration of the author’s persona), narrator, narrative levels, narrative strategies, ideology, politics (ecopolitics), criticism, literary theory, metatextuality, intertextuality, binary oppositions (the texts that take place on the same page), history writing, history and fiction, irony, humour, parody.

Upon acquiring remarkable expertise in these narrative strategies and moral lecturing as well as academic posturing, Coetzee uses these novels to blur the essential “dichotomy between life and art, and, becomes one of the best examples for the deconstruction of ‘art imitates life or life imitates art’ changing it into a set of polemical presentations of the power of mimetic relationship between reality and discourse” (Çıraklı, 2022). Nethersole argues that “fictionalising the triangular relation between author-writer/writing-the-written Coetzee, in the Costello stories and in the Nobel Address, liberates literary criticism from its secondary position that it occupies in relation to the “art of fiction”, since its inception in European Romanticism” (Nethersole, 2005: 256). Hence, it is important for the reader to consider these narrative and textual strategies as these novels cannot be understood regardless of “how it is told”. Coetzee, invites the readers to be involved in the novels not only as a reader pursuing appreciation and delight but also a participant in technical and ideological grasping: “Interestingly enough, in these novels, the author gives up professionalism, but the reader takes over a profession critical reading” (Çıraklı, 2022). Thus, in the analysis of these novels, narrative strategies will be referred to as a significant launching pad. The narratives deliberately undermine verbal, structural, fictional, ideological and cultural hierarchies in a way that questions the “reliability of the narrator and the significance of the layout of the novel’s content”⁵. Also, the characters are portrayed innovatively with a short self explanatory description. Such treatment of characters and novels renders vital info for acknowledgeable comparative analysis.

⁵ Evy Varsamopoulou, “Timely Meditations: Reflections on the Role of e Humanities in JM Coetzee’s Elizabeth Costello and Diary of a Bad Year,” *Humanities* 3, no. 3 (2014): 379.

In literary analysis, it is required to define and describe narrators to make conclusions about their reliability and unreliability. This reliability makes a novel relevant and reliable enough to be used for reference in debates and academic discussions. When judging the literary effects of a piece of work, it is not the dissimilarity of individuals that is of great significance. Rather, it is the trustworthiness of a narrator which is at stake.

Lastly, the present study carefully differentiates between Coetzee-the-historical-author and Coetzee-the-implied-author. Drawing on the terminologies offered previously by Wayne Booth (1983), any narrative discourse or textual work of art implies “an implicit picture of an author behind the narrative strategies,” which is called the “implied author.” It is therefore an explicitly textual and implicitly narrative construct, a narrative device “different from the real (historical) person, who creates a “second version” of his or herself while writing” (Booth, 2010: 70–71). The study will also consider the problems (and complications) of the concept of “implied author” as the narratives under consideration deliberately attempt to blur the dividing lines between the hierarchical levels and layers between texts and performances. The implied author functions as an intermediary between narrative text and reader. As Herman and Vervaeck (Luc. Herman Vervaeck, Bart. ., 2005: 18) discusses, “the implied author [can be regarded as a reflection of the real author. Coetzee sometimes seems to invite us to this reflection, especially in books such as *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year*. (p. 486). In some cases the readers can assume Elizabeth Costello or Senior C “function as Coetzee’s “alter ego” but the very analogy between them is just an evidence for the implied author.

3.2.2. Narrators / Narrative Levels / Narrative Strategies (Effect of Narrative Levels: Irony, Humour, etc.)

Coetzee’s narrators are sophisticated in a way that they are involved in the textual realms as well as contextual boundaries. The third person narrators collaborate in the act of presentation of the events and they set out to tell the stories from the perspectives of the characters. In *Diary of a Bad Year*, the narrator retreats and disappears to leave the stage to the characters and their “written” accounts, in *Elizabeth Costello*, the third person narrator, frequently employs the strategy of “free indirect discourse”. In both cases the readers are exposed the minds of the characters.

In the narratives, the act of storytelling is held by the “tellers”, in traditional sense, or in what we call today “narrators.” This narrative agent of the storyteller has evolved in time from the carrier of mere experience (McKeon, 2000; Çıraklı, 2015) to a fictional narrative construct, which can appear as an omniscient third person narrator or first-person unreliable narrator. In some instances these narrators take place without the realm of the events while in some others involved in the story as a character. What is more, the posture of narration bring about complications regarding classification. There are two basic problems to name the roles of the narrators: First, the notion of “involvement,” and secondly, the notion of perception. The study of narrative discourse, therefore,

owes much to the offerings of Genette (1983) who differentiates between “telling” and “seeing” and coined the term of “focalisation.” Apart from the classical categories speculated in E. M. Forster’s *The Aspects of the Novel* (1985 [1927]), Stanzel’s explanations in a *Theory of Narrative* (1984), or Wayne Booth’s discussions about “telling” and “showing” in *Rhetoric of Fiction* (1983) Genette attracted the critics’ attention to *discours du récit*, that is, what is happening in the very mechanical and dynamic workings of the narrative strategies used in the storytelling. Mieke Bal (1977), raised the notions of “technical speaker” and “ideological speaker,” the former refers to “teller” and the latter to “seer.” In other words, Bal updated the categories as “who speaks” (narrator) and “who perceives.” (focalizer). All these categories help the readers to elucidate the narrative discourse but in the 1990s the researchers like David Herman (1990) or Nunning (2012) highlighted the issue of postclassical narratology as the considerable number of contemporary texts cannot be narrowed down to the workings of the narrative structures nor the postures of narrators or focalisers. They argued that there is no text without context. Coetzee’s novels are remarkable examples to apply the notions of postclassical narratology with a similar idea in mind that a text operates within a context, not only challenging “the previous assumptions of the possibility of representation,” but also “the narrative assumptions of the storytelling” (Çıraklı, 2022).

Elizabeth Costello (2003) and *Diary of A Bad Year* (2007) comprises the above discussions and presents the reader a textual platform for the elaboration of textual operations and historical (representational) speculations.

3.2.2.1. Narrative levels and shifting perspectives

A storyteller holds the telling of a story in three levels: the level of the global text at which the narrator-story character’s is told; the level at which the primary storyteller’s discourse takes place; and the level of the narrative act outside the spatiotemporal realm coordinates the primary storyteller’s discourse (Hühn et al., 2009: 295).

However, as Çıraklı suggests (2022), in Coetzee’s novels under consideration, *EC* and *DBY*, “narrative levels (story) and narrative layers (text) are found mutually at play. This, theoretically requires narrative analysis regarding representation and textual analysis regarding act of writing and performance”. The compound and intricate depiction of writing, speculating, narrating and focalising processes involve the characters in an ongoing drama of “authorship” and “storytelling” with different narrative levels and textual layers. This study deals with “levels of narration” and the depiction of narrative agents rather than conventional narrative levels complicated with ongoing performances of intertextuality. These novels, therefore, explore the spatiotemporal relationships between narrating actions that occur throughout a story.

Figure 4: Narrative Postures and Involvement

Extradiegetic – Intradiegetic Heterodiegetic - Homodiegetic
Historical author – character Implied Author - narrator
verbal discourse – text (meaning) narrative discourse – drama of narration (ironic effect)

Narrative discourse refers to the arrangement of the narrated events, in which the narrator holds a posture through which s/he seriously refers to reality outside the text, giving up the fictional or representational role, and leaving aside the traditional restrictions of Booth's telling and showing. These passages take place within the realm of "narration" but also deliberately complicates narrative levels and blurs the textual layers.

Coetzee's attitude towards narrative deviates from the conventional sense of storytelling, which reminds that of the belated concepts offered by classical and postclassical theory and incorporates these new levels with possible effects and functions of the narrative. As suggested earlier by Barth (1981), these levels are associated with serious, ironic and deconstructive purposes as emerged in the fictional and metafictional narratives respectively. These functions indicate six main categories: (1) explicative; (2) predictive; (3) purely thematic; (4) persuasive; (5) distractive; (6) obstructive (Genette [1983] 1988: 92–4). Genette, and his followers ordered these categories by putting emphasis on the authorial complications of the narrative act and thus dissatisfying the thematic and ideological relations between the narrative frames, which deliberately deny or decree the hierarchies between primary and secondary narratives with decreasing emphasis on the representational narrative act. (Genette et al., 1983; D. Herman et al., 2010).

Diegetic levels (narrative levels) refer to the elements to clarify the analytic and synthetic processes of narrating instances arranged to create diverse narrative situations and (im)postures. Coetzee argues that "the author's authority is perhaps nothing more than "a bagful of rhetorical tricks", a species of imposture, as Barthes and Foucault, and Diderot and Sterne before them, had suggested (Coetzee, 2007: 149). As Coetzee himself implies the authors pursue and perseverance for an "authoritative voice" is constantly undermined by the accompanying facets of "irony", punctuated by "self-nullification" (Sanders & Ruttenburg, 2009: 1) in every act or attempt to fulfil after "ceasing to be oneself and beginning to speak vatically" (Coetzee, 2007: 151). The classical principles of "vertical relations and horizontal" (See: living handbook) between various narrating instances and the properties of relations within a narrative are intentionally degraded. According to narratology, there are three narrative levels (*The Living Handbook of Narratology*, n.d.) :

A narrator holds the telling of a story by

- (1) Character Narrator: The narrative situation at which a character appears as a narrator within the boundaries of the story being told. A character narrator indicates a narrative level intradiegetic and homodiegetic to the narrative posture. The involvement of the narrator in the storyworld as a narrator-character;
- (2) Observer Narrator: This narrator takes place in the storyworld as a mere observer not having an omniscient feature. In this narrative level, this narrative agent is a heterodiegetic narrator, whose presentation mediates the storytelling;
- (3) Outside Narrator: When the narrator is situated outside the spatiotemporal coordinates, it indicates a level at which of the extradiegetic narration occurs.

Hence, Michael Toolan in *Narrative, a Critical Linguistic Introduction*, argues that

“horizontal relations between narrating instances situated at the diegetic levels, as when a story is told by several narrators. The notion of narrative levels serves to describe the spatiotemporal relations between the various narrating acts occurring in a narrative, and can thus be thought of more accurately as “narration levels” or “narrating levels.” (Toolan, 2012)

As will be analysed in the analysis chapters, the novels under consideration, the implied author(s) of *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year* play(s) with the narrative postures, narrative notions, storytelling situations, and involvement in the story on different levels. These narrative instances, to a great extent, are concerned with breaking up the narrating boundaries, complicating the levels, and calling into play the narrators’ situations within a questionable and mingling “spatiotemporal realm” of the texts.

In this vein, the study also carefully differentiates between Coetzee as historical author and Coetzee as implied author. The mingling and provoking strategies can indicate intended narrative strategies adopted by Coetzee-the implied author. Even though the implied author is a construct out of the text, this textual narrative agent emerges as a narrative device that tries to control the narrative discourse with engaging narrative strategies. As the narrators, focalisers, narrative instances are employed, these strategies necessarily come into being, not close-ended devices, but open-ended and dynamic narrative processes in the narrative discourse.

Having established the similarities and uniqueness of *EC* and *DBY*, this study comprehensively analyses the two novels with critical references to each other. The implied author “narrativized the texts and textualized the narratives, and let them melt into a fluid, yet plain (un-hierarchical) apparatus of representation, thereby complicating the narrative strategies and discursive practice exerted by the agents of triple enunciation as author-narrator-character. These agents appear to be

oscillating between the fringes or centres of narrative, on a volatile, trembling and ungrounded floor of textuality, which, surprisingly enough, claim a status of laying moral (and strong) instructions” (Çıraklı, 2022). The implied author employs narrative strategies to challenge the narratives, dramatic representation with dialogues to undermine the drama queens and kings in authorial costumes, textual revelations and intertextual references to subvert the power of discourse, literary figure of personification to de-personify the six permutative combinations of the matrice of narrative posture” (Çıraklı, 2022). Çıraklı, offers three types categorization under the title of “narrative roles,” “narrative agents combinations” and “acts of narrative” as follow:

Table 2: Narrative Roles (Author)

1	Author- Lecturer
2	Author - Character
3	Author from others’s perspective
4	Author- Lecturer-Writer
5	Author – Character-Narrator
6	Author from others’s perspective

Table 3: Narrative Agents Combinations (Author-Narrator-Character)

author	narrator	character
Author as narrator	Narrator as author	Character as author
Author as character	Narrator as character	Character as narrator

Table 4: Acts of Narrative (Narrative-Narration-Discourse)

Historical author-narrative	Implied author-narration	Locutor- text discourse
Historical author as Implied author	Implied author as historical	Locutor as Historical author
Historical author as locutor	Implied author as locutor	Locutor as Implied author

As Çıraklı argued (2022)

“classical categories of extradiegetic – intradiegetic or heterodiegetic – homodiegetic narrators do not suffice to explain Coetzee’s strategy of reversal and narrative drama of modern authorship. An author appears with various roles in different narrative levels and social layers. His strategy of reversal refers to his act of “narrativization of the texts” through which a text is tested/judged by its rhetorical power or its degree of persuasion. The readers are invited to perceive the aged intellectual with diverse narrative roles: author-intellectual, author-novelist, author-character, author-narrator and author-focaliser. Her lectures comprise remarkable narrativization of the texts, and as a novelist she is being narrativized through a narrative by another author. The author’s narrative drama or drama of narrative in *Elizabeth Costello* indicates the inadequacy of “writing,” “narration,” and “performance.” (Çıraklı, 2022).

In fact, as a character they are not adequately involved in the events, as an author they feel inadequate to have genuine touch with reality, as an activist they feel too weak to change reality, as a human being they cannot believe appropriately in and rely adequately on humanity, as an

academician they cannot convince the addressee enough, as a narrator they cannot achieve her task of storytelling, and so on... The transformation of a certain narrative mode can be observed as the author uses elements of parody and prefers comedy mode over serious mode to deepen sarcasm. The tools such as rewriting and intertextuality bring about a special effect to some degree.

Table 5: Two Types of Irony That Emerge

Elizabeth Costello --- dramatic irony – verbal irony (there is no dramatic representation but there occur dramatic scenes)
Diary of Bad Year --- situational irony – verbal irony

3.2.2.2. Strong Narratives

Table 6: Complementary Doubles in the Narratives

Eight Lessons as Strong Opinions Eight Lessons – Oral Lectures – Drama of lecturing, parody of preaching (parody of realism, history, parody, intertextuality, narrative? ---) Oral Enunciation and appears as an orator (there is a deliberate rhyme in the words author/orator- an orator sets up a “monologue” merely and severely occupying and holding an authority on the stage- her “oral” authority is disappointed, or challenged or undermined by the counter arguments or critical perception of the audience or her son) Strong Opinions as Teaching Moral and Philosophical Lessons Strong Opinions – Authorship - Drama of authorship - parody of authoring (parody of (realism, history, parody, intertextuality, narrative? ---) Written Enunciation and appears as an author (there is a deliberate rhyme in the words author/orator- an author sets up a “monologue” merely and severely occupying and holding an authority on the book/paper/writing- her “written” authority is disappointed, or challenged or undermined by his parallel accounts presented in his and Anya’s diaries or critical perception of the implied readers.

3.2.3. Metatextuality, Intertextuality and Parody

Intertextual discourse in Coetzee’s novels, particularly in *EC* and *DBY*, extends its limit to metatextuality, not only by laying out critical comments but also presenting these texts as part of the narrative discourse produced. The originality and keen parody of the texts and narratives turn out funny comedy of other text. One of the main arguments of this thesis is that these texts are not referenced or questioned in terms of meaning but they are undermined in terms of diminishment of the “effect.” Gérard Genette, in his *Palimpsests* argues that “any text changes or expands on the content of another text” (Genette, 1997: 92) and Foucault, in his invention of “author-ity” questions the very notion of author upon a text. However, in these novels, Coetzee explores and questions the inadequacy of the author or a text (discourse) in retaining the so-called authorial power. Accordingly, author and authorship are among the most heated topics in the history of literature particularly after the rise of individual authors with the renaissance. By the turn of the 20th century, structuralism and narratology, as scientific disciplines, elucidated the critical terms primarily “author” and drew up

lines between the author and narrator, conceiving the narrative prospectus a patterned narrative discourse. Thus, Author, narrator and character appeared to be distinct textual constructs and have received remarkable critical attention so far.

3.2.4. Binary oppositions

Narratives holds a particular moral or philosophical point of view (different than that of any narrator, it is by assumption held or imposed by the implied author). Life is a concertation of diversity but language (and discourse) operates on opposites. Coetzee's text envisages life with an amalgamation of these diverse and seemingly opposite but in fact just different accounts. Coetzee, therefore, does not consider life as a set of binaries which cannot exist together or which only and only can exist in a hierarchical organization.

As an explicative principle of structural linguistics and narratology, binary opposition can reveal how language, culture and narratives function but these binary codes are arbitrary, cultural and performative. So, these binaries are not essential and relational. Such a theory of sociology, anthropology and linguistics that claims that all parts of human culture can only be understood in connection to one another and how they work within a wider system or the overall environment. In cultural studies, we frequently meet binary oppositions while examining the interactions between distinct notions. On the surface, these terms appear to be simple identifiers, yet their incompatibility renders them binary opposites.

Narratives mostly assume or operate on binary opposites, building barriers between different groups of people, so fostering fictional, narratorial, textual, cultural or historical prejudice and discrimination. One group may fear or see the opposing category, known as the "other," as a lower/sub category, alternative, antithesis, denial, negative or inferior part, or even threat. The revelation, subversion or deconstruction of binary opposition is a recurrent method of postmodernist and postcolonial narratives in literature, a method for exploring disparities between cultural, historical or textual discrepancies or hierarchies. Authors may investigate the gray space between the two groups and the repercussions of their apparent distinctions.

Blurring, diminishing, complicating and undermining fiction and history are the underlying notions as a forceful (and somewhat remorseful) impetus behind the act of writing and authorship. In Coetzee's novels and the novels under consideration, say, *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year* and, authors' representations occur on different levels. Authors can be discerned through a number of elements on "historical," "implied" and "diegetic levels". J.M. Coetzee, as a historical author, appears behind and beneath the textual realms and his biographical history cannot be annihilated from the fictional world created by the author. The intersectional points abound yet so

vague that no critical reading can be totally based upon such a historical backbone. J. M. Coetzee, as a historical author, problematizes the author's status also as a narrator and a character.

3.2.5. History writing / History and fiction / Ideology, Politics (ecopolitics)

From a postclassical perspective, the narrative strategies have to do with the manipulations of the contextual parameters that resist the narrative determinations of the possible interpretative processes of the narrative. The postclassical apparatus and postmodernist terminologies are found at a state of contradiction and conflicting the former keeping on the possibility of narration while the latter essentially undermining the idea of representation. The former foregrounds the narrative imagination while the latter reveals the textuality of narrative discourse.

As will be analysed in the analysis chapters, the novels under consideration, *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year* emerge as the “narrative texts” at a state of “conflation” (Çıraklı, 2022), bringing together the notions of narrative discourse and narrative representation allowing for the postclassical reading of these novels, and the textual elements and postmodernist “strategies of undermining” that indicate the “vanity” and “pointlessness,” and more than that, “unreliability” and “inadequacy” of storytelling. These novels play with the myths of “narrative representation.”

Moreover, Coetzee, associating himself with the previous tradition, rewrites Ulysses, taking a non-epic journey, as implied in the opening passages of the novel: “the imaginary Elizabeth Costello is herself a novelist, an Australian born in 1928. Her best-known work is *The House on Eccles Street* (1969), in which she gives Molly Bloom from Ulysses her own story to tell. Thanks mainly to that novel, as permanent an achievement in its own way as the masterpiece from which it derives, she is in demand at literary conferences. She rarely manages to tell people what they want to hear” (Mars-Jones, 2003).

In this sense, as Çıraklı puts (2022), “narrative image is continuously tested, impaired, crippled, damaged – or surprised and subverted– by the very textual set of concepts, which refer to strict ideologies and ideological bias, and devour an epistemic ground on which human being and human consciousness make sense.” Coetzee's novels, then, are not only narratives of intellectual degeneration but also sagas of “narrative images.” The intertextual storage of the novels are therefore not the references to the previous texts but mere “vanity” of moral, philosophical and ideological assets and assumptions that prove useless in the text.

3.3. Methodology

3.3.1. Mapping of Enquiry and Research Guideline

- a) The study presents critical analysis of the novels and analyses the narrative strategies, including narrative patterns and the strategies offered by narrative situations and strategies regarding the narrativized textuality and textualized narratives.
- b) The study will also outline the plural voices in the narrative layers and levels and shifting perspectives of the characters, then, becomes important to identify the changes, narrative underpinnings, manipulations, vicissitudes, underminings or authorial penetrations, nuisances, intentions and predispositions concealed or decorated through the narrative indicators taking place in the narratives.
- c) So, in the discussion sections, the thesis will consider the variations of the narrative discourse and put emphasis on the depiction of the mood of the narrative agents speaking out through the dramatic narratives and narrative drama of the intellectuals. The study will eventually attempt to set up a consistent explication for the manipulative narrative strategies exerted by the implied author to intrigue the readers into naively assuming associations, collision, cooperation, collaboration and coordination between the authorial background of the narrators and the fictional characters and situations.
- d) Thus, the texts within narrative mediums (and the narrative mediums as texts) will be analysed concerning humorous narrative instances achieved through narrative strategies, concepts of authorship and the potential effects of writing and storytelling as an intellectual activity and bodily performance, always with a focus of authorship, narrative strategies and undermining hierarchies.
- e) Additionally, the thesis will provide deliberations of these issues regarding Coetzee's texts and narratives. The study therefore aims to show how Coetzee gets the contemporary discussion about authorship one step further, and depicts it within a narrative medium. Additionally, the study raises awareness of authorship and narration both as a leitmotif, theme, tool as well as degenerating performance and an outworn fallacy.
- f) Lastly; the study will reveal that even authorship has long been a state of death, and now it is the author as an intellectual and bodily entity that has long proven dead and dysfunctional.

3.3.2. Operational Terms

Key Concepts

- Author
- Authorship
- Narrator
- Narrative Levels
- Narrative Strategies
- Ideology, Politics (ecopolitics)
- Criticism, Literary Theory
- Metatextuality
- Intertextuality
- Binary oppositions
- History writing
- History and fiction
- Irony, Humour, Parody

CHAPTER FOUR

4. AUTHOR AS CHARACTER: *ELISABETH COSTELLO*

4.1. Chapter Introduction

Authors no longer have the lightness,
the distance from subjective needs and interests,
required for teaching us how to feel, and, in consequence,
we no longer have “faith in the artist and his truth”
(Coetzee, 2003: 207, 2004)

Regarding the history of cultural and narrative hierarchies, Coetzee’s sole ray of optimism about great Western culture is that it is the third phase following the author’s death. When reading *Elizabeth Costello*, we discover that the author and authorship have long passed away, yet his or her grave is vacant. Rather than critical and philosophical speculations about authorship, the implied author represents contemporary author within a complicated “narrative medium” and the microcosmic settings of authorial revelations.

Elizabeth Costello can be considered a typical postmodern narrative since it employs fragmented narration in the form of teachings that seem terribly realistic for a fictitious character. Despite this, Coetzee complicates the narrative with male and female sensitivities and experiences, amalgamating a number of striking narrative characteristics of authorial posture. In analyzing the narrative strategy of *EC* by Coetzee, it is vital to explain its complicated publishing history. Initially, Coetzee presented this novel as “eight lessons,” which were separately published, and others were presented as a lecture between 1997 and 2003. Elizabeth Costello appears in all of these lessons as a character. Coetzee later assembled and modified them and further added others, and in 2003, he published one book called *EC: Eight Lessons*⁶.

In this vein, there have been debates on whether the term ‘novel’ suits this book. This argument is because of how the book was initially published; partially, it had a changing narrator’s point of view, and partially, it had the content of the “lessons.” In fact, many reviewers were cautious of

⁶ JM Coetzee: *Countervoices*

referring to the book as a novel⁷. For a reviewer, when a text is referred to as a novel, including a narrative volume of episodic pieces with a single protagonist. As the author, Coetzee chose the word lessons, which seems to be describing his relationship to this novel. Most likely, the lessons suggested the learning process of Coetzee, never finalized and never uncontested, even within himself. Various terms can be used to describe the *Elizabeth Costello* text, each being justifiable though not comprehensively or giving full satisfaction. Therefore, for this textual analysis, *EC: Eight Lessons* can be named as a novel, and the individual chapters in the novel can be referred to as lessons (Moses, 2009: 5).

Kochin stresses that *Elizabeth Costello* raises important issues regarding “what an author is,” which marks a reference to Foucault, who elaborates on “the function of an author,” in his well-known essay (1969), and discusses “the existence, circulation, and operation of certain discourses within a society” (Kochin, 2008: 79). Kochin argues that Foucault “provides a template for inquiry into a certain period of literature, the age of the idealistic author” (Grobler et al., 2015: 6). As Attwell (2002) discusses and puts carefully the aforementioned issues raised within the realm of fictional status of the so-called authorship “to fictionalize the writer-as-public intellectual more directly [than certain characters in previous novels]” (Attwell, 2006: 25). In this vein, discusses

[*Elizabeth Costello*] enables Coetzee to fictionalize the writer-as-public intellectual more directly [than certain characters in previous novels]. One may see her as a compromise and a surrogate: a compromise because through her Coetzee goes some way toward meeting the demands placed on him to step into the public limelight, and a surrogate because she does, to some degree, speak for him—when called upon to speak publicly, Coetzee ushers her [onto the stage] instead, enabling him to stand back and observe the ironies and the play of positions. (Attwell, 2006: 33–34)

The history of literature, particularly after the 50s, however, witnessed that particular “idealisation” of the author as a “Godlike” and “creator” figure prevailing the realm of representation. The 20th and 21st centuries, however, the author appeared as “a character,” who takes “vain” journeys into fiction ripped from reality and take shelter in mere discourse of ideology. They persistently, and unconsciously, seek refuge in the discursive realm of existence that turn out to be textuality. *Elizabeth Costello*’s so-called textuality is brought together with features of reality. The work has launched on from reality, social forms or cultural institutions, but carefully and deliberately calls into question the very blurred realm of fictionality and idealised and institutionalised cultural and aesthetic hierarchies.

Also, unlike Coetzee’s earlier works which can be considered naturalistic, or can be read from a naturalistic point of view, his latest works are combined with storytelling fiction, memoirs, polemical essays, or a combination of all three in a fictional framework. *Elizabeth Costello* (2003)

⁷ Laura Giovannelli, “JM Coetzee’s unsettling portrayals of *Elizabeth Costello*,” *Acta Scientiarum, Language and Culture* 33, no. 1 (2011): 63-71.

and *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007) are outstanding examples of this critical shift in the course of Coetzee's oeuvre. These recent novels thus present a challenge for a reader to understand because of their intellectual content, which are aimed at the representation of the "author at work", which indicates another metafictional as well as representational level of literature. This critical attempt at the problematization of the act of storytelling and authorship shows that, as Çıraklı suggests Coetzee "uses a strategy of reversal in the process of representation, thereby moving the spotlight upon the author without authority, who, as an object of narration, has become the centre of characterization in a decentered text" (2022). Critics refer to *EC* and *DBY* as "narratives of observation, contemplation and thinking" (i.e., *EC*, 167) because they encourage readers to ponder challenging questions. When reading these two novels, they provoke one's thinking and debate, yet the thoughtful suggestions fall beyond providing insightful answers nor practical solutions. They simply prove, as the "strong opinions" suggest, too weak in function. They only seem to achieve readers' responses but they seem to have been caught up in an incurable frailty. They just remain "strong opinions" that emerge in the fictional status quo. Hence, the two narrative texts or textual narratives are dramatic novels because of how their ideas are expressed, how the characters are grounded, and then how all these are undermined through the dramatic representation of these characters, arousing somewhat humorous, acute, ironic and sarcastic, yet frequently and recurrently ludicrous. Therefore, unlike Coetzee's earlier novels, these recent ones are seemingly more philosophical but it is a deliberate attack on author's philosophizing revelations, accounts, statements, lectures or books with philosophical stances adopted by the author characters.

Let us briefly analyze the lessons based on setting and time. "What is Realism" is the first lesson written in 1995, and it is a story about the speech of Elizabeth Costello at Altona College in Pennsylvania, Williamstown. In this event, Elizabeth is expected to be awarded a Stowe Award. "The Novel in Africa" is the second lesson whose date is not specified, but it was done on a Scandinavia cruise ship to South Africa and Antarctica. The third and fourth lessons, namely "The Lives of Animals" and "ONE and TWO," respectively, appear in 1997, two years after the delivery of the first lesson. The lessons occur at Appleton College in Waltham, Massachusetts, where Elizabeth is invited to talk on a series of academic lectures on animal rights. "The Humanities in Africa" is the fifth lesson and is also not given a date, but it happens in Johannesburg (Clarkson, 2009: 48). Here, Elizabeth is invited to lecture at Marianhill in Zululand, where she meets her sister and they to attend together her sister's PhD graduation ceremony.

"The Problem of Evil" is the sixth lesson. This sixth lesson occurs at Amsterdam's philosophical/theological conference dated 1998. "Eros" is the seventh lesson and is not given time, but it is about Elizabeth's philosophical reflections on the nature of Eros. "At the Gate" is the eighth lesson, and it comprehensively describes the agony of Elizabeth⁸. This lesson takes place after

⁸ JM Coetzee: *Countervoices*

Elizabeth's death in an ordinary undisclosed place. Finally, there comes the "Letter of Elizabeth, Lady Chandos," which is a Postscript describing the response of the Lord's wife. The letter was intended for Francis Bacon. Therefore, the novel has various individual lessons with a noticeable sequential progression and mutual denominator: Elizabeth Costello, the persona.

From the above overview of Coetzee's lessons in the *Elizabeth Costello* novel, the author modified the lessons and articulated them more for the joint publication. However, the whole novel consists of remarkably disjointed narratives. This postmodernist disintegration of the novel makes the reader read the constructedness of the novel attentively, and it refutes literary conventions, especially easy resolutions of realism and realistic representations.

It has been stated so far that the first lesson is the most instrumental one as it deals with the very conventions of realistic storytelling. From this lesson, a reader can learn self-deconstructing mock realism where the narrator, Elizabeth, is not restricted by the conventions of the realistic novel⁹. Elizabeth's narration in this lesson is often interrupted by a pervasive self-conscious narrator, who might be probably Coetzee himself. For example, phrases like "we skip" are ushered in some paragraphs to show that there is another narrator. Other parts have a narrator informing the readers on strategies that realism makes use of.

As an omnipresent narrator, Coetzee instructs his listeners/readers/writers to be about the realistic presentation of a story by showing how it would fail to represent at all. Also, from the novel, one learns that nothing there can be taken at face value, thus informing the reader that they should not trust everything in a story: these sentiments by Coetzee and at the beginning of the novel, makes a reader a bit disturbed and wonder how fictional the novel is going to be (Khan, 2011: 7). Both in *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year*, resistance to imitate is a central theme. The narrative procedures are undermined as well as conditioned by conventional drives of storytelling, which is at the same time utterly displayed and deconstructed by the subversive implied author.

Let's turn to the person holding the act of narrating in *Elizabeth Costello*. In *Diary of a Bad Year*, narrators speak directly, but in *EC*, the novel is narrated using present tense by third-person narrators. This has been the trademark fictional mode of the author Coetzee. Apart from the third-person reflector, there are other points of view. When looking at the eight lessons in the novels, most of them are narrated from the point of view of John, Elizabeth's son. John narrates lessons 1, 3, and 4. The rest of the lessons are told by Elizabeth herself. The third-person narrator in the fifth lesson sounds as the voice of Elizabeth. It is her voice because she confirms so to the reader. All through these eight lessons, Elizabeth is shown on the fringe, at a state of confess or departure from belief. She is reflecting on her books and what they teach (Kotrsová, 2012: 58). At the gate, Elizabeth

⁹ JM Coetzee: Countervoices

acknowledges that her books designate how an author character lives in the minds of the readers; she refers to this self-character, [herself] as she, while others, including readers, refer to her as Elizabeth. This indicates the narrative strategy and the playfulness of the implied author who achieves to complicate, yet reveal, the various narrative levels and textual layers.

The narrative point of view is a significant factor in the analysis of aging in literature. For example, in the bibliography of some novels, old protagonists with over 60 years are included in texts / narratives where the point of view is considerably shared by the central character. The impetus behind novels having a bibliography with no third-person narrative point of view is to strengthen the one's sense of detachment from the storyworld. Readers are not involved in such narratives; they only perceive the storyworld and remain detached from it. Contrary to what has been the previous experience, aging protagonists emphasize that the most well-developed and complex representations of life as experienced past. These characters are represented to share their story from their own points of view. Elizabeth Costello however, is a sophisticated character with various features and traits that do not meet any existing stereotype of the old or aged characters, maintaining a negative view when reading the novel. Elizabeth predominantly owns this point of view, and thus negative stereotyping instances of the old protagonists can be considered as hers. Hence, this analysis highlights *EC*'s third-person point of view with shifting perspectives and focal points.

This might be the reason why the majority of the critics or readers are prone to a joint analysis of *EC* and the historical author JC, however, the present analysis of the point of view is mainly concerned with the narrative levels and textual layers although in the case of JC has been considered in the analysis. In his previous books, Coetzee has been using autobiographical elements. Therefore in *EC*, the same elements are also expected. Although the relationship between Coetzee and Elizabeth is complex, the two have similarities (the Coetzee as the author and Elizabeth as the protagonist). Coetzee is a vegetarian interested in humanitarian activities in Africa and in humanities in Africa and elsewhere. Elizabeth also has an interest in humanitarian activities and further discusses topics concerning animals. Both Coetzee and Elizabeth are renowned authors who have been interested in the use of intertextuality as a strategy for verbal, situational and dramatic irony. Coetzee has modified Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and Elizabeth has modified Joyce's *Ulysses*.

However, the dissimilarities between the two are more than their similarities in terms of year of birth, gender, and nationality. The dissimilarities play an important role than just preventing sheer similarity or correspondence between the implied author and its protagonist; if Elizabeth was not a female, maybe she could not have played the roles she played in more than three of the Lessons in the novel *EC*.

If Elizabeth was a South African, it would be evident in her writings, and she could have made references that are familiar to people from South Africa. Elizabeth personally acknowledges that

African authors need to interpret various African-related topics for African readers in her writings. These sentiments imply that Elizabeth is not an African but an Australian author. In the fifth lesson, she is required to comprehend the necessities of the situation in South Africa because she is not familiar with the place. Therefore, although there exist some correspondences between the author Coetzee and Elizabeth as the central character (narrator and focalizer), the dissimilarities between the two outweigh, thus significantly contributing to the development of the plot of the *Elizabeth Costello* novel.

Although the autobiography hunters most likely targeted Elizabeth, other characters from other lessons were compared to the author, Coetzee. Together with other characters, John expresses well-formulated counter-arguments of the opinions of Elizabeth as his mother, well-articulated like those of Coetzee himself. Emmanuel Egudu is another character who can be significant compared to Coetzee. The author met this former writer aboard the cruise ship in lesson two. Through this character, the author introduces a black African version, specifically of himself, because he was a South African by birth but later relocated to Australia. This character is a representation of Coetzee, a writer and critic with South African origin, who is an Anglophone by upbringing and Afrikaner by surname.

Further, the novel raises an issue regarding the author and Elizabeth: as a male author, Coetzee speaks through Elizabeth, a female character. Since 1970, there have been debates about feminist debates on who is qualified to write about who; some believe that a man should write a man and a woman should write a woman. This debate has also been pointed out in chapter two about gender representations in novels. But in *Elizabeth Costello*, Coetzee has broken this literacy cycle and feminist assumption and written about a woman.

Some critics argue that Coetzee used Elizabeth as a mask to hide his expressions and feelings behind her. The author was a coward to write about his views directly, so he hid behind Elizabeth to speak his mind. Some say that it is typical for male authors to use women to express their feelings. Although this argument is relevant, it is also vital to understand that by choosing to use a female narrator, Coetzee was able to address some gendered feminine topics in the society, which male characters could not have presented as required. The author was able to address animal, evil, imaginary, death, embodiment, and literature-related topics using a woman narrator.

Before talking about these topics, it is vital to overturn Coetzee within the established rule, and it seems that he inserts and enchants the voice and thoughts of another person in *EC* with a female narrative agent. Therefore, Elizabeth is neither an authoring drag nor a shield, but as postmodernists describe, she is a vacancy, embodying the famine through which Coetzee can speak.

One might also argue differently concerning Coetzee using Elizabeth to speak in the novel. One might view Elizabeth as a compromise and surrogate. She is a compromise because, as an author, she wants Coetzee to look like a public intellectual because that is what is expected of him as an author of many books. On the other hand, Elizabeth is a surrogate because, in the novel, she seems to be speaking on behalf of Coetzee. Therefore taking into consideration the portrayal insight of Elizabeth and the benefits of using a female narrator's point of view to address certain topics, this analysis concludes that Coetzee's use of Elizabeth to pass his message to his readers is convenient and acceptable.

This research analyzes the two books by Coetzee (*Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year*), outlining their similarities and differences. From the analysis, it can be concluded that the narrative strategy of both novels, *EC* and *DBY*, is a complex issue. As suggested, during a literary analysis, it is probably essential to understand the narrative levels and textual layers of the novel and how it complicates the point of view with shifting perspectives. These aspects help in the accurate analysis of a novel and deep analysis and understanding of that novel. Further, the introduction of protagonists such as JC and Elizabeth and other characters is also a basic aspect to be considered when doing a comprehensive literary analysis.

4.2. Narrators / Narrative Levels / Narrative Strategies (Effect of Narrative Levels: Irony, Humour, etc.)

Easy going critics almost always emphasise how Coetzee create doubles for himself and how we should consider the correspondences between his biography and narratives. For example, even the selection of the name "John" seems to be trick, for Coetzee readily must have known that the naïve readers or critics would take it another double for "J-ohn M. Coetzee". This dissertation essentially criticises this naïve and outworn inclination for historical-biographical reading of Coetzee novels. In fact, this study argues that Coetzee, as an implied author, intentionally manipulates these readers or critics to intrigue them into biographical interpretation of the novels. However, the complicated use of narrative strategies show that the implied author foregrounds the importance of "narrative representation, only through which the "author condition" can be represented. *EC* as a narrative, therefore, provides a platform for exploration and depiction of the author. It is seen through the discrepant narrative layers and levels, that Elizabeth is not adequately involved in the events as a character, nor, as an author, she feels adequate to have genuine touch with reality. As an activist, she feels too weak to change reality; as a human being she cannot believe appropriately in / rely adequately on humanity; as an academician, she cannot convince the addressee enough; as a narrator, she cannot achieve her task of storytelling, and so on... As Çıraklı argued (2022)

classical categories of extradiegetic – intradiegetic or heterodiegetic – homodiegetic narrators do not suffice to explain Coetzee's strategy of reversal and narrative drama of modern authorship.

An author appears with various roles in different narrative levels and social layers. His strategy of reversal refers to his act of “narrativization of the texts” through which a text is tested/judged by its rhetorical power or its degree of persuasion. The readers are invited to perceive the aged intellectual with diverse narrative roles: author-intellectual, author-novelist, author-character, author-narrator and author-focaliser. Her lectures comprise remarkable narrativization of the texts, and as a novelist she is being narrativized through a narrative by another author. The author’s narrative drama or drama of narrative in *Elizabeth Costello* indicates the inadequacy of “writing,” “narration,” and “performance.” (106).

The narrative mode of the narrative of the author gradually switches from the serious mode to sheer comedy, from authorial confidence and authority of the ideals to ludicrous character weakness and parody. (Consider imitation/rewriting/intertextuality are the elements of parody to arouse a particular effect such as laughter and sarcasm related with irony and undermining). The narrative discourse and the Costello lessons plays with narrative time and levels and uses narrative strategies to produce an effect of ridicule, and the narrative turns out to be a self-deconstructing authorship on the stage. One of the best examples of this is her “mock realism” in Lesson 1, where, in the fashion of narrative drama, Elizabeth Costello represents the how she violates conventions of the realistic novel on textual and narrative levels.

As suggested earlier in the theoretical background section (p. 52), there is an ongoing narrative drama of an aged author. Elizabeth Costello is presented in a way that produces ironic situations, mostly dramatic irony even though, concerning the genre, there is no dramatic representation but there is a recurrence of dramatic scenes of “lecturing” a strategy of the implied author to create a dramatic effect of “imitation of action,” in Aristotelian sense, and the depiction of the unreality of the real condition of the contemporary intellectual and novelist.

The third person extradiegetic narrator takes over the narration of Lessons / Lectures 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, yet John, Elizabeth or audiences’ minds are revealed along with the narration. The complication of the narrative structure is more obvious when the reader understands this third person narrator can be fused with the narrating mind of Elizabeth, who frequently thinks of or imagines herself in the third person. This, nevertheless, indicates an extradiegetic posture, as the narrator speaks from without: The parts narrated in the third person, therefore, also indicate Elizabeth Costello’s role as a narrator. It is surprising that she is said to address herself in the third person: “the person whom she, to herself, calls she” (Coetzee, 2003: 207). That split in narrative role is also an indication of the split of personality. “Split” in this context has to do with “narrative gap” regarding narrativity, and “degeneration” regarding reality. O’Sullivan, in this context, finds the act of narrating and narrating time very crucial. He argues:

For Coetzee, the “everlasting present” of the story is “nothing but the moment of narration itself” (579); the “construct of narrative time has collapsed” and there is only the “time of narration left” (579). However, the problem of authority returns when we are left with nothing but the “moment of narration itself” (O’Sullivan, 2011: 128).

The complication of order regarding the story of Elizabeth and John Costello, the reader has to be involved in a challenging task to construct the story.¹⁰ The chronological order is distorted and the Elizabeth's lessons / lectures appear through an irregular order. For example, the reader understands in lessons 3-4 that John is "married". In the Lesson 1 part, and the reader questions whether John is "married and unmarried" as he is sleeping with Susan Moebius, one of her mother's fans. The implied author complicates the narrative order in lesson / lecture 3, letting Elizabeth Costello mention a previous lecture she gave "two years" prior to her famous Kafka lecture ("Report to an Academy"). This is of course a reference to the lecture delivered in Lesson 1.¹¹ "As a Woman Grows Older," represents *Elizabeth Costello* making critical and polemical discussions amidst the American Presidential campaign, which is also a sign of alienation between the authors and reality. They raise political issues and serious concerns about the policy makers but they are useless and ineffective through their political, critical and polemical discussions. The extradiegetic and homodiegetic narrator-focaliser Elizabeth Costello is simply imprisoned in a narrative layer which signifies a sterile story world of its own. Lessons 3-4, calls into question Elizabeth as a mother, and explores mother-son relationship. As an author, she is praised on the stage and the fictional realm of authorship but excluded from life, as a mother, she keeps being an "other" for John. John, as she persists in her "sacred" authorship and takes seriously her role supporting the animal rights. John's love and sympathy for his mother is obvious across the narrative, yet the son hardly takes her seriously.

That and more she had said: it had seemed to her obvious, barely worth pausing over. But she had gone a step further, a step too far. The massacre of the defenceless is being repeated all around us, day after day, she had said, a slaughter no different in scale or horror or moral import from what we call the holocaust; yet we choose not to see it (Coetzee, 2003: 156).

The Irish Times published a letter by Coetzee, sent in 2008, in which he expressed his disapproval of Dubliner Trinity College's regime of animal abuse, that is, vivisection in scientific research. He cravingly scribbles: "I wholeheartedly concur with John Banville's points of view. Scientific or pedagogical purposes should not necessitate students chopping up live animals. Disgraceful for Trinity College to keep up the practise." (*Vivisection at Trinity – The Irish Times*, 2008) When Banville was asked about the practise of vivisection at TCD on RTÉ Radio 1's Liveline, an Irish listener pointed out that Banville had addressed the subject nearly nine years before. Banville went on Liveline and called out the practise "Extremely bad, -- he said, recounting the historical

¹⁰ The intricate use of narrative methods demonstrates that the suggested author emphasizes the significance of "narrative representation," which is the only means by which the "author condition" may be expressed. For instance, even the use of the name "John" seems to be a ruse, since Coetzee must have anticipated that ignorant readers or critics would mistake it for "J-ohn M. Coetzee." So, the naïve reviewers nearly always emphasize how Coetzee creates doubles for himself and the correspondences between his life and fiction. This dissertation primarily critiques this simplistic and outmoded historical-biographical view of Coetzee's works. This research indicates that Coetzee, as an implied author, manipulates these readers or critics purposefully in order to entice them into biographical interpretations of the books.

¹¹ Coetzee cites this in his wellknown critical account *The Lives of Animals* (The part appears in a footnote: 18n1).

author's fruitless attempts to mediate: "I was going by the front gates of Trinity one day and there was a gathering of primarily young females protesting and I was intrigued.... They told me that the college was doing vivisection experiments when I approached them and spoke with them. Because this came as such a shock and a surprise to me, I sent a letter of protest to The Irish Times. Retiring to write books, the Trinity University professor wrote back and advised Banville to leave the scientists to their own work." The Irish Times inquired if Banville had received any more support for his letter, to which Banville said, "I'm sorry, but that's not possible.' 'John, please stop talking.' As my depression worsened, I reflected about this. My involvement will do no good; if I could have made a difference, I would have continued." A letter from John Coetzee appeared in the Irish Times thanks to my efforts "I'm referring to J. M. Coetzee, the acclaimed author. I talked to a few people." (Halpin, 2017)

J. M. Coetzee's fiction and other works with serious critical and cultural insights engulf speculations on what Foucault calls into question as authorship. Textual, historical, playful and performative traits of authorship and writing embodies the authorial function in Coetzee's works that amalgamate Coetzee's biographical, nonfictional or fictional themes in striking and pondering narratives. Except for *Life & Times of Michael K*, the protagonists are authors or the central characters have to do with the act of writing. In his memoirs, he, presents "his own 'portrait of the artist as a young man'"¹². Coetzee's works provide examples of author-characters and he likes to interweave narrative, character and authorial voices within the same space of story. His inclination to mix these voices, exploration of the author-figures in the narratives, or strategy to play with the reader traces back to his early novel *Dusklands*, in which there are such characters. This recurrent motif of writing recurs in his other novels, for example, *Waiting for the Barbarians*, *Age of Iron*, *Foe*, and much more interestingly, *The Master of Petersburg*. In his most known work, *Disgrace*, the protagonist (Lurie) is an intellectual author, who, throughout the narrative, is portrayed as occupied with the business of writing. The novel does not have an eponymous hero, but makes constant references to poets, composers and writers like Byron. Coetzee, as a historical author, delivers his Nobel lecture (2003) with similar, and keen, mimicry of the idealised protagonist Robinson Crusoe, whose voice is enunciated all through the address. The narrator-character's seemingly "authorial" voice is heard, which created triple narrative levels at a time as is the case with *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of a Bad Year*. In fact, argues Çıraklı (2022), "nobody is like nobody, in Coetzee's address: The implied author, the historical author, the narrator, the character, or Coetzee as an author in history... they all refer to evasive categories. Coetzee as a historical author argues that

I reiterate [...] that history is not reality; that history is a kind of discourse; that a novel is a kind of discourse too, but a different kind of discourse; that, inevitably in our culture, history will, with varying degrees of forcefulness, try to claim primacy, claim to be a master-form of discourse [...]. The categories of history are not privileged, just as the categories of moral discourse are not

¹² The protagonist is not an author, but a gardener, yet there is a considerable motif of writing/narrating in the narrative.

privileged. They do not reside in reality: they are a certain construction put upon reality. (Coetzee, 1988).

The voice of the addresser (Coetzee's lecture) refers to many voices at a time. Robinson takes over the narration of the story but this supposed voice, as a lingering agency, is on the go to signify its true referent" (Çıraklı, 2022). As a matter of fact, Coetzee published the novel *Crusoe* with a pseudonym of Daniel Defoe (79). In striving Kochin argues that "Coetzee writes out of and in response to the material history of literature" (4). In fact, he, from a historical – and somewhat Marxist -- point of view considers authorship 'a capitalistic game the professional authors are involved. The authors are supposed to "play the game by the rules of the [established order and] state" (Coetzee, 1992: 364). Hence, the critics who discusses the notion of "authorship" with regard to historical-economic parameters refer to the historical author's views. This is because, it seems, Coetzee gives priority to "Defoe" and assigning him with a representative value. As Kochin (2008) puts "Defoe was the first writer to make a living by the sale of his books and pamphlets to the public, that is, to book buyers who did not know him, and who bought his books because they wanted to read them" (Kochin, 2008: 80). So, Coetzee's *Elizabeth Costello* and *Diary of A Bad Year* and Robinson Crusoe as a self-reliant character with strong opinions, integrated skills and over-confident storytelling seem to be appropriate figures to explore the position of modern author as narrator and character within the text and as a powerful individual emancipated from the security of the patronage. Even though, there might be hot debate as to whether patronage is completely removed from the so-called sector, it is an undeniable fact that modern author turns out to be an essential "stakeholder" of the system. Çıraklı argues, "not only concerning the economic power but also regarding, in Bourdeau's (1986) terms, "cultural capital", modern author is a sort of contemporary "influencer" holding and retaining a significant "intellectual capital" (2022). It is very clear in his *Elizabeth Costello*, when the authors save intellectual capital like the goods and commodities having a considerable exchange value. An author with a *prima facie* (write in latin) is a "business(wo)man" in the economic sense (EC, 166-7). Kochin states that

An author, in the emerging market-based society, was understood to be authorized to speak to the condition of the public by his (or, less often, her) success in creating a public for his books. In the modern era – from about 1640 to 1989 – the public authorized by an author's creation of an audience was, in the most important cases, the nation, the public of readers as Englishmen and -women, or, more recently, as Irishmen and -women, as Israelis, as South Africans (Kochin, 2008: 80).

Coetzee's character, the Australian author (an aged female novelist) Elizabeth Costello highlights the importance of an author (EC: 40-41), which reminds us of Foucault's famous question: "What is an auhor?" Elizabeth Costello, in this sense, is a representative of the global author, who has to do with more than textual or historical concerns. A global author is one who engaged a confident cultural position within the global world. S/he attempts to exert its potential to frame out the narrative with particular function and meaning of "we in its exclusive form," (*Elizabeth Costello*

40-41). The role of global authors is extended from nations, achieving beyond local struggles. For example, Elizabeth Costello (Coetzee's fictional author) is said to have re-penned *Ulysses*. The keen and apparently playful reference to the historical author's rewriting of *Foe* (and the protagonist Defoe) and *The Master of Petersburg* with particular references to Dostoevsky and the historical period at the time of revolution, Elizabeth Costello's imaginary "The House on Eccles Street" and imaginary *Ulysses* is aimed at challenging all these historical, narrative and textual categories. He attacks history and reality as such, in referencing Leopold Bloom, Stephen Dedalus. Kochin's remarks on Coetzee are also of note here:

Thanks to the industrial efficiency of printing and the relative ease of translation as against creation, an author successful at creating a national or monolingual public can often call into existence a multinational or multilingual public. An author of world stature, that is to say one with significant international sales, is authorized by this success at creating a world audience to address the condition of that audience, the human condition. Not all authors of international stature are national authors. Some, such as Salman Rushdie and J. M. Coetzee, work within the institutions of global culture (Kochin, 2008: 81).

However, we should not conceive of such an author as one who has transcended or outgrown cultural, literary and historical institutions, but rather as one who writes within world-wide cultural mediums with international receivers, including the Swedish Academy with its globalized (and politicised) nomination stages and procedures (or, relatively humbler organizations or associations like PEN International).

[1] I'm a country girl myself, she would like to say, but does not, though it is true, in part. Nothing exceptional about being from the country. [2] Each of the entertainment staff is expected to give a short public talk. [3] 'Just to say who you are, where you come from,' explains the young coordinator in carefully idiomatic English. [4] His name is Mikael; he is handsome in his tall, blond, Swedish way, but dour, too dour for her taste. (*EC*, 37).

It seems that authorship has turned out to be a profession and all professional writers write primarily for an implied audience, so an international writer like Elizabeth Costello, has developed the habit of writing for strangers.

Coetzee explores such elusiveness, distinct streams of narration and sterile truths observed in the case of modern authorship, and three essential features are significant in the case of postmodern writers: They do not have genuine touch with "(a) experience; (b) audience; (c) truth. Fiction and textuality have overcome experience, modern technological developments and globalisation have extended afar audience; (c) postmodernism, information technologies and the new media and the rise of post-truth have turned upside down idealised, achievable and existent notion of truth (Carstensen, 2007: 80). Coetzee states that "a (rash?) decision to set down the truth, as though after a lifetime of exploring one had acquired the credentials, amassed the authority, to do so" (Coetzee, 1985: 232).

Elizabeth Costello, as a prize-winner author has proved to be a prize-worthy pen with attempts to redefine humanist morality (Çıraklı, 2022). She still writes for the sake of transcendental values or refined ideals, and keeps teaching the readers moral lessons to raise awareness of those ideals or idealised notions. Self-confident and self-content drama of authorial voice of contemporary authors, however, prove vain when they are depicted in narrative discourse. What Coetzee achieves is to make the “author” an object of narration as having various roles in the narrative. This was an earlier discussion raised by Bakhtin. From a Bakhtinian perspective Çıraklı (2022) argues that “all idealistic imaginative activity is conceived and experienced as a potential manifestation of a single, somewhat official consciousness, a single ethos. All that has meaning may be gathered in a single authorial consciousness and subjugated to a *homoglot* discourse of narrative. Modern European humanism assumes a reduced narrative world with incidental and superfluous elements disregarding the polyphonic aspects of novelistic discourse. Starting from the Enlightenment, when the fundamental genres of European prose were developed, authors and critics “facilitated the establishment of the monological principle and its penetration into all domains of ideological life” (Bakhtin, 1984: 66). We can highlight how Coetzee, as a self-conscious author, attributes his art to Defoe but also to the theory of epic and novel. Moses stresses the parts in *EC* devoted to the development “European novel” and “the etymology of the word ‘novel.’ Moses finds it significant because the word “meant the form of writing that was formless, that had no rules, that made up its own rules as it went along” (Coetzee, 2003: 44–45; Moses, 2009: 37). As Bakhtin and Foucault attract our attention to the monopolistic and official perspective of the roots of the “idealistic spirit” of the successors of the modern author¹³, Elizabeth Costello as a character, narrator and author challenges the ideological themes and monologues of Enlightenment and their resonating Romantic idealisations or idealistic romanticisation of human centred, nation oriented or class-conscious discourses and institutions. *Elizabeth Costello* as a narrative provides the readers with various narrative layers, levels and perspectives. As a well-thinking, praise-worthy (and prize-worthy) international preacher (author), she is depicted at various verbal and nonverbal positions ranging from most serious to ludicrous. Modern capitalistic institutions of authorship are tested by the reflective storyworld in narrative fiction through which the reader can see how authorship can no longer be capable of teaching us how to achieve these ideals. As Çıraklı argues “not only human being and humanist morality but also liberal humanism and humanities as a field of study are violated by the narrative”. Coetzee produces “a composite of conflicting voices” and his style “resists a single reading and instead calls upon the reader’s subjective approach for an active construction of the text’s synthesis” (Carstensen, 2007: 81). At this point we also remember Coetzee fusing the voices of historical, implied and fictional authors, as he clearly points out: “all versions of the I are fictions of the I” (Coetzee, 1992: 75). So, it can be argued that through these conflicting voices, he undermines not only author-centred realm of discourse but also human-centred morality, according to which the posture of author, narrator and

¹³ A postmodern author from this perspective is the one who still tries to achieve a single consciousness having the control over the uncontrollable textual relationships and textual dominance.

character emerges. Idealist and idealised Platonic realm of humanism is shattered. As Kochin maintains, “Humanist that is to say, to live humanely, to live gracefully in the face of and in relation to the disgrace of human suffering, evil, and death” (Kochin, 2008: 84).

[1] Her first inclination would be to say no. [2] Her books certainly evince no faith in art. [3] Now that it is over and done with, that lifetime labour of writing, she is capable of casting a glance back over it that is cool enough, she believes, even cold enough, not to be deceived. [4] Her books teach nothing, preach nothing; they merely spell out, as clearly as they can, how people lived in a certain time and place. [5] More modestly put, they spell out how one person lived, one among billions: the person whom she, to herself, calls she, and whom others call Elizabeth Costello. [6] If, in the end, she believes in her books themselves more than she believes in that person, it is belief only in the sense that a carpenter believes in a sturdy table or a cooper in a stout barrel. [7] Her books are, she believes, better put together than she is” (EC, 207-208).

Coetzee states “The efforts of authors to give us lessons, therefore, no longer work to promote those ideals: authors are disgraced, that is to say, are deprived of their expected grace, by the spirit of righteousness (Coetzee, 2004: 12–13). The spirited human consciousness with strongly implanted idea of formulated virtues and morality, the overconfidence in one’s own –socially constructed and unreliable— consciences of those who has the right to condemn one, is not so innocent as we think him or her to be. The myth of the righteous person, as depicted and explored in *Elizabeth Costello*, does not provide a graceful ground for the “suffering of the innocent” or, for holding the correct moral or humanist stance or political correctness. Authorship with the privilege of righteousness has absolved itself of complicity. Costello, and thus Coetzee, try to regain their innocence through discourse and discursive engagement, yet their intellectual desire to be rescued falls to remorse. As Foucault (1969) suggested earlier, “the themes destined to replace the privileged position accorded to the author have merely served to arrest the possibility of genuine change” (Foucault, 2019: 118). J. M. Coetzee, in this regard, takes on a difficult job to show, explore and represent Foucault’s words in a way that depicts the situation of author in particular narratives in the face of the grand narrative of authorship. His fictional narratives and memoirs are devoted to reveal the critical change in the reception of authorship. Particularly *Elizabeth Costello* (and *Diary of a Bad Year*) elucidates the issue apart from what Barthes, Foucault or Derrida have so far discussed under the title of “death of the author” and represents this “degraded image of author” within the narrative framework by using narrative strategies filled with postclassical implications. Various kinds of situational irony emerge from the contradictory and discordant narrative levels, which clearly indicate the authorial status having lost its monopolic, monologic and univocal dominance over the other voices. Kochin maintains “Coetzee’s body of writing can be seen as what the Greeks called an *askēsis*, a series of exercises designed to purge him of the impulse to take idealistic stands in the manner of an author” (Kochin, 2008: 82). Doubling or tripling the focal points with alternating narrative streams of essays, lectures, interviews, mental speculations, free indirect discourses and dialogues, the implied author puts all these elements together, in his nonfiction (i.e. memoirs) and fictions (i.e. *Elizabeth Costello*). *EC* deliberately hints at there are significant references to the biography of the historical author.

David Attwell stresses that Coetzee exerts using generic pluralities to document an author's progress as writer, critic, narrator, focalizer and a character. Elizabeth Costello comprises philosophical essays, religious pamphlets, scientific reviews, literary passages, and reviews on history, politics, economy, philosophy, drama / film, commerce / advertising, even the comic strip and cartoons, sports, journalism, and cultural accounts, generic stereotypes as the historical author's nonfiction has included. The character *Costello* is seen to discuss "the white tribe," "the Afrikaner," "Global South" or "African Novel." *Elizabeth Costello*, as particular narrative against the grand narrative of truth, resists any compromises in what conventional narratives require of the implied readers, never trying to narrow or eliminate the gap between the mass-market lowbrow readers in the street and the so-called intellectual highbrows. That is not the declaration of the victory of all-encompassing "popular literature, culture and humanities." What Coetzee highlights in Elizabeth Costello, then, not merely South Africa, but world and global culture is a challenging and complicated concept. Regarding the problems cast by the contemporary world and the global humanist culture, Coetzee argues that:

As for the other pieces you mention, pieces on South African society, I think they deserve a quiet death. I am afraid that at a certain stage of my career – the mid 1980's – I slipped a little too easily into the role of commentator on South African affairs. I have no talent for that kind of political/sociological journalism. To be more specific, I am too suspicious of the genre, of the vision it locks its practitioners into, to give myself wholly to it, yet I lack enough zeal to try to turn it upside down or inside out. Anyhow, I am far too bookish, far too ignorant about real people, to set myself up as interpreter, much less a judge, of the lives they live (Coetzee, 1992: 103–104).

In creating *EC*, Coetzee as an implied author undertakes the task of inverting the method and the strategy of reversal which brilliant writers employ to test the power of writing when appraising actual people and their lives:

Elizabeth Costello is a writer, born in 1928, which makes her sixty-six years old, going on sixty-seven. She has written nine novels, two books of poems, a book on bird life, and a body of journalism. By birth she is Australian. She was born in Melbourne and still lives there, though she spent the years 1951 to 1963 abroad, in England and France. She has been married twice. She has two children, one by each marriage (*EC*: 1)

It is clearly seen in Elizabeth Costello's "Eight Lessons." As highlighted in the narrative by the third person narrator, and Joe's stream of consciousness intertwined with the free indirect discourse, the implied reader learns about the professional life of the author protagonist Elizabeth Costello, whose major works deal with realism, realistic representation and reality ("The Lives of Animals" and "The Humanities in Africa"), deconstruction of history and realism ("Realism") or mimicry of the previous authors (an imitation of Kafka: "At the Gate").

Coetzee, as a contemporary professional author, support themselves by lecturing, speaking and, notably, teaching at university. The outcome is a literature produced for academic professionals, replete of academic conventions and reflective not just of literary traditions but also of generic

boundaries, aesthetic prejudgements, literary-critical schools and reading habits and fashionable styles or emerging reading schools. Elizabeth Costello, therefore, discusses from the inside this transition from the book writing to academic writing, or vice versa.¹⁴ In a spoof of “postmodern reflexivity,” the critical lectures and courses in *Elizabeth Costello* consist mostly of anecdotes about academicians, where she emerges as a storyteller and re-maker of the past. For instance, John describes his mother’s college visit and literary award talk in “Lesson One: “Realism”, the protagonist Costello attacks reality, history, authorship, liberal humanism, humanist assumptions and idealisations and hierarchical construction of what we call reality:

[1] The blue costume, the greasy hair, are details, signs of a moderate realism. [2] Supply the particulars, allow the significations to emerge of themselves. [3] A procedure pioneered by Daniel Defoe. [4] Robinson Crusoe, cast up on the beach, looks around for his shipmates. [5] But there are none. [6] ‘I never saw them afterwards, or any sign of them,’ says he, ‘except three of their hats, one cap, and two shoes that were not fellows.’ [7] Two shoes, not fellows: by not being fellows, the shoes have ceased to be footwear and become proofs of death, torn by the foaming seas off the feet of drowning men and tossed ashore. [8] No large words, no despair, just hats and caps and shoes.

[9] For as far back as he can remember, his mother has secluded herself in the mornings to do her writing. [10] No intrusions under any circumstances. [11] He used to think of himself as a misfortunate child, lonely and unloved. [12] When they felt particularly sorry for themselves, he and his sister used to slump outside the locked door and make tiny whining sounds. [13] In time the whining would change to humming or singing, and they would feel better, forgetting their forsakenness.

[14] Now the scene has changed. [15] He has grown up. [16] He is no longer outside the door but inside, observing her as she sits, back to the window, confronting, day after day, year after year, while her hair slowly goes from black to grey, the blank page (EC: 4-5).

Shifting narrative perspectives between third person (John) and first person (Elizabeth), are interwoven with *intradiegetic* narrative layers (not narrator), in which Elizabeth appears to be a lecturer, an ambiguation of rhetorician and storyteller, politician and manipulator, historian and novelist. Five lessons out of the total eight in the narrative, including the section “As a Woman Grows Older,” are told from third person point of view from Elizabeth’s perspective (they are narratologically different categories) and three lessons are told from a third person point of view but from the perspective of John, Elizabeth Costello’s son.

Even though Elizabeth Costello’s career is said to have been launched by telling Molly Bloom in Joyce’s *House on Eccles Street*, she preaches about the crucial need to stop reiterating the stories inbred through the existing heritage of the past. In this sense, Cornwell argues that the protagonist is portrayed to “deliver the lectures that comprise the greater part of the texts in which she appears. The

¹⁴ Remember Coetzee’s Nobel talk, he typically exercises self-reflexivity and responds to academic invitations by reading a short story.

snatches of narrative in which the lectures are embedded are there for the sake of the lectures” (Cornwell, 2011: 355). What is more, she holds on her storytelling moment at the time of her non-authentic and unrealistic “lecture” about reality. Thanks to the narrative strategies and the narrative medium of depiction, her claims prove situational irony: She argues that we avoid inherited stories, from which we must be liberated in order to create our own stories. However, the very moment of storytelling, and the only narrative medium she can exist, additionally give way to a dramatic irony from the perspective of the audience.¹⁵

That is also an indication that Costello is suffering the “loss of faith in the liberating potential of rewriting and retelling” of the previous stories. Modern authors’ creative zone has long been outworn, and Costello’s remarks can be considered a justification for the fatigue of their imagination, storytelling and creative talents. Making the authors and writing the objects of representation and the arts, therefore, seem to be the last material to use and elope with to mark the end of creative powers of the artists. She, posthumously, would only begin to regain these creative powers after death as implied in the last lesson. Such death is also a reference to her being an “object of the arts”, which is a reversal in the concept of human being. As Çıraklı argued “Within the framework of humanism human being is the sole centre, after the rise of humanities human being is the essential subject, and after the postmodern/post-narrative turn, human being becomes an object” (2022).

Costello’s following lecture “Lesson 2: The Novel in Africa,” takes place aboard a cruise tourist liner to Antarctica, where authors, critics or intellectuals are staged as lecture givers, our Elizabeth Costello is embarked accompanied by an old Nigerian novelist. They are scheduled as part of entertaining and funny presentation with a Russian band. The former author Emmanuel Egudu¹⁶ presents himself in a funny way. He reads his own biography, portraying himself in the third person, which glimpses at the narrative distance between the orator and the rhetoric:

“He lectures at American institutions, informing the young of the New World about the exotic topic on which he is an expert, just as an elephant is an expert on elephants: the African novel. An elephant is a fine animal, but he should not be confused with a zoology professor” (42-3).¹⁷

Emmanuel is neither an excellent example of a beast nor a teacher. In his emotional cruise-ship speech, he extols the glories of the traditional African perspective on life and art, while refusing to

¹⁵ In Coetzee's Nobel talk, Robinson Crusoe states that there are a finite amount of tales in the world, forcing us to recount them in order to continue writing. This plagiarism, like Joyce's reiteration of Homer's *Odyssey*, is best seen as an effort to put previous tales to work so that we are free to create our own.

¹⁶ The name bring to mind Romanus Egudu, a researcher of West African oral poetry.

¹⁷ Remember Roman Jakobson's rejecting Nabokov (at the time a member of the curator team of butterflies at Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology) at the department of comparative literature. J. M. Coetzee, the historical author, implies that contemporary author should be, figuratively put, both an elephant expert and a biologist. Coetzee, Costello and Mr. C are all experts of novel writing and academicians on literary criticism.

accept anything about the realities of contemporary Africa, other than its failure to provide him with the luxuries he has become used to (EC, 37: 41-2). As shown in Elizabeth Costello's teachings in lesson five and lesson six, the implied author demonstrates that the readers cannot aspire to discover the foundation for a gracious future in Western culture and high cultural society. 11 But he represents in Lesson 2 how global multiculturalism falls so naïve and emotional and it extremely proves to be a fallacy. The representation of a fake intellectual on the stage with outworn argumentations, acquired memorisations, stale seductions and hack philosophy, the implied author reveals how Emmanuel Egudu's shallow lecture provides the audience with no solace for sorrow and alienation. Sharing the desk with Elizabeth Costello, he does not know that the contemporary readers are no longer *naïve* enough to fall for Emmanuel's line and the contemporary readers on the brink of posthumanism and in the face of the death of universals, are still open to hold considerable tolerance and understanding of universal experience of humanity, yet they are not naïve enough to be seduced easily by the stories of multicultural spices. Hence, Emmanuel Egudu is, in a sense, Coetzee's dark stereotypical doppelganger, despite the fact that he seems to be nothing more than "embodied" entertainment and is presented to be the "punchline" of his own discourses and jokes. Through this figure, Coetzee creates another version of intellectual author, presenting a black African ex-novelist as a character, he posits an uprooted version of a former South African writer and critic in Anglophone descent. Costello's Australian origin provides her with a degree of comfort, which allows her to disparage the afrikaneer writer, Emmanuel's (and therefore Coetzee's) business of writing for strangers (Kochin, 2008: 51-52).

Coetzee demonstrates that whilst diversity and multiculturalism cannot ultimately rescue us. The grand narrative of Western humanism is also unlikely to do so. The humanism of the West, even the humanism of the factual writer Paul West, is incapable of reconciling the worst atrocities the West has committed:

[1] The book she was reading that day was by Paul West, an Englishman, but one who seemed to have freed himself of the more petty concerns of the English novel. [2] His book was about Hitler and Hitler's would-be assassins in the *Wehrmacht*,¹⁸ and all was going well enough until she came to the chapters describing the execution of the plotters. [3] Where could West have got his information? [4] *Could there really have been witnesses who went home that night and, before they forgot, before memory, to save itself, went blank, wrote down, in words that must have scorched the page, an account of what they had seen, down to the words the hangman spoke to the souls consigned to his hands, fumbling old men for the most part, stripped of their uniforms, toggled out for the final event in prison cast-offs, serge trousers caked with grime, pullovers full of moth-holes, no shoes, no belts, their false teeth and their glasses taken from them, exhausted, shivering, hands in their pockets to hold up their pants, whimpering with fear, swallowing their tears, having to listen to this coarse*

¹⁸ Originally put in italics.

creature, this butcher with last week's blood caked under his fingernails, taunt them, telling them what would happen when the rope snapped tight, how the shit would run down their spindly old-man's legs, how their limp old-man's penises would quiver one last time? One after the other to the scaffold they went, in a nondescript space that could have been a garage or equally well an abattoir, under carbon-arc lights... (EC: 157-158).¹⁹

Lessons 3 and 4 of “The Lives of Animals” are structured around a new moral claim and questions the human centred morality. Lectures at Waltham College, where the old intellectual is invited to give a series of lectures, discusses the humanist capitalistic notion of production in the form of factory farms, which refers to victimisation of endless number of fellow creatures, whose death never indicates a moral concern from the perspective of human centred morality, capitalistic order of cultural humanity, hypocrisy of liberal humanism. The essentialist view of the need for the products derived from animal farming is compared to that of Nazi death camps, which in this case, signposts a radical reaction and a keen response to politically correct standards of void and immoral essentialism. The present study argues that Costello as a broad minded intellectual and a sensitive child of nature, in fact, deconstructs history and historical facts invented upon the myth of innocence and humanity. So, her aim is not to retell the past story of the Jews in Autzswitch nor Stalin's extermination of virtually incalculable millions. She uses a narrative strategy of multiple narration to draw the attention to the discrepancies and inconsistencies between the narratives. Keeping the past stories as they are, she carefully and keenly adds new stories to them, thereby revealing the gap in the consistent stories and simply calls into question the value of consciousness in rational acting. Costello acknowledges the disappointment of the West. She explores the fundamentals of the romantic idealism and essentialist morality and calls into question the centrality of human and human consciousness in the wake of human's implanted and inherited horrors and, in fact, enacts this catastrophe with varying elements of consciousness and self-awareness. Costello's lecture, as she stressfully implies, preaches about this issue and ponders the primacy of human being as a conscious entity, turns out to be a meditative performance not to persuade the audience, but to “save her own soul” (89). So, John perceives her resistance to comply with the current —and over-confident— human condition that she, too, will suffer and die in a world of misery and death. At the conclusion of “The Lives of Animals,” he soothes her by stating, “It will soon be over” (EC, 115). Any hope of comfort fall afar, so the protagonist cannot help pontificating about and problematising animal rights and animal abuse. The very narrative drama and dramatic irony become overt in that her beliefs in the form of verbal manifestation emerge as a verbal performance that meets the need for a few good words with a smile, positive acclaim, rewarding response and huge hugs.

The theorists, intellectuals or philosophers have thus far failed to give sufficient and explicative ethical ground to the author's talent and skill to empathise with the animals. Humanists should have

¹⁹ In the focalising part [4], italics are mine.

long been aware of their own animal bodies, feeling them, to be moved sympathetically with the animal suffering or exaltation depicted –and legitimised— in the cultural history. Yet Coetzee requires us to acknowledge that Costello’s effort to derive moral lessons from the power of authors. In the passages Elizabeth Costello refers to Ted Hughes, the implied reader is provided by a new account as to how animals experience their bodies and how Hughes makes the reader feel like an animal, how we can imagine ourselves embodied the way animals experience their bodily existence. The examples of a “jaguar” or a “salmon” indicate the protagonist’s quest for a better understanding of “living” experience:

[1] Rilke’s panther? [2] What panther? [3] His confusion must show: the girl next to him pushes a photocopied sheet under his nose. [4] Three poems: one by Rilke called ‘The Panther’, two by Ted Hughes called ‘The Jaguar’ and ‘Second Glance at a Jaguar’. [5] He has no time to read them.

[6] ‘Hughes is writing against Rilke,’ his mother goes on. [7] ‘He uses the same staging in the zoo, but it is the crowd for a change that stands mesmerized, and among them the man, the poet, entranced and horrified and overwhelmed, his powers of understanding pushed beyond their limit. [8] The jaguar’s vision, unlike the panther’s, is not blunted. [9] On the contrary, his eyes drill through the darkness of space. [10] The cage has no reality to him, he is *elsewhere*. [11] He is elsewhere because his consciousness is kinetic rather than abstract: the thrust of his muscles moves him through a space quite different in nature from the three-dimensional box of Newton — a circular space that returns upon itself (EC: 95).

As for “Lesson 5: The Humanities in Africa,” Elizabeth Costello, as a novel and novelist, a narrative and storyteller, a serious issue in humanities and an intellectual, similarly focuses on a lecture in an academic medium in Johannesburg, presented at the opening of a university division on the occasion of her sister Blanche’s invitation. She is now a clergywoman (a prioress Sister Bridget) at the institute. This characterisation shows another keen and clever example from Coetzee’s collection of the types, which is full of implications regarding the fact that they are both part of author-itarian institutions, a critical and harsh reference to authorship, figuratively put, as a form of humanitarian clergy. The counter-balanced arrangement of the doubling of professions two sisters have attained are noteworthy here: Her sister is previously a classical scholar, a Catholic nun at present and a member of medical missionary at the institute; and Costello is a former academician and novelist, who has turned out as a cultural preacher. As a matter of fact, Sister Bridget delivers a purposefully controversial speech depicting the chasm between the humanist goals of literary studies and Christianity. Here, it can be argued that Coetzee, as ahistorical and implied author, demonstrates a sight of this gap, displaying post-Christian and post-humanist opinions by clerics and academics, preachers and authors. The scene is a bit scaring as much as it causes the modern readers to flinch at the faux pas of mentioning it aloud.

In the scene when Blanche takes our protagonist author Costello to the Zululand hospital in remote place, where she meets a talented woodcarver, Joseph, who has spent his whole life making replicas of painful Jesus image, the idealised human being writhing and suffering in anguish on the

cross in various sizes, Coetzee's strategy of reversal and strategy of multinarrative are at work: Elizabeth sees skill squandered, Sister Blanche sees personality sacrificed in appreciation of "Our Saviour's" sacrifice (137-8). Through the gap between the interwoven narratives and focalisations emerges the critical revelation of the aforementioned counter-balanced, yet too naïve, arrangement. Ms Costello has no rebuttal for Blanche's conviction of Christian view of life based upon Western humanism: she concedes that humanism has failed to deliver on its promise of redemption. The enlightenment and the age of reason evolved into a questionable contemporary human conception with bodily expression as discussed in the early twentieth century:

'When I was a student,' she says, turning back to the Godwins, 'which would have been around 1950, we read a lot of D. H. Lawrence. Of course we read the classics too, but that was not where our real energy went. D. H. Lawrence, T. S. Eliot - those were the writers we pored over. Perhaps Blake in the eighteenth century. Perhaps Shakespeare, because as we all know Shakespeare transcends his time. Lawrence gripped us because he promised a 126 form of salvation. If we worshipped the dark gods, he told us, and carried out their observances, we would be saved. We believed him. We went out and worshipped the dark gods as best we were able, from the hints that Mr Lawrence let drop. Well, our worship did not save us. A false prophet, I would call him now, in retrospect ...'(Coetzee, 2003: 126)

Elizabeth agrees that Western humanism high culture can only endure if it can discover a novel and appealing means to satisfy the need for redemption. Elizabeth's only convincing answer to Blanche's sermon is the promise of enjoying the moments of pleasure available even in the midst of misery and sorrow, when still beautiful women give themselves sexually to men for love, charity, or money. Elizabeth is said to have refrained from writing this response down, but she raises this argument to her sister (Coetzee, 2003: 147-155). That is a naïve and weak gesture on her part, as it simply contributes to the comedy of manners and the drama of lecturing. The readers should give them credit for such wonderful material for humour.

Another humanist myth Elizabeth Costello attacks takes place in "Lesson 7: Eros." Costello contemplates the mythic grand narratives of natural connection between female and male (sacred heavenly arrangement of the lovers). With acute reference to real American poet Robert Duncan, (back in "Lesson 1: Realism") and John's casual talk with the fictional character Susan Moebius²⁰, portrayed to be an academic on Elizabeth Costello oeuvre, so a professional critic of his mother's books are brought together. The historical author Coetzee's sense of humour is obvious in the names as they correspond to historical notions, figures or ideas. The implied author's referring the "heavenly gift of authors and poets" (28) correspond to the debate of authorship on various levels. On the one hand, the readers are tasked with determining the depictions of striking analogies and imaginative powers of the historical author, implied author and the character as a focalizing agent in the narrative. The extended metaphor assuming sexual contact between gods and women, Elizabeth is depicted to provide representations of authors' heavenly capacity in coinage, rhetoric and language use in a way

²⁰ Mobius strip in geometry is a three dimensional un-ending shape.

that transcends mere reality. As an author and novelist, the protagonist indirectly refers to herself as having a divinely gifted mind. She in a way differentiates herself from the readers and her adoring followers and audience, dividing a line between mortality and vanity of the male and female readers and perpetual creativity of the artists. An author, therefore, “ceaselessly nibble away at her substance in a frantic attempt to emulate the divinity she embodies” (3, 6, 28, 30-1). Elizabeth believes that she may suffer the same fate as “the actress Frances Farmer in the film *Frances*, who was repeatedly raped by scumbags who want to brag that they fucked a movie star when she was a mental hospital” (185).

Regarding the questions “Do humans and gods continue to have conferences?” or “Can we still understand the language of the world?” or “Do things still inspire us to write?” *Elizabeth Costello* presents a narrative of interrogation in the postscript as follows:

Letter of Elizabeth, Lady Chandos, to Francis Bacon

Dear and esteemed Sir, You will have received from my husband Philip a letter dated this 22nd August. Ask me not how, but a copy of that letter has come under my sight, and now I add my voice to his. I fear you may think my husband wrote in a fit of madness, a fit that by now may have passed. I write to say: It is not so. All that you read in his letter is true, save for one circumstance: no husband can succeed in concealing from a loving wife distress of mind so extreme. These many months have I known of my Philip's affliction, and suffered with him. How did our sorrows come to be? There was a time, I remember, before this time of affliction, when he would gaze like one bewitched at paintings of sirens and dryads, craving to enter their naked, glistening bodies. But where in Wiltshire will we find a siren or a dryad for him to try? Perforce I became his dryad: it was I whom he entered when he sought to enter her, I who felt his tears on my shoulder when again he could not find her in me. *But a little time and I will learn to be your dryad, speak your dryad speech*, I whispered in the dark; but he was not consoled (original italics, EC, 227).

The embedded narrative in which Costello tells the story of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and his *The Lord Chandos Letter* or Philip, the Elizabethan lyric poet, and his *Lord Chandos*, and his relationship with his old mentor Francis Bacon. In these passages, Coetzee-the-implied-author's imitative discourse of “Letter of Elizabeth” and “Lady Chandos,” supports the main argument of this dissertation. Rather than the truthvalue, reliability or persuasiveness of the singular narratives, the narratives under consideration attracts the attention to the existence of multi-narratives and ironic gaps between the narrative layers and levels. What is the heart of the matter in Coetzee's novels is not rewriting or reproduction, but the coexistence of the multiple narratives which always questions or subverts one another. All these narrativized discourses are at a constant textual relationship and they produce newer meanings, and they constantly produce newer narrative gaps, discordances and contradictions. For example, through the allusive passages of another female character (Lady Chandos), Elizabeth Costello attempts to make new analogies between the characters and herself. She alludes to the lady's raptures in the embraces of her formerly “divinely lyrical husband”. The very female protagonist as an author resists and subverts the conception of “woman as a semi-divine

dryad or nymph.” Now, she is not an immobilized or paralysed writer incapable expressing herself, her experiential elations through intelligible words. Rather, she is the master of language, yet unable to control or have reality as such. Whether a Philip Chandos or an Elizabeth Costello, the author henceforth overwhelms the divine or overcomes the idealised constructions. The author is able to translate his/her sensitivities, experiences, elations, raptures, inabilities, dilemmas, disappointments into works of art, verbal or nonverbal, but these works are not only the results of creativity of human imagination, but also somewhat ludicrous and vain manifestations of the aged, intellectual speculations of the old, mental and imaginary arrangements of the notions. On the other hand, Elizabeth Costello is at the stage to tell the story of these ongoing ruptures, as an aged female author rather than a semi-divine authority or nymph, to forget about her incapability to fix the ruptures, nor her ultimate immobilization in terms of action.

All in all, as regards “Lesson 8: At the Gate,” the readers are invited to perceive the author dead. Elizabeth Costello is now deceased, but she lingers in a midpoint, as if she were in a limbo, in a remote and strange imaginary city. Dooley, G., & Phiddian, R. (2016) argues that “we can read all of this as Coetzee’s anguished personal reflections on the limits of fictional truth, but it is also possible to read it as the work of an author distancing himself from a cipher-like narrator (Dooley & Phiddian, 2016: 20). She appears somewhere reminding us of Kafka’s Prague, Joyce’s Trieste, and Hofmannsthal’s Vienna. It is the protagonist Costello, who would walk through the “gate into the dazzling light” (Coetzee, 1980: 131) (this sign of death previously used by Coetzee in *Waiting for the Barbarians*):

1. ‘Excuse me,’ she says. He pays her no attention. ‘Excuse me. Can someone open the gate for me?’
2. He is filling in some kind of form. Without ceasing to write, he speaks. ‘First you must make a statement.’
3. ‘Make a statement? To whom? To you?’
4. With his left hand he pushes a sheet of paper across to her. She lets go of the suitcase and picks up the paper. It is blank.
5. ‘Before I can pass through I must make a statement,’ she repeats. ‘A statement of what?’
6. ‘Belief. What you believe.’ ‘Belief. Is that all? Not a statement of faith? What if I do not believe? What if I am not a believer?’
7. The man shrugs. For the first time he looks directly at her. ‘We all believe. We are not cattle.’
8. For each of us there is something we believe. Write it down, what you believe. Put it in the statement. statement of her convictions” (Coetzee, 2003: 193–194).

At this scene, she is asked to make her statement of faith so that the guards would let her get through the gate. She needs to submit a “statement of her convictions” before the gate (193-4). She

is immobilized at the gate and she found herself to strive for the eradication of her beliefs and convictions, such as those expressed in the previous lessons like “The Lives of Animals” and “As a Woman Grows Older.” If redemption needs conviction in her hypothetical idealisations, the author as character cannot rescue the realm of textual inventions and the realm of reality, both of which cannot bring about everlasting self-confidence out of the presuppositions that have proved constructed idealisations, as John referred to as “the spirit of righteousness” before her death (remember the passage “As a Woman Grows Older”).

The narrative entrapment will end when Elizabeth Costello may appear as an ordinary character beholding the doctrine of salvation through storytelling and writing. In order to escape limbo and peacefully die, our protagonist Elizabeth Costello should spend forever writing and rewriting her “confessions,” as suggested at the end of the incomplete narrative. Here, Elizabeth, like the pagan philosophers of the First Circle of Dante’s *Inferno*, would spend her existence on the fringes of “divine justice,” but her reliance to a “World to Come” would fall so naïve a creative and sensitive author hardly disregards (210).

Coetzee draws on the difference and nuance between the concepts by using the character’s attempt to think over the dividing lines between “salvation” and “redemption.” In response to Elizabeth Costello’s assault on Paul West, which provides a clear example of exploring physical pain and bodily agony by means of recognized atrocities at the time and labelling the incidents as “terrible and startling,” Costello highlights West’s ideas raised in his “The Very Fine Hours of Count von Stauffenberg” and problematises the miseries of body. The idea that an author redeems the pain of bodies via arts and writing well corresponds to the contemporary artist’s craving misery and suffering (West, “When Horror Invades Protocol”). As Kochin argues, “writing devoted to satire is ineffective” as it becomes a ridiculous drama of the act of writing. Recalling hardship might dull our reaction to it by making it more real to us. In the Elizabeth Costello lessons, the implied author

resists taking stands: he refuses to use his fiction to make a statement of what he believes (cf. Elizabeth Costello 194). In part, Coetzee performs this refusal by having Elizabeth Costello take stands in her lectures, interviews, or conversations that are either confused or tiresomely disconnected from the way things are. By this repeated refusal, Coetzee is showing us that the authority of the writer is false or phoney: no twenty-first century author can be what Dostoevsky, who Coetzee fictionalises as the ‘Master of Petersburg,’ aspired to be for the Russians, the Slavs, and the Orthodox Christians. (Kochin, 2008: 89)]²¹

²¹ Coetzee’s lesson is not how to begin to live our lives without books: that is what Rousseau’s tutor preaches to his pupil Emile, preachings that are reiterated in the pages by romantic writers like Rousseau. Coetzee wants to remind us that true independence from the authorial control, strategies and function necessitates the fact that these writers’ works live with them without being enslaved to them. In *Dusklands*, *In the Heart of the Country*, *Life & Times of Michael K*, and other works, Coetzee has showed us how to live with, and how we can liberate ourselves from the colonial and contemporary literature of self-improvement.

Coetzee himself argues that his narratives, always adopting a critical attitude towards representation, unearth conventional assumption of the human being and produces a discourse exposing the inhumanity of these novels. He puts, “for the writer the deeper problem is not to allow himself to be impaled on the dilemma imposed by the state [and culture or existing order].” He tries to “imagine torture and death” (Coetzee, 1992: 364). Thus, for the contemporary author, “Paul West is not a devil, but a hero: he has journeyed into the labyrinth of Europe’s history, slain the Minotaur, and returned to tell the tale” (168). Moreover, in “The Humanities in Africa,” Elizabeth’s sister, informs her that psychological books are unnecessary: “We do not need to reference books... to know what pettiness, baseness, and brutality humans are capable of” (Coetzee, 2003: 128). Elizabeth concludes therefore argues that “the depths of human depravity without desensitizing both the author and the reader” can be outlined through rethinking and revisiting Paul West.²² What lies at the heart of Elizabeth Costello and *Diary of A Bad Year* is the rejection and failure of “would-be-instructive” narrative discourses, postures and genres. The protagonists’ narratives do not tie –and in fact are unable to involve– the readers to well-considered, all-too-human ideas of writers. To this purpose, Elizabeth’s critical statements against the global capitalistic and human centred “Great Satan” at the conclusive section in her “As a Woman Grows Older” brings about no effect nor arouse any particular sympathy towards the protagonist. Elizabeth as the author character (and therefore Coetzee as historical and implied authors) problematises writing as a divine or sacred profession or an idealised act. Writing performance is not divine not because it enables the artist create a world as they believe, express or narrate but because it signifies a rather distinctive performative outcome or an idiosyncratic physical action known as act of writing. Elizabeth finds writing “graceful”, which “can be an expression of our bodies that uncovers them.”²³ Elizabeth puts:

without saying what they are, uncovers them from the illusions fostered by particular conceptions of embodied life: old, young, beautiful, decrepit, deformed, scarred, wounded, lecturing, listening, reading, rapt by erotic longing or sexual pleasure, ravaged by disease or starved by apathy, bodies lived, “embedded in life” (*EC*: 32).

This revelation of embodied experience transcends any discourse or writing in the form of embodied performance or performed reality, making writing heavenly [17]. For Elizabeth, writing or creating a character that becomes, speaks or thinks requires showing, exhibition or revealing rather than telling, confession or believing and storytelling itself seeks no purpose other than itself. So, Coetzee, in *EC*, explores the act of storytelling not only from the perspective of textuality. Elizabeth, incorporates other texts, other narrations, and other stories into her process of storytelling, text production, contemplative activity and performative writing. As in the case with *EC*, Coetzee’s narrative always co-exists with that of Elizabeth Costello, and hers is reproduced with other

²² As Coetzee demonstrates in the last paragraphs of *The Master of Petersburg* (249-50), the author’s human feelings are exchanged for the uncertain value of words on paper when he or she writes about human pain.

²³ Remember Mr C, whose fingers are not strong enough to type smoothly and regularly. The brilliance of their mind and their physical bodily experience are subject to fading and degeneration in terms of power.

narratives at a synchronious medium of narrative, and so on. The vain attempt at the writing, transforms its topic “into an object appropriable by the reader or listener,” as Barthes earlier discusses, and this appropriation falls apart from “any merely personal motivation of the author” (Barthes, 1990: 88–90), yet the existence within a narrative medium is always related with the tone and mode of presentation regardless of what is made as part of the belief or motivation of the author. Costello’s conceiving “the act of writing” as a performance or “bodily activity,” may fall her into D. H. Lawrence’s “heated vitalism” or Bakhtin’s material (bodily) and chronotopic diversity of a “grotesque body in the carnivalesque medium” (Bakhtin, 1984: 26,29,317). An ongoing dialogic imagination is at work in *EC*, and the novelistic discourses produced in *EC* is therefore indicate performative responses as well as textual responses.

Each page in fact offers a dialogical space in which personal and general issues are debated first in the essays and then between the main protagonists and inside each narrator’s consciousness to the extent that the writing becomes the vehicle of orality and rings with each speaker’s idiosyncracies in terms of syntax, vocabulary and register. The narrative status of the essays is ambiguous on two counts: temporal and logical. First if one analyses their relation to the fictional narratives, they are posterior to them since they are the concrete end product of a process which originates in the fiction. Their juxtaposition on the page dissimulates a temporal gap. Second, although the formal division of the page separates them from the texts below, they are in fact implicated in them, or more precisely, they form the outside of the inside, both proceeding from the same substrate. This common substrate can be broadly defined as the process whereby enunciating instances appropriate language and emerge as speaking subjects. (Samin, 2009: 49)

If we also consider the fact that these authors are also aged intellectuals, their bodily activity is also at a state of degrading, and Ms Elizabeth Costello, most probably, like Mr C, has fingers, not strong enough to type smoothly and use the keyboard or pen regularly. The brilliance of their mind and their physical bodily experience are subject to fading and degeneration in terms of power. Their fading vitalism is an eventual chapter in the life of Elizabeth Costello, who started questioning and undermining the role of human consciousness and the transcendental idealisations and arrangements of humanity that give priority to authorship. On the other hand, their degrading bodily performance marks a critique of the immanent understanding of what embodied minds can do: In a way, Elizabeth Costello, in her attempt to violate the dualities of transcendent and immanent assumptions about authorship:

to attempt to show in writing how bodies write is precisely to follow Barthes in resisting “the reduced conception of the body . . . [as] what is opposed to soul” (Barthes on Barthes 80).¹⁹ Just such an immanentist understanding of writing as a bodily activity is expressed in Elizabeth Costello: “Only by an ingenious economy, an accident of evolution, does the organ of ingestion sometimes get used for song” (54, 150). (Kochin, 2008: 90)

Table 7: Narrative Roles (Author)

	<i>Narrative role</i>	<i>Narrative Sample</i>
1	Author-Lecturer	When it comes to human rights,' he continues, 'other cultures and other religious traditions quite properly reply that they have their own norms and see no reason why they should have to adopt those of the West. Similarly, they say, they have their own norms for the treatment of animals and see no reason to adopt ours — particularly when ours are of such recent invention. (EC, 105)
2	Author - Character	She need not have asked. Before it comes, she knows what the answer will be.
3	Author from others's perspective	'In yesterday's presentation our lecturer was very hard on Descartes. But Descartes did not invent the idea that animals belong to a different order from humankind: he merely formalized it in a new way (EC, 105).
4	Author-Lecturer-Writer	She reads. 'I am a writer. You may think I should say instead, I was a writer. But I am or was a writer because of who I am or was. I have not ceased to be what I am. As yet. Or so it feels to me. 'I am a writer, and what I write is what I hear. I am a secretary of the invisible, one of many secretaries over the ages. That is my calling: dictation secretary. It is not for me to interrogate, to judge what is given me. I merely write down the words and then test them, test their soundness, to make sure I have heard right. (EC, 200)
5	Author – Character-Narrator	"There is no more doubt in her mind about where she is, who she is" (EC, 194)
6	Author from others's perspective	She pauses, then brings out the next sentence, the sentence that will determine whether this is her judge, the right one to judge her, or, on the contrary, merely the first in a long line leading to who knows what featureless functionary in what chancellery in what castle. 'I can do an imitation of belief, if you like. Will that be enough for your purposes?'

Table 8: Narrative Agents Combinations (Author-Narrator-Character)

Elizabeth Costello as a Narrative agent	
<i>author</i>	On the list of her co-lecturers there is only one name she recognizes : Emmanuel Egudu, a writer from Nigeria. Their acquaintance goes back more years than she cares to remember, to a PEN conference in Kuala Lumpur. Egudu had-been loud and fiery then , political; her first impression was that he was a poseur. Reading him later on, she had not changed her mind. But a poseur, she now wonders : what is that? Someone who seems to be what he is not? Which of us is what he seems to be, she seems to be? And anyway, in Africa things may be different. In Africa what one takes to be posing, what one takes to be boasting, may just be manliness. Who is she to say? (EC, 36)
Author as narrator	
Author as character	
<i>narrator</i>	
Narrator as author	
Narrator as character	
<i>character</i>	
Character as author	
Character as narrator	

4.3. Chapter Conclusion: Shifting Perspectives and Solid Opinions

Elizabeth Costello, as a novel, is a narrative scream, an attempt at “importance” and a pointless act of authorial grace. Against the authority of the grand narrative of authorship, which was once seriously challenged by the idea of “death of the author” popularised by influential postmodern

theorists like Barthes and Foucault, Elizabeth Costello as an old intellectual and author character, tries out or acts out (or appears to be) a “funny” depiction of “live degenerating corpse” –with outworn ideas and melting flesh— the life of a dead idealist author, having so many solid and strong opinions that do not make her strong in the face of loss of ideals, meaning, hierarchies, performance and graceful embodiment. Nevertheless, it should be noted here that Coetzee (as an historical and implied author) recognises the fact that authorship can be self-deceptive as with the idea of representation. Coetzee, like Barthes, “grapple with the limitations and deceptions of self-writing, taking themselves and their work as points of reference” (Powers, 2016: 324). Coetzee’s attempt to create “narrative dramas” (Çıraklı, 2022) also indicates his strategy of reversal presenting and “representing the authors’ and texts’ drama within narrative” (Çıraklı, 2022) through narrating levels and textual layers with shifting perspectives, through which not only the author and but also authorship appear to be fading away on textual and performative levels. Therefore, these novels as literary depictions and allegorical pictures use ethical debates and concerns as themes, and rather attempts “to face the ethical challenges of authorship” (Galván, 2016: 182). So, the present study shows the authors and intellectuals “at work” and “in life.”

CHAPTER FIVE

5. AUTHOR AS CHARACTER-NARRATOR: *DIARY OF A BAD YEA*

*Cher lecteur, c'est mois!*²⁴

Second Diary

5.1. Chapter Introduction

DBY has a narrative strategy that helps understand its content through the narrator and layout of the novel. The novel is narrated by JC, the main character, and Anya, his secretary²⁵. The point of view of these two narrators renders the novel its completeness and also its complexity. There are also more than three parallel texts visually on a page, divided by a line and a white space. Inside the Diary novel, the JC character writes a collection of essays titled *Strong Opinions*, and Anya helps him in typing. These characters further replace *Strong Opinions* with *Second Diary*, also known as “soft opinions,” in the last third part of the novel. JC and Anya are narrators in different essays. When a text on the page is divided into simultaneous storylines, this split narrative technique makes the reading act a rather vital achievement.

Coetzee's author characters, Elizabeth Costello and Senior C. represent two complementary mock characters. They appear as authors, narrators, characters having remarkable intellectual capabilities. The texts undermine the fictional status of the novels by using various strategies related with authorship. Coetzee-the author shares his sensibilities with the readers and produces a self-reflective and self-critical exploration of the authors' persona through *EC* and *DBY*, which complicate the elements of narrator, narrative levels, narrative strategies, ideology, culture, politics, criticism, literary theory, metatextuality, intertextuality. *DBY*, in this sense, casts particular questions and subversions regarding binary oppositions literally, figurally, structurally and on further levels.

The simultaneous presentation of the three texts, which take place on the same page, amalgamate history writing, history and fiction, irony, humour and parody at a time. The readers cannot help calling into question the authorial authority and the creative and monitoring powers of

²⁴ This epigraph refers to the final intertextual reference (Monsieur Homice, c'est moi!) at the end of the passage in the second diary by Senior C. The expression refers at a time to Madam Bovary, to Mr. Coetzee and the position of the self-reflexive author and attentive reader.

²⁵ JM Coetzee's "Diary of a Bad Year"

Coetzee, who enjoys playing with his own authority in his works and deliberately questions the status of the author as a constructivist maker inventing situations that reveal the conflicts of the hypocrites. The hierarchical impositions and convictions of life are well and repeatedly represented in the novels of Coetzee, who made his character say “I must not underestimate Coetzee!” One of the recurrent hierarchies between the author and narrators is foregrounded in his *Dusklands* (1974). His bitter irony and keen humour arise when he undermines his status as an author, who also tries to make up for intellectuals’ naïve and blind daily rituals that help them accustom to getting involved in daily life and the brutalities of humanity. The narrator mocks Coetzee as an author, who is at the centre of critical handling in many of his novels. The historical Coetzee amusing the implied author Coetzee as a construct and as character, but he is also largely concerned with the involvement in the story worlds he created in his works. We can argue that Coetzee presents himself to be a “genial” figure as having the qualities of “ordinary man” having much in common with the readers who sometimes raise critical eye on his works. In fact, it indicates a historical bond between the historical author, implied author, narrator, character, reader and disappoints the readers possible glowering comments about the authors. Thus, another hierarchy between the image of the author in the eyes of the readers and the historical author himself is considered in the text.

Coetzee, as an author, academic, intellectual and educated person always wanted to rely on the power of storytelling and fiction as well as science but he has also a strong inclination to purport the hidden proclaims of culture based upon hierarchies of the doubles. Though enormously acclaimed as a novelist, an academic and an intellectual, and despite his enduring popularity, he needs to undermine his respectable image as a representative of vain, constructed, shallow men and women of sensitivities. As a public figure he is firmly humble and enigmatic. The readers follow his diary representing his strong ideas about the things, the notions, the ideas and the concepts, and witness his critical judgements upon them.

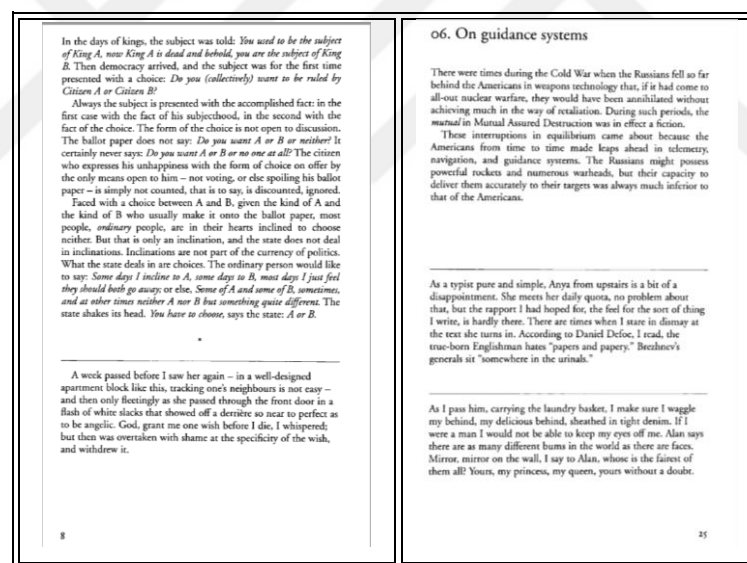
5.2. Narrators / Narrative Levels / Narrative Strategies (Effect of Narrative Levels: Irony, Humour, etc.)

As for narrators and narrative levels / narrative strategies (effect of narrative levels: irony, humour, etc.),²⁶ narrative complications, the strategy of reversal and Coetzee’s strategy of narrative drama and dramatic narrative are apparently observed in the separate and conflicting narrative streams in *DBY*. The narrative is divided into two parts: “Strong Opinions” and “Second Diary.” (Çıraklı, 2022)

²⁶ These narrative levels denote “textual layers”, which have little to do with Genettean narrative levels. In Coetzee’s narratives levels and layers are blurred. While storytelling upgrades Anja, but the old man’s diary degrades him.

Each page has three separate parts that are interconnected to impeccably “bring out the intelligible and complete content of the novel” (Petersen, 2017: 487). The three sections in each page continues throughout the novel inviting the reader receive the accounts at a time with respect to each other. The top parts are devoted to, first, Señor C’s strong opinions, and then his second diary notes in a more public tone; the second sections include Señor C’s diary, where the reader learns about his personal observations, thoughts, aspirations and impressions. And then comes the third section, which includes Anya’s thoughts about her relationship with the old man and young boy friend. The Strong Opinions of JC in the novel are concerned with today’s world state, politics, and also English usage (DBY: 27). These opinions are expressed on the top page part of the essay. The narrative technique is designed to question the role of the author. At the top is given the public accounts (in the form of Strong Opinions, a book, or as a Diary to be published by the author), in the middle is given the private diary kept by the author-character, and at the bottom is given Anya’s diary. Three accounts flow at the same pages, referring to a kind of situational irony as the discrepancies are situated together only to draw the attention of the reader:

Figure 5: Narrative Fragments in DBY



As can be observed, the narrative is divided in two main parts with subsequent sections by different narrators. The main parts are “Strong Opinions” and “Second Diary”, but they covers so many pages by various meditations and thoughts. Throughout the novel / narrative, each page is mostly divided in three sections: at the top is Señor C’s seriously put *strong opinions* and at the fragments given in the diaries by the old intellectual and female character. The second part, Second Diary indicates another phase in the life of the characters presenting the readers with “personal impressions” and “Anya’s thoughts.” That is not by chance, of course, as Petersen suggests, the

²⁷ JM Coetzee’s” *Diary of a Bad Year*”

attentive reader is to construct the whole picture: “the reader will try to construct a picture of who is writing, an entity that is not necessarily neutral (Petersen, 2017: 486). Veena Das argues “the purpose of the split page is to block, even defeat, ersatz ethical posturing and promote genuine ethical thought in the reader by turning around their whole soul” (Das, 2016: 179).

The readers “could proceed with asking how the different narrative instances interact and signify in *Diary of a Bad Year*.” Samin, with reference to Coetzee states that “several first person voices are distinctly heard in the novel but owing to the narrative apparatus and the frequent use of indirect speech or free indirect speech they seem to move freely from one to the other. As Coetzee points out: “all versions of the I are fictions of the I” (Coetzee, 1992: 75; Samin, 2009: 50). At some point, a reader wonders about the link between narrative sequences and opinions, not finding the connections. Also, the interrelatedness (the state of being mutually connected) is not linear. Therefore, one can reference JC’s essay when reading Anya. These separate accounts or narratives produces ironic effect as “irony is ordinarily understood as saying something other than what it means” (Geertsema, 2011: 75). Nevertheless, irony is aroused out of the narrative levels and textual layers of *DBY* and it is understandable to assume a comparison between Beckett and Coetzee in this sense. Geertsema maintains:

This irony is of a piece with the disregard for narrative convention that Coetzee detects in Beckett’s fiction (“Manuscript” 42) and is in evidence precisely in *Diary of a Bad Years* almost baroque architecture which works very strongly both to identify the “strong opinions” of the author JC and his later diary entries as Coetzee’s while, at the same time, rendering such identification problematic (Geertsema, 2011: 76).

The three texts are separate, but they are interconnected, although not in a linear way, making it impossible for a reader to understand the novel if they skip any of the parts: “the abiding effect is of distance between author and reader, since any association one makes between these authors is simultaneously and constantly disrupted” (Geertsema, 2011: 76).

Another narrative strategy aspect Coetzee uses in the diary to influence the understanding of the novel is speech, which he grants to his characters. The amount of speech used in the novel makes the novel understandable and makes it interesting for the reader to continue reading. In the beginning, the page is separated into two parts: JC’s narration and *Strong Opinions*. Anya becomes a narrator as the story continues on page 25²⁸. However, in *Second Diary*, which is the second part of the book, JC is not heard talking. His space is left blank and preserved on the page. When the reader finally hears his voice again, it is his last encounter with Anya. In this second part, Anya’s narration continues without interruption. The way the author has distributed narrators in the novel speaks a lot

²⁸ JM Coetzee’s “Diary of a Bad Year”

about the storyline. The readers come to hear Anya's voice after her meeting JC and entering JC's life as a typist. She is included in the narration only after she meets JC.

06. On guidance systems

[1] There were times during the Cold War when the Russians fell so far behind the Americans in weapons technology that, if it had come to all-out nuclear warfare, they would have been annihilated without achieving much in the way of retaliation. During such periods, the mutual in Mutual Assured Destruction was in effect a fiction. These interruptions in equilibrium came about because the Americans from time to time made leaps ahead in telemetry, navigation, and guidance systems. The Russians might possess powerful rockets and numerous warheads, but their capacity to deliver them accurately to their targets was always much inferior to that of the Americans.

[2] As a typist pure and simple, Anya from upstairs is a bit of a disappointment. She meets her daily quota, no problem about that, but the rapport I had hoped for, the feel for the sort of thing I write, is hardly there. There are times when I stare in dismay at the text she turns in. According to Daniel Defoe, I read, the true-born Englishman hates "papers and papery." Brezhnev's generals sit "somewhere in the urinals."

[3] As I pass him, carrying the laundry basket, I make sure I waggle my behind, my delicious behind, sheathed in tight denim. If I were a man I would not be able to keep my eyes off me. Alan says there are as many different bums in the world as there are faces. Mirror, mirror on the wall, I say to Alan, whose is the fairest of them all? Yours, my princess, my queen, yours without a doubt (DBY: 25)

Further, one can deduce that the limited presence of JC or his first-person narration in the second part when the novel is about to end indicates his nearing death. Three textual pieces of evidence support this presumption. First, "On the afterlife" is JC's last essay in the *Strong Opinions* collections. This essay is on the last chapter of the book, and it fills a whole page, thus dominating all the earlier and next essays. Also, in *Second Diary*, the voice of JC is almost inaudible, and the reader almost forgets about him²⁹. This part starts with a remembrance of a troubling dream about the death of JC. Further, when coming to the end of the novel, Anya confirms the vision of JC's death and plans how she will take care of him during his last days. Therefore, the narrators' speech and voices also strongly suggest the characters' absence, presence, or status in the reality of the book's storyline. As Samin suggests, we could proceed with asking how the different narrative instances interact and signify in *Diary of a Bad Year*. Several first person voices are distinctly heard in the novel but owing to the narrative apparatus and the frequent use of indirect speech or free indirect speech they seem to move freely from one to the other (Samin, 2009: 50).

The way the Strong opinions of the authors are two-fold: Oral presentations all through the invited speeches, conferences and lectures, in a mode of performative manifestation; and secondly,

²⁹ Oana-Celia Gheorghiu and Praisler Michaela, "Western Political Philosophy in JM Coetzee's *Diary of a Bad Year*," *Cultural Intertexts* 3 (2015): 42.

written chapters all through a book, in a fashion of authorly manipulation. So, the aspect of strong opinions about life and reality is the farthest and relatively most irrelevant passages of the novels. In both novels the authors hold a narrative strategy to produce “quasi-novelistic texts”, in narratological terms, and “combine both strategies of responding to contentious, pressing issues. Many of the essays in this text read as if they could have appeared in a collection” (Geertsema, 2011: 72).

The drama of the suspicious and curious relationship between Anya and Alan brings about moral and intellectual questions. The ongoing “interplay between the different narrative lines” (Rossoni, 2016: 172) and different narrative accounts, discourses or enunciations bring about not only textual issues but also so-called real life phenomenon like Alan’s “market values,” or Senior C’s generous will to the organisations. Tayler argues that “And while C, in his narration, sounds like a more urbane Beckett character, Anya’s lively, raucous voice seems to have dropped in from a different book altogether. Aware of, and amused by, the effect “my delicious behind” has on her employer, she’s neither an exploited immigrant - though she likes to pose as one - nor an incurious bimbo.” (Tayler, 2007).

Another cruel and crucial undermining comes out when Anya develops a series of jokes and humorous discourse about Mr. C. This shatters the hierarchy between (a) the object and object of desire, (b) the coloniser and the colonised, (c) man and woman, (d) the autonomy of the writer as having authority and monitority, (f) author and character. What is more interesting here is that the author is not authoring the text but a diary undermined by a narrative account of a female character. Characters appear to be authors/storytellers, and the characters in the argumentative account of the author are underestimated by the fictional narratives in the diaries kept by the authors.

Anya’s diary turns out a narrative device and a fictional vehicle for an unusual series of anecdotes about C, an intellectual man, a tycoon of the field with a Nobel certificate hanged on his bedroom wall. This “ludicrous” man is a García Márquez or Paulo Coelho in the eyes of the neighbours. Here, we remember Nethersole’s statement about Costello lectures and the discrepant streams of narratives and lessons, which characterises these narratives, as well: “the “lessons” neither synthesise opposing views nor do they bridge incompatible sides so that “heads and tails”, obverse and reverse, articulated structurally as “double” or paralogy emerge even more forcefully at a lesson’s closure than at its beginning” (Nethersole, 2005: 256):

[1] The drama being played out before our eyes is of a ruler, George W. Bush (whether Bush turns out to have been a pawn in the hands of others is not relevant here), whose hubris lies in denying the force of the curse on him and of curses in general; who indeed goes further and asserts that he cannot commit a crime, since he is the one who makes the laws defining crimes.

[2] And how long have you and he been married? We are not married. I thought I told you that. We don't make a big thing about it. I mean, whatever people assume - we are married, we are not married — we just let it slide.

[3] ... and the money, before the vultures arrive. What vultures? I say. The relatives, says Alan. Alan has got it all wrong, but I check the cupboards anyway, just to make sure - the bathroom cupboards, the kitchen cupboards, all the drawers in the bedroom. In a solitary shoebox, a shoe-cleaning kit: brushes with the bristles falling out, shoe polish that caked years ago. He must have a safe, says Alan. Look behind the pictures on the wall. Or else it is in the bank, I say, where normal people keep their money. He is not normal, says Alan. Of course he is not normal, not supernaturally normal, I say, but how normal do you need to be to keep your money in a bank? And what entitles us to steal his money anyway? It is not stealing, says Alan, not if he is dead. Anyway, if we don't take it someone else will. It is not stealing if he is dead? I say. That's news to me. Don't be irritating, you know what I mean, says Alan. (DBY: 49)

As can be seen, the weakness comes out when the readers are presented with the author's discourse, self-aspirations and image in Anya's mind: "My guess is [that he unbuttons himself when I am gone, and makes himself come. And then buttons up and gets back to John Howard and George Bush, what villains they are]" (DBY: 49). These narratives as it is seen are complementary passages that function as 'paralogy'.

Anya's diary provides us with a bit more scandalous image of the intellectual man. The diary passages take place beneath the serious essays including strong opinions. The diaries evoking the voices of the aged intellectual author, the girl and her boyfriend represent the growing relationship between the old man and the woman, which ultimately changes their perspectives, feelings and mindsets.

[1] Please, I say. Please don't take it amiss. Don't take what amiss? Being told that I can't type? Of course you can type. I know this job is beneath you, I am sorry about that, but let us just persevere, let us just go on.

[2] Three years together and still Alan has the hots for me, hots so hot there are times I think he is going to burst. He likes me to talk about my exes while he is at it. And then? he says. And then? And then? Then he made me take him in my mouth, I say. This mouth? he says. These lips? And gives me mad, furious kisses. Yes, these lips, I say, tearing myself loose from his kisses long enough to speak, and he bursts. All lies, of course. I make them up to inflame him. That stuff you told me, he says afterwards — it is all lies, isn't it? All lies, I say, and give him a mystery smile. Always keep a man guessing. (DBY: 37)

Neither of these narratives is reliable. The ensuing discrepancy, the ironic and humorous tone arises from these conflicting perceptions and diverse perspectives of the storytellers. Not the language but the gaps between these narrative streams is cruel and witty. The rhetorical devices and serious tone and content of Mr. C's political writings indicate that Mr C is suffering from "burden of remembering" (Benito et al., 2006: 92) and attempt to reorganise life and reality through his discourse and narration. That is also due to Coetzee's own remarks about writing and memory. He says, "I

merely write down the words and then test them, test their soundness, to make sure that I have heard right (Coetzee, 2003: 199). *DBY* provides the historical author with a test of the soundness of narratives. The tripartition of each page by different and conflicting narrative accounts, two of which are personal narratives, undermines the hierarchy between the author as a “guru” and the audience. The novelist’s public voice is shattered by his personal account and challenged by Anya’s diary. The deadly serious argumentations at the top of each page are a sign of authority that assumes superiority over the readers and a keen understanding of the world and its reality. That also reminds us of Coetzee’s *Foe* (1986) an early tackling of the authority of the novelist in dealing with the critical issues. Coetzee, in that novel, questions the position of the novelist as an “opinion holder” and “policy maker”, yet he is devoid of these capacities. Inadequacy resides in the very attempt to make these statements and to appear as a “guru”, having the authority of imposition.

08. On universities

It was always a bit of a lie that universities were self-governing institutions. Nevertheless, what universities suffered during the 1980s and 1990s was pretty shameful, as under threat of having their funding cut they allowed themselves to be turned into business enterprises, in which professors who had previously carried on their enquiries in sovereign freedom were transformed into harried employees required to fulfil quotas under the scrutiny of professional managers. Whether the old powers of the professoriat will ever be restored is much to be doubted (*DBY*: 35).

A novelist’s authority can be challenged but not totally banished from life. Grobler et al. states that “this process relieves him of the burden of accepting responsibility for the consequence of choices (in other words, the change) and also transfers this to the reader – making the reader co-responsible for the text” (Grobler et al., 2015: 6). That validates the idea that “the ethics of putting someone into a book, however disguised, are also chewed over: Anya starts to fear that C plans to write about her, and Alan develops an analogous scheme for exploiting C financially without his knowledge.” (Tayler, 2007). This authority of “storytelling” is considered seriously by every character in the novel, including Alan.³⁰ Thus, “it is typical of deconstructionist theory to deny the authority of the author as sole creator of the text (Baker, 2005: 46; Helgesson, 2004: 22).

Thus we stood for a moment. *Behold, who can tell the workings of the Lord*, I thought to myself. At the back of my mind there was a line of Yeats too, though I could not pin down the words, only the music. Then I took the required step forward and embraced her, and for a whole minute we stood clasped together, this shrunken old man and this earthly incarnation of heavenly beauty, and could have continued for a second minute, she would have permitted that, being generous of herself; but I thought, *Enough is enough*, and let her go (*DBY*: 190).

³⁰ It can be added: “Yet their ideological showdown is played out on the same pages as a series of more personal essays, written at Anya’s prompting and not for publication. And despite knowing that C isn’t identical with Coetzee, who’s six years younger than the character, isn’t childless and so on, it’s very difficult not to read these essays as Coetzee’s late-career confessions.” (Tayler, 2007)

No account is complete in *Diary of a Bad Year*. The serious essays presented in the novel are random, pointless, not oriented around a particular theme and topic, and casual. Similarly, the readers have no idea that the diary sections are complete or not. Here is undermined another hierarchy between the novelist and the reader because the novel leaves much space for further readerly interpretation. The novelist as an implied author makes himself/herself felt through the arrangement of the narrative sections on each page but hardly hints at the completion of these parts.

[1] I type what I hear, then I hand it over to spellcheck, she offers by way of explanation. Maybe spellcheck gets it wrong sometimes, but it is better than guessing.

[2] All he writes about is politics — he, El Senor, not Alan. It's a big disappointment. It makes me yawn. I try to tell him to give it up, people have had it up to here with politics. There is no shortage of other things to write about. He could write about cricket, for example - give his personal perspective on it. I know he watches cricket. When we come in late at night, Alan and I, there he is, slumped in front of the television, you can see him from the street, he never closes the blinds. (DBY: 26)

Anya appears to be a moderator in the novel as she governs the narrative pieces. She edits and types the narrative one and then moderates the emotional motive behind the diary of the old man as an object of narration and object of desire, and controls her own narrative account as a story-teller. In all these three narrative parts she emerges as a governing device.

The two narrators appear to be two “dictating” or “typing” agents in literal and figural senses. Anya tells the story from her perspective in her diary, Mr. C keeps a journal and tells the reader about the same days and events, Mr C shares his “strong opinions” including so many rewriting or intertextual references, and performatively it is Anya who types Mr. C's notes. If we remember the synopsis, Mr C (character, narrator, author) needs professional help and asks Anya, a married neighbouring young woman, for professional help to type the notes every day and starts to keep a journal in which he tells the story of his growing relationship with the woman typing and keeping his essays. It is implied that, suggested by the woman's account, she is hired not due to professional concerns but also to the old man's concealed desire for the young woman whom he occasionally run into her and saw her previously. The young lady is hired, she suggests, she has attracted the old man with her clothing style (short skirts) and fresh flesh: “derriere so near to perfect as to be angelic” (Tayler, 2007). The old man is alerted and tempted by the reckless and free manners of the young woman, and she boldly takes the assault of playing with the author and his imagination. The female character appears to be a storyteller, undermining the authority of the author/writer in the novel, and the author is depicted to set up a seemingly professional bond (hierarchy) between the woman and himself. Not only hiring, but also creating an effect on the woman through his “strong ideas” he attempts to make up for his physical weakness and tries to compensate for it by his intellectual and writerly power. That is an act of holding “power” on the female persona that would yield to his ultimate power on the feminine. However, the mimicry of the woman storyteller is significant in that

he both imitates and undermines the act of keeping a diary, holding a perspective, repeating the strong ideas of a weak person. That is also indicating the fact that the so-called intellectual persona is not so much original in his strong ideas, he is a typer/typesetter of the previous ideas made earlier by the thinkers and philosophers.

Before long, she, Anya, holds a space in the novel (in every sense of the word) and attains a “voice” in the narrative account of triple structuring. One-third space of each page is devoted to the female persona and at the bottom of each page appears Anya’s account, undermining authorship, author, genre, male voice, male perception, deconstructing Mr. C’s narration. The diagrammatic hierarchy is also undermined by Anya’s part, pushing C’s account up to the middle, above which are given the argumentative and contentious essays. This placement of the accounts is also a mimicry of the structural psychoanalytical graphic design of the allegorical representation of the psyche, super-ego, ego and id, having a correspondence with the accounts presented in discrepancy.

Alan comes into the room while I am typing. So what are you up to now? he says. Typing for the old man, I say. What is it about? he says. Samurai, I say. He comes and reads over my shoulder. Birth certificates for animals, he says — is he crazy? Does he want to give them all names? Clifford John Rat. Susan Annabel Rat. What about death certificates too, while he is about it? When are you coming to bed? (DBY, 36)

Mr. C’s essays are dated between 12 September 2005 - 31 May 2006, indicating factual verbal gestures amalgamated with the expression of strong ideas and keen opinions on various topics ranging from history to ecocriticism, from religion to physics, from racial segregation to animal rights. These issues are also highlighted in *Elisabeth Costello*, who was to a great extent concerned about humanity and human race, yet in the wake of ultimate frailty and despondency at present. Having respectable ideas but not being so much respectable when perceived in intimacy and privacy, these intellectual characters are also forerunners of the death of humanity at the threshold of posthumanism. The common sore point Coetzee return to, highlight and stress again and again, the extrapolated the emotional sense of loss, a loss of self-respect, a devaluing emotional state getting more destructive and acute with a keen and active awareness and sensitivity of these characters. Knowing much about everything has also to do with listening to oneself constantly and grindingly, and their consciousness works as mechanism of neurosis, distemper, anxiety and inadequacy. These intellectual characters are emotionally wounded primarily by their own consciousness, apart from by the weakness they should bear upon in modern life. Their felt disgrace and dishonour are an idiosyncratic personality trait for these characters. They argue that the so-called war on terror is a result of such consciousness about human actions, unintelligible, lawless and cruel. These actions are engendered by humanity with an impetus behind strong sense of guilt and inferiority. His strong opinions about political issues like “To the bullying, authoritarian, militaristic strand in western political life, the bogeyman Osama bin Laden has been a gift from the gods” (Tayler, 2007). Mr. C projects (and transforms) this sense of disgrace to current political hot debate and a discourse of

argumentation. However, individually, he acknowledges that “detention camps for illegal immigrants” or “Bush administration’s defence of torture” or “South Africans’s miserable concept of the arts” have little to do with an old isolated man sheltered in a flat. He still keeps on the concerns with “the generation of white to which I belong, and the next generation, and perhaps the generation after that too, will go bowed under the shame of the crimes that were committed in their name” (Tayler, 2007). In this context, the reader can remember Costello, the fictional double (or antithesis) of Anya, who “illustrate different positions and, therefore, may be regarded as one another’s foil” (Grobler et al., 2015: 6). Graham (2006) argues that Costello seeks to find a “medium”, without authority. She, contrary to what is put by Graham, does not “ironically deny herself the authority to intervene” (Poyner, 2006: 225) but is depicted in such a dramatic position that arouses irony. Anya by contrast is supposed only to write down whilst she actively attempts to interpret (Grobler et al., 2015: 6). So, Anya’s attitude towards the act of writing and consciousness of her limited authority should be noted here. Geertsema discusses the situational position of the author(s) and the effect of irony with regard to the textual references to Beckett:

The comment by Coetzee on Beckett is, of course, ironic given that irony is ordinarily understood as saying something other than what it means. This irony is of a piece with the disregard for narrative convention that Coetzee detects in Beckett's fiction (“Manuscript” 42) and is in evidence precisely in *Diary of a Bad Year* almost baroque architecture which works very strongly both to identify the “strong opinions” of the author JC and his later diary entries as Coetzee’s while, at the same time, rendering such identification problematic (Geertsema, 2011: 76)

Even though there can be found many similar references to the historical author’s (Coetzee’s) strong opinions, C’s reasonable argumentation remains an intellectual make up and pointless imaginary vain arguments having no correspondence with the real life on no scale. Neither politicians nor individuals would take all these ideas seriously, they are like spray of vapour upon hot flames, to be consumed by the readers with an aim of intellectual existence having no role and say in actual life. They are produced for the mediocre to use and eat-up in various occasions by the average readership. Any literary-type of reader are accustomed to these ideas from the *New Yorker* or *New York Review of Books*.

Diary of a Bad Year, therefore, questions the authority of Mr. C, and the source and legitimacy of his authority in making out these “strong opinions”. By what authority, the reader asks, does C talk about these serious issues? The protagonist is seen to lecture the readers casually on anything that comes to mind? Are there anybody who cares what he thinks about philistine schools or departments and their administrators, or the repugnance of the new music young people enjoy? James Lock argues that “And what kind of moral exemplar is C, a man whose emotional life appears to centre on a power-fraught infatuation with his hired help?” (Tayler, 2007).

[1] During the years I spent as a professor of literature, conducting young people on tours of books that would always mean more to me than to them, I would cheer myself up by telling myself that at heart I was not a teacher but a novelist. And indeed, it was as a novelist rather than as a teacher that I won a modest reputation. But now the critics voice a new refrain. At heart he is not a novelist after all, they say, but a pedant who dabbles in fiction. And I have reached a stage in my life when I begin to wonder whether they are not right - whether, all the time I thought I was going about in disguise, I was in fact naked. In public life the role I play nowadays is that of distinguished figure (distinguished for what no one can quite recall), the kind of notable who is taken out of storage and dusted off to say a few words at a cultural event (the opening of a new hall in the art gallery; the prize-giving at an eisteddfod) and then put back in the cupboard. An appropriately comic and provincial fate for a man who half a century ago shook the dust of the provinces off his feet and sallied forth into the great world to practise *la vie boheme*. The truth is, I was never a bohemian, not then and not now. At heart I have always been a sobrietarian, if such a word exists, and moreover a believer in order, in orderliness. One of these days some state official or other will pin a ribbon on my shrunken chest and my reassimilation into society will be complete. *Homais, cest moi. (DBY: 191)*

Back to the reliability issue, a reliable narrator is entrusted to tell the truth about everything that is going on in a novel. When a narrator is reliable, he or she will always tell the truth. They never make mistakes nor change their minds about a particular issue or topic. As argued earlier, the text of the essays stands outside of the narrative and outside of time. Nevertheless, the essays are JC's first-person narrative in which he is a self-conscious narrator, narrating and informing the reader of everything happening. In this case of essays, the issue of reliability or unreliability of a narrator is irrelevant since these essays are vocally personal and subjective opinions of JC. Therefore, there is no unreliability issue because the narrator talks of his own thinking and personal opinions. "On the authority in fiction" is an essay JC writes in the *Diary* novel. He comments on how Whitman and Tolstoy were perceived as great authors, thus necessarily having authority on life, being wise men, and even mentors³¹. However, it is not like they had too much wisdom to offer or advice to people. Instead, these men were poets; they wrote poems. On the other hand, they were ordinary men with ordinary and human and average opinions.

During his later years, Tolstoy was treated not only as a great author but as an authority on life, a wise man, a sage. His contemporary Walt Whitman endured a similar fate. But neither had much wisdom to offer: wisdom was not what they dealt in. They were poets above all; otherwise they were ordinary men with ordinary, fallible opinions. The disciples who swarmed to them in quest of enlightenment look sadly foolish in retrospect.

What the great authors are masters of is authority. What is the source of authority, or of what the formalists called the authority effect? If authority could be achieved simply by tricks of rhetoric, then Plato was surely justified in expelling poets from his ideal republic. But what if authority can be attained only by opening the poet-self to some higher force, by ceasing to be oneself and beginning to speak vatically?

³¹ JM Coetzee's "Diary of a Bad Year"

The god can be invoked, but does not necessarily come. Learn to speak without authority, says Kierkegaard. By copying Kierkegaard's words here, I make Kierkegaard into an authority. Authority cannot be taught, cannot be learned. The paradox is a true one (Coetzee, 2007: 151).

From the analysis, it appears that JC personally defines his opinions as fallible and ordinary concerning the interrelatedness of the narrative and the essays. So as a narrator, he is not perfect but writes as an average natural man. The fact that parts of the novel narrated by JC and others by Anya play a vital role in the analysis of writing and aging, as discussed in chapter 7. Although the narrators in *DBY* are subjective, they seem to be equally reliable as they stand by their opinions and don't change their minds throughout the text.

[1] But do I really qualify as a thinker at all, someone who has what can properly be called thoughts, about politics or about anything else? I have never been easy with abstractions or good at abstract thought. Did you have undue influence on me? I don't think so. I don't think you had much influence on me at all. I don't mean that in a negative way. I was lucky to meet you when I did. I would probably still be with Alan but for you; but you didn't influence me. I was myself before I met you and I am still myself now, no change.

[2] I stood up. Time to go home, Alan, I said. Thank you, Mister C, for including us in your celebration. I am sorry we spoiled it, but it is nothing serious, nothing to take to heart, it will all blow over, Alan has just had a little too much to drink. (*DBY*: 203)

Concerning the ideas raised, he undermines the hierarchy between the persona with strong ideas and the persona with self-effacing idiosyncrasies, he reveals a split between the character and his ideas. This split is also apparent between the diary penned by the typewriter woman, and the journal kept by the character, and the book having been typed by the author and the narrative text produced by the implied author and the novel written and published by the historical author and the historical publishing house. The persistent act of making out discrepancies between all these categories and also simultaneously coercing to keep a value of representation of the intellectual academic and author as a spokesman of the existing culture and politics is noteworthy in this context.

The playfulness of the implied author but the acuteness of the subject matter and the crucial themes raised and discussed are posited as opposed to the frailty of the humble character as a human being with repressed desires for younger women or despondent concerns for animals. However, the ethical and normative selflessness is apparent in their habitual features and daily rituals such as "eating steak daily." The wry humour arises when these educated characters are "known to be ethical vegetarians."

From a critical perspective these intellectuals elderly, experienced and educated characters remind us of the notion offered by Mark Twain, the ludicrous hypocrite characters ridiculed by Huckleberry Finn, or by Faulkner, to underline what Nadine Gordimer once offered: "stately fastidiousness." However, the ones foregrounded by Twain and Faulkner are just criticised by their

shallow and vain, undigested ethical notions resulting in folly and hypocrisy; the characters of Coetzee with “verbal neatness” relatively indicates a more helpless human condition in the postmodernist era. The naivety of these characters is not due to their intellectual inadequacy, instead they can fix the world only through the discourse punctuated with strong ideas, ethical fastidiousness, moral norms and verbal sensitivity. Another hierarchy undermined therefore, in the Coetzee novel is that there is no reliable correspondence between the reality of these characters and their discourses. The realisation of this fact, the acute suspicion towards real-world experience and verbal commitments, Coetzee has always been concerned with the fulfilment of such humanly drawback representing the impossibility of the cure for this split between what you think, what you think is right, what you say, what you say you think, etc. We can trace the indicators of this awareness of individual realm of experience and realm of discourse. In his *Boyhood* (1997) and *Youth* (2002) (his fictionalised memoirs, written in the present tense and third person), he started to represent the authorial pretensions and emotional aspirations, poking fun at the writers and himself. Writing, at the same time, is the sole strategy to overcome these frailties and a sort of reaction formation against the current status of intellectual schizophrenia. For example, Paul Rayment, the central character in *Slow Man* (2005), is criticised for being “cold and reserved”, which causes him to give a “dull” impression to the reader, or, Elizabeth Costello, is another sensitive yet ludicrous character, with no great source of sympathy. What is more interesting is that, Coetzee, has his characters parody each other, as Rayment is seen to examine Costello's novels with a critical eye. As a haunting soul Coetzee roams around his characters and the readers cannot decide in what degree and on what particular events these characters represent the historical author. Yet, Rayment's critical remarks are noteworthy: “colourless, odourless, inert and depressive gas” (Tayler, 2007). He wonders “how on earth did she get to be a popular author, ‘if popular is what she is’?” A similar ironic effect is detected when he refers to Pinter within somewhat political context. This is one of the cases where “the historical, implied and fictional authors converge” (Çıraklı, 2022). The fictional author tells the reader about 2005, when Pinter sent from his sick-bed a political lecture attacking the policies of Tony Blair:

When one speaks in one's own person—that is, not through one's art— to denounce some politician or other, using the rhetoric of the agora, one embarks on a contest which one is likely to lose because it takes place on ground where one's opponent is far more practised and adept. (Petersen, 2017: 487)

This is also an indication of how how the heroic historical agora has been reduced to mere rhetorical realm, in which the degenerating tongue attacks the sharp swords of reality. This is a drama of the novelists, which arouses verbal, situational, dramatic ironic effect at a time.

Mr. C, the protagonist in *Diary of a Bad Year*, is shown even more unsparingly. Mr. C is a wellknown, respected and distinguished author, having recently begun to live in Australia (the attentive reader can recognise the biographical link and the implication that Coetzee (the historical

author) Coetzee has had a residence since 2002). A white South African emigrant, Mr. C has a task to write a book as a former academic. In his book he gives space to various social, political, historical and cultural issues including animal rights. He is a vegetarian and over-sensitive man. Spending his time in a small flat, the isolated, elderly intellectual is portrayed to be tirelessly dealing with his self-image. This self-critical man, with name initials JC, gives a strong impression that he is a representative of the historical author (with his first name John?), and his curriculum vitae, his publications and references remind the historical author (Coetzee). Here, there is such playfulness and acuteness again: The author undermines the hierarchy between the reference and the referent (the referentiality problem and the signification process). There are many references to Coetzee but at the same time there is always a serious doubt and suspicion for the fictional status of history, for instance, refers to his novels “my novel *Waiting for the Barbarians*”, yet he still discloses the fact that *Diary of a Bad Year* is not his biographical account. Rather, Mr. C, is an invention and construct, and the historical author deliberately keeps critical distance between the character, the narrator, and the author. Moreover, the evidence of fictionality disappoints the evidence of actuality, which hints at the hand (authority) of the author. Mr. C., a somewhat silly intellectual, a childless old man, suffering from Parkinson disease at the initial stages. His obsessive pondering over death causes him to grip life more ambitiously, a vain attempt to assume a bond with the young woman. He is in a way aware of his declining power, not only as an intellectual, but also as a promising man. He is depicted in vain aspirations and consuming desires, but, upon the critical reviews of his work, he first realises and then denies his inadequacies: “At heart he is not a novelist after all, they say, but a pedant who dabbles in fiction. And I have reached a stage in my life when I begin to wonder whether they are not right.” (Tayler, 2007)

Coetzee aims deliberately to leave the reader hesitantly and in-between whether the character represents the historical author. Thus, he undermines another hierarchy between reality and representation, and he also demonstrates how an author can manipulate the fictional realms. In this way, he also shows that reality and real experience always leaks into the narrative accounts, which are fed and nurtured by actual experiences and actual discourses. As critics like Geertsema argues “what the genre of the text is: whether it is a novel or a book of opinions”. So, it can be said that Coetzee, in *Diary of a Bad Year*, undermines generic boundaries and hierarchies. The novel progresses through two and three streamlines, taking the form of a series of essays for a collection that C is writing for a publishing house. Generic undermining starts from the title of the book *Strong Opinions*, which novels and narrative accounts are supposed to depict “strong [sophisticated] characters” and “strong [intricate plots] events.”

Mr. C is chosen among the six eminent and well-known writers, who will write about the issues they think are important topics. We understand that Mr. C is an intellectual who have a say on some specific topics. He is invited to contribute to the issue and to write argumentative essays: “the more contentious the better” (Coetzee, 2007: 21). His process of writing these essays turn out another

journey with a young woman into understanding the character better. The readers view the character from two different perspectives through the filtering eyes of the female character and through his own selective perspective. At the bottom of each page, in a separate bar or section there appear three textual bands, one argumentative part and two diary or journal accounts at a time.

Apart from the parallel texts, the portions of the novel are irregularly distributed. At the beginning of the novel, each story is given on specific pages. The pages are complete, and the sentences are finished with a dot at the end. But in some parts of the novel, this consistency is lost, and there are stories given on the same pages. Some sentences also do not have dots at the end. These inconsistencies make the novel more complicated, requiring the reader to pay more attention to understand the content.

During Anya's narration, the reader is introduced to another character, complicating the story. The character is Anya's boyfriend and a stockbroker by the name of Alan. This character is not given a voice of his own and thus not assigned a part of a page. Alan is rather voluble and has his view about JC, whom he meets when the novel is about to end. Alan also has his view about the collection of essays JC is writing, and he can be referred to as JC's anti-thesis because he does not like JC, probably because he was close to his girlfriend Anya. Therefore, Anya's voice and Alan's voice generate "a counterpoint" to the essays of JC. The author forms this counterpoint to make the novel have some kind of fictionalized argument about the current state of affairs. This aspect thus significantly contributes toward the creation and understanding of the novel's content.

Although cautiously, the author seems to be somehow projecting himself into his characters, as suggested in the introduction. In this novel, *DBY*, there are obvious similarities between the author Coetzee and the character JC. First, as a South Africa-born citizen, JC relocated to Australia. Coetzee also relocated to Australia from South Africa. Although the time frame of their relocation does not match, there is a similarity in their origin and migration. Also, JC is presented as the author of *Waiting for the Barbarians*, an apparent reference to Coetzee's novel (Coetzee, 2007: 171). He also published a collection of essays on censorship in 1990 in the novel-this can be compared to Coetzee's 1996 *Giving Offense*. Finally, the many essays JC is seen working on are typical of expressing Coetzee's emotions (Varsamopoulou, 2014: 381). Through these essays, he passes his message about the current state of today's world.

However, at this point, it should be noted that the essays Coetzee writes are well-argued, and they concentrate on literary issues, as opposed to JC's essays which are not coherent and deal with various general topics. Suggestively, the opinions JC writes about are those of Coetzee. Also, in the *Second Diary*, the reflections in this part are utterly autobiographical on Coetzee's part.

If one were to believe the fictional narrative of Coetzee about the building of one's life story (as it is written in his novelized description of *summertime* by Sophie, a fictitious colleague of a fictional Coetzee), one would be keen to draw any conclusions about the fiction/fact division concerning the novels of Coetzee. As a fictioneer, Coetzee believed that one would construct any life story as they wish, within or against the restraints imposed by the real world (Gheorghiu & Praisler, 2015: 47). When reading Coetzee's novel, one is left with a sense of the contingency of words and their connection to the real world. Also, some argue that an author can never depart from his work (choosing to write not from their life experiences and writing a totally different thing that is not part of their lives).

However, one should not use the data in this *DBY* novel to reconstruct Coetzee's real life. Although some data might match, the work is out of his creativity and art as an author. This has been Coetzee's authorial strategy for a long time, inserting some real-life happenings in his novels. In his texts, Coetzee draws attention to the constructedness, which confuses and disturbs readers.

Table 9: Narrative Roles (Author)

	<i>Author Character's Narrative roles</i>	
1	Author-Lecturer	Thus is inaugurated the dualism of modern political culture, which simultaneously upholds absolute and relative standards of value. The modern state appeals to morality, to religion, and to natural law as the ideological foundation of its existence. (p. 17)
2	Author - Character	"Write about cricket, I suggest. Write your memoirs. Anything but politics. The kind of writing you do doesn't work with politics. Politics is about shouting other people down and getting your own way, not about logic. Write about the world around you. Write about the birds. There are always a mob of magpies strutting around the park as if they own it, he could write about them. Shoo, you monsters! I say, but of course they pay no heed. No brow, the skull running straight into the beak, no space for a brain." (p. 35)
3	Author from others's perspective	"Too cheeky. Lots of empty bottles in his kitchen, which I am not supposed to notice. Cockroaches too. Shows how long ago the wife must have died or run away. Scurry-scurry along the skirting boards when they think you aren't looking. Crumbs everywhere, even on his desk. Cockroach heaven. No wonder his teeth are so bad. Crunch-crunch scribble-scribble talk-talk. Down with the Liberals. What Hobbes said. What Machiavelli said. Ho hum." (p. 45)
4	Author-Lecturer-Writer	"My notes on these developments in linguistic usage grew in length, to the point where they began to turn into an essay. But what sort of essay was I engaged in: a piece of objective linguistic analysis or a veiled diatribe on declining standards?" (p. 146)
5	Author – Character-Narrator	"Thus has it come about that my opinions, in all their drafts and revisions, are to pass under the eye and through the hands of Anya (her name), of Alan and Anya, A & A, unit 2514, even though the Anya in question has never done a stitch of editing in her life" (p. 19) "She is in my flat. She has just dropped off the day's typing; she is on her way out, but for some reason chooses to linger. She puts her hands on her hips, tosses her hair, glances at me provocatively." (p. 40) "Much that I wrote not a word — but it worked. The doorbell rang." (p. 147)

Table 10: Narrative Agents Combinations (Author-Narrator-Character)

Narrative agents	Sample
<i>author</i>	“The best proof we have that life is good, and therefore that there may perhaps be a God after all, who has our welfare at heart, is that to each of us, on the day we are born, comes the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. It comes as a gift, unearned, unmerited, for free. How I would like to speak just once to that man, dead now these many years! “See how we in the twenty-first century still play your music, how we revere and love it, how we are absorbed and moved and fortified and made joyful by it,” I would say. “In the name of all mankind, please accept these words of tribute, inadequate though they are, and let all you endured in those bitter last years of yours, including the cruel surgical operations on your eyes, be forgotten.” - “Whatever you do, don’t allow yourself to get depressed. I know you believe you are not what you used to be, but the fact is you are still a good-looking man and a real gentleman too, who knows how to make a woman feel like a woman. Women appreciate that in a man, whatever else may be lacking. As for your writing, you are without a doubt one of the best, class AA, and I say that not just as your friend. You know how to draw the reader in (for example, in the bit about the birds in the park).” - “Long after the break-up with Alan, after the move to Queensland, after Senor C sent me his book and I wrote back to thank him, I made a call to Mrs Saunders in the Towers. I never got to know Mrs Saunders properly while I was there, she is a bit dippy (she was the one who told me Senor C was from Colombia, she must have mixed him up with someone else), but her flat is on the same floor as his and I know she has a soft heart (she was the one who used to feed the birds in the park)” (p.221).
Author as narrator	
Author as character	
<i>narrator</i>	
Narrator as author	
Narrator as character	
<i>character</i>	
Character as author	
Character as narrator	

5.3. Chapter Conclusion: Undermining Hierarchies and Strong Opinions

Regarding the novels under consideration, the present dissertation argues that Elizabeth Costello’s “Eight Lessons” can be conceived as strong opinions and, similarly, “Strong Opinions” can be regarded as rhetorical of moral and philosophical lessons. So, the numerous lectures presented in the stories stem from some crucial controversies and questions regarding their narrativity and beyond. The lessons Ms. Costello accounts and the chapters Mr. C writes revolve around issues of drama and parody of the narratives and discuss new understandings morality, humanity and philosophy.

Diary of a Bad Year is complicated as it additionally raises “strong opinions” to be embodied as a book, which refers to fictional, textual, textual notions regarding narrative strategies. It can be concluded that Coetzee is trying to challenge the cognitive need of readers to establish the dominance of a text, i.e., to classify it as one neat text type. In this novel, there exist two types of texts: the

expository type and the narrative of the fictional story. The *Strong Opinions* is the expository text, while the narratives of JC and Anya are the account of the fictional story. Expository texts provide facts with the purpose of educating readers and other audiences, while fictional stories tell a narrative and generally use many emotions. Their relation to time is also different. The expository one is outside of time, while the fictional story is time-bound. On every page of the two text types, the audience is constantly reminded of the conflicting assertions of time and the release from time. Although challenging, this layout significantly supplements some parts of the novel's content. This Diary novel bridges the gap between the narrative fictional text and the expository text.



CHAPTER SIX

6. CONCLUSIONS

This study explored various roles of two writers as represented in two “narrativized texts and two textualized narrative”. The concept of a public intellectual is not novel. It dates back at least to Socrates and the prophets of the Old Testament, if one may call them intellectuals and activists in those times. Nonetheless, the notion and its meaning have received increasing attention during the past two centuries. People such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Antonio Gramsci, Edward Said, and more recently Richard A. Posner have devoted portions of their books to defining the role and duties of the public intellectual. Currently, this disagreement appears to have intensified rather than waned (Kotrsová, 2012: 3). This study argues that J. M. Coetzee’s novels under consideration can be analysed in terms of narrative strategies, and that these strategies undermine hierarchies of representation, fictionality and the very discourse of realistic concerns.

The implied author does not simply foreground the playfulness of the author, self-reflexivity or impossibility of representation he also denies the possibility of a reliable discussion of the serious problems of humanity. What Coetzee achieves in *EC* and *DBY* is a transformation not only on the aesthetic level but also on the level of what we call reality.

These novels, therefore, problematizes the “postmodern attitude of problematization” (Ref. Çıraklı, 2022, unpublished lecture notes; other references). In other words, “argues “The characters and orators of the novels are so serious but the readers cannot take them seriously as they, and their discourse of strong and acute issues, do not indicate neither an epic quest, nor a distressed modernist non-epic journey. These narratives are neither the signs of fictionality nor the death of the authors, who revive, yet, not adequately alive. So, these novels cannot have a genuine touch upon reality. The final undermining of these novels are directed to the very idea of binaries or hierarchy by leaving the discourses to “decentredness.” His ongoing manipulation of the readers with overt and covert self-references to history, reality, biography and politics” (Çıraklı, 2022).

In the analysed works by Coetzee, the implied author shows his passion for writing about other writers in their old age. In *EC* and *DBY*, the main characters are aging writers. However, irrespective of their age, as prominent as they are, they are expected to step up and act as public intellectuals. In the *Diary of a Bad Year*, JC is the aforementioned older writer who Anya, a young woman,

challenges. Although JC is aware that he can never become romantically involved with Anya, he remains obsessed with her and hires her to be his typist.

In *Elizabeth Costello*, although she is a celebrated writer, she disappoints her audiences in various instances. Since she writes about women's liberation, her audience anticipates that she will be an energetic fighter for equality who will boldly speak about a woman's role in modern society³². Her interviewers and audience are disappointed to see an old, sick, and weak woman who is tired of discussing her first book. In other instances, Elizabeth disappoints her audience when she begins discussing things they don't understand. Therefore, in both novels, Coetzee shows the impact of aging on writers and how this affects their personal life.

Elizabeth Costello (2003) and *Diary of a Bad Year* (2007) are outstanding examples of the critical shift across "the conventional assumption of narrative representation and postmodernist revelation of textual playfulness" that indicate a paradoxical state of fiction bringing together "narrative text and textual narrative" (Çıraklı, 2022). In this regard, we can argue that these novels challenge the contemporary reader with their representational narratives and "very" serious intellectual contents, which are aimed at the representation of the "author at work" (Çıraklı, 2022), which indicates another metafictional as well as representational level of literature.

Additionally, these two novels establish a tricky and intriguing link with the biography of Coetzee, who seems to have set all these tricks deliberately to display the vanity and frailty of the contemporary authorship. As a implied –and supposedly historical author, Coetzee includes some direct autobiographical elements in the novels. At some point in the novels, he moves a date a few years backward or forward, and at some point, he leaves it upon the reader to decide any link whatsoever. Coetzee asserts that to a larger extent, all writing is autobiography³³. Everything authors write, including fiction and criticism, the writings describe them as they write. In other words, what they write reflects their personal life and experiences. All writing is autobiography, and all autobiography is storytelling. Both *EC* and *DBY* are autobiographies, and to a larger extent, they reflect the experiences of Coetzee, and Coetzee is storytelling via these novels.

Further, in *EC* and *DBY*, Coetzee seems to deal with the generic diversity, bridging gaps of different types or complicating the boundaries –and hierarchies— between the texts. On a synchronic textual level, various kinds of texts, narrative or nonnarrative, are brought together in an undermining or subversive manner. *DBY* seems to be closing or calling into question the gap between different types of texts, whereas, in *Elizabeth Costello*, he is bridging or reducing the gap between the worried discourses of non-academic and academic readers. Coetzee has done this bridging in these books and

³² Carrol Clarkson, JM Coetzee: Countervoices, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

³³ JM Coetzee: Countervoices

during his public performances, where he has addressed and criticized the gap difference issue³⁴. Coetzee's public lectures on numerous occasions turned out to be public readings of his works of fiction. Therefore the bridging concept is not only represented in the two novels, but it seems to be a way for Coetzee to express his thoughts and view.

Finally, *EC* and *DBY* were both written after Coetzee moved to Australia in 2002. This relocation had an impact not on Coetzee's life but also on his writings and specifically on these two novels. In the *Diary of a Bad Year*, the character JC was an Australian citizen, but he was born in South Africa, just like Coetzee³⁵. On the other hand, Elizabeth Costello was an Australian-born citizen who traveled worldwide to attend various events and conferences. Therefore the two works under analysis closely relate to each other, and Coetzee majorly based the novels on his life experiences.

The oral or written lectures provided in the narratives are due to generic controversies and call for critical questions as to whether they can be considered part of the narratives. These sections deserve further elucidation to tackle them as narrative and authorial strategies. The very presence of these sections (the lessons Ms. Costello presents and the chapters Mr. C penned) refer to the underlying drama and parody of the narratives and mark a critical and significant notion of complementariness about serious issues take life seriously, regards reality achievable, assumes the possibility of representation, imposes a new morality, reconstructs humanity and humanist philosophy.

The characters (Elizabeth and Senior C.) represented in the two novels appear to be authors, narrators, characters having remarkable intellectual capabilities. The texts undermine the fictional status of the novels by using various strategies related with "authorship (Coetzee as implied author, self-reflective, self-critical, exploration of the author's persona), narrator, narrative levels, narrative strategies, ideology, politics (ecopolitics), criticism, literary theory, metatextuality, intertextuality, binary oppositions (the texts that take place on the same page), history writing, history and fiction, irony, humour, parody.

In *Diary of a Bad Year* and *Elizabeth Costello*, authors' representations surfaces on various levels. These levels can be discerned as historical and narrative levels. The distinction between author, narrator and character is blurred. The centre remains vague, Coetzee continues to problematize author's role and the interaction between narrators and characters.

³⁴ JM Coetzee: Countervoices

³⁵ "JM Coetzee's" *Diary of a Bad Year*

Table 11: Characters on the stage

<i>EC</i>	<i>DBY</i>
Costello at the stage / Lectures	Senior C's Book / Strong Opinions
Female Lonely (in SOCIAL milieu) Aged Intellectual Knowledgeable Insightful Reflective Sensitive Questioning but Naïve Humanely Occasionally Comic (Represented from within and without, author character as narrator and focaliser in the form of narration) Ironic effect (dramatic irony)	Male Lonely (ISOLATED in a flat with limited social interaction) Aged Intellectual Knowledgeable Insightful Reflective Sensitive Questioning but Naïve Humanely Occasionally Comic (Represented from within and without, author character as narrator and focaliser in the form of diary writing) Ironic effect (situational irony)
John's perspective	Anya's perspective

IMPLICATIONS

Literary Critical Implications

On the verge of postmodern and postclassical perspectives, novels do not only represent the conflicting human condition as suggested earlier by the traditional mission of humanist literature, critical studies unearth (and deconstruct) “novel's ethical foundation” on the fringe of death of humanism and humanities.

Linguistic Implications

After structuralist and poststructuralist views of the signification processes emerging through the use of language and its linguistic assumptions, the power of Coetzee's novels (narrative dramas) exhibit the effect of narration and narrators, those who use language but aim to perform rather than mean or preach.

Socio-Political Implications

Upon the degeneration of ideas, ideals and fixed ethical considerations with stable and reliable points of references, speech and narration – and any academic discourse or intellectual speculation—turned into a vain activity. At this point, this situational and dramatic irony of socio-political misery of humanity needs further considerations apart from mere rhetoric of “truth”.

Cultural Implications

The analysis of these novels with narrative strategies can be a significant launching pad to undermine verbal, structural, fictional, ideological and cultural hierarchies produced by an artificial (and mostly political and poisoning) statusquo. Cultural discourses fall apart from culture as such, and literature cannot be a reliable exploration of culture as it was determined by the capitalistic web of the global politics.

Psychological Implications

Coetzee's later novels also provide the unique psychological cases of the “aging/aged intellectuals” and rerepresents the art of fiction devouring the artist or novelist himself/herself. The

psychology of the author and the enunciating stages of the degenerating persona seems a new turn in the position of the author, who is not “dead” by “dying.”

Pedagogical Implications

Considering the fact that Coetzee’s *EC* and *DBY* are the narratives of “lecturing” and “teaching moral lessons”, these novels can be reconsidered regarding their value of texts in the literature classroom. They are good examples of teaching, language, narrative structure, ethical notions, animal rights, philosophy, novel writing, aging, family relationships and so on. With all these complicated themes and notions, *EC* and *DBY* can be included in the contemporary novel syllabi.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Regarding the previous studies, conclusions and implications of the present study, Coetzee’s novels explored in this study can be utilised in terms of their discussions about the contemporary controversies like ethics of narration. This would also add to the newly raised discussions as to what we conceive as the function of language, namely, practical discourses produced in everyday life and practical performances of the act of enunciation (narration and writing at a time). These philosophical foundations of the linguistic practice are as important as the political suggestions of the works. These novels should be reconsidered and revisited in light of the fading power of the arts, language, humanities and literature.

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Appendix 1: Glossary of Narrative Terms

Agency: The capacity to act in an environment.

Biography: A narrative of a person's life.

Character: An entity with agency in a storyworld.

Characterisation: The meaningful arrangement or presentation of the characters of the story.

Collaborative fiction: A form of writing where two or more authors share creative control of the narrative.

Description: The textual representation of characters or environments.

Dialogism: The use in narrative of different perspectives or viewpoints, whose interaction or contradiction is important to the story's interpretation.

Dialogue: Representation of verbal or speech interactions between characters, often accompanied by dialogue or speech tags.

Discourse: The means through which a narrative is communicated by the implied author to the implied reader.

Embedded narration: A story that is narrated within another story.

External narrator or narratee: A narrator or narratee who is a figure of discourse but not an existent of the storyworld.

Fiction: A narrative that represents imagined (or partially imagined) characters, events, and environments.

Focalisation: The perspective or point of view adopted by the narrator when telling the story.

Foregrounding: A set of linguistic features of discourse that deviate from the normal or ordinary use of language.

Genre: Conventional grouping of texts (or other semiotic representations) based on certain shared features.

Ideology: An interconnected set of beliefs, ideas, values, and norms that structures the worldview of a person or group.

Implied author: The projection of the real author in the text, as can be inferred by the reader from the text itself.

Implied reader: The virtual reader to whom the implied author addresses its narrative, and whose thoughts and attitudes may differ from an actual reader.

Individuation: The ascription of mental, physical, or behavioural properties (characteristics) to a character.

Internal narrator or narratee: A narrator or narratee who, besides being a figure of discourse, is also an existent of the storyworld, particularly a minor or major character.

Inward focalisation: Narration from the subjective perspective or point of view of one or more focal characters.

Irony: Use of discourse to state something different from, or even opposite to, what is meant.

Appendix 1 (Continued)

Ironical narrator: A narrator who makes statements about the characters or events in the story that mean something very different, even the opposite, of what is being stated.

Limited narrator: A narrator who has only limited knowledge about the internal or psychological states of one or some of the existents in the storyworld.

Metonymy: A figure of speech that replaces an idea or thing with another idea or thing, with which it is somehow connected or related in meaning.

Motif: An existent that recurs throughout the story and often has a symbolic significance.

Narratee: The figure of discourse to whom a story is told by the narrator.

Narrative: Semiotic representation of a sequence of events, meaningfully connected by time and cause.

Narratology: The systematic study of narratives in order to understand their structure (how they work) and function (what they are for).

Narrator: The figure of discourse that tells the story to a narratee.

Nonfiction: A narrative that claims to represent characters, events, and environments drawn from the lifeworld of writers and readers.

Novel: A fictional narrative of book length, written in prose, and generally intended to be read in silence.

Novella: A fictional narrative longer than a short story but shorter than a standard novel, written in prose, and generally intended to be read in silence.

Objective narrator: A narrator who has no knowledge about the internal or psychological states of any of the characters in the storyworld and can only report what can be observed from the outside.

Omniscient narrator: A narrator who knows everything about the existents of the storyworld, including the internal or psychological states of all characters and the unfolding of events.

Outward focalisation: Narration that avoids taking the subjective perspective or point of view of any of the characters.

Personification: A figure of speech that attributes personal or human characteristics to a nonhuman entity, object, or idea.

Polyphony: The inclusion in narrative of a diversity of points of view and voices.

Protagonist: The main character of a story, the one who struggles to achieve some goal.

Realism: Narrative discourse that aims to construct a storyworld that is an accurate reflection of the lifeworld (i.e. the 'real' world).

Rhetoric: The art of crafting effective or persuasive discourse.

Scene: The narrative representation of an environment, set of characters, and sequence of events in enough detail to create the illusion that the events are unfolding in front of the narratee (and ultimately, the reader).

Appendix 1 (Continued)

Showing: The direct representation of the events, environments, and characters of a story without the intervention (or, in the case of narrative showing, with minimal or limited intervention) of a narrator.

Significant detail: A descriptive detail that reveals meaningful connections between the existents of the story and helps the reader to recreate the storyworld in her imagination.

Story: A complete chronological sequence of interconnected events.

Storyworld: The world of the story, which includes different types of existents (events, environments, and characters).

Style: A characteristic set of linguistic features associated with a text or group of texts.

Telling: The representation of a story through the mediation of a narrator, who gives an account and often interprets or comments on the events, environments, or characters of the storyworld.

Typical character (also, **Type**): A character that represents a particular aspect of humanity or a particular group of humans.

Universal character: A character that represents a general aspect of humanity or the whole human species.

Unreliable narrator: A narrator who makes statements that contradict what the implied reader knows (or infers) to be the real intention or meaning of the narrative discourse.

Verisimilitude: Features of narrative discourse that attempt to convince readers that the storyworld is a faithful imitation of the 'real' world.

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