



**Revue Internationale de Langue,  
Littérature, Culture et Civilisation**

**Vol. 3, N°2 Numéro spécial, 25 janvier 2024  
ISSN : 2709-5487**

# **Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation**

**Revue annuelle multilingue**  
Multilingual Annual Journal

[www.nyougam.com](http://www.nyougam.com)  
ISSN : 2709-5487  
E-ISSN : 2709-5495  
Lomé-TOGO

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ISSN : 2709-5487

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### Editorial

La *Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation* (RILLiCC) est une revue à comité de lecture en phase d'indexation recommandée par le Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES). Elle est la revue du Laboratoire de Recherche en Langues, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation Anglophones (LaReLLiCCA) dont elle publie les résultats des recherches en lien avec la recherche et la pédagogie sur des orientations innovantes et stimulantes à la vie et vision améliorées de l'académie et de la société. La revue accepte les textes qui cadrent avec des enjeux épistémologiques et des problématiques actuels pour être au rendez-vous de la contribution à la résolution des problèmes contemporains.

RILLiCC met en éveil son lectorat par rapport aux défis académiques et sociaux qui se posent en Afrique et dans le monde en matière de science littéraire et des crises éthiques. Il est établi que les difficultés du vivre-ensemble sont fondées sur le radicalisme et l'extrémisme violents. En effet, ces crises et manifestations ne sont que des effets des causes cachées dans l'imaginaire qu'il faut (re)modeler au grand bonheur collectif. Comme il convient de le noter ici, un grand défi se pose aux chercheurs qui se doivent aujourd'hui d'être conscients que la science littéraire n'est pas rétribuée à sa juste valeur quand elle se voit habillée sous leurs yeux du mythe d'Albatros ou d'un cymbale sonore. L'idée qui se cache malheureusement derrière cette mythologie est que la littérature ne semble pas contribuer efficacement à la résolution des problèmes de société comme les sciences exactes. Dire que la recherche a une valeur est une chose, le prouver en est une autre. La *Revue Internationale de Langue, Littérature, Culture et Civilisation* à travers les activités du LaReLLiCCA entend faire bénéficier à son lectorat et à sa société cible, les retombées d'une recherche appliquée.

Le comité spécialisé « Lettres et Sciences Humaines » du Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES) recommande l'utilisation harmonisée des styles de rédaction et la présente revue s'inscrit dans cette logique directrice en adoptant le style APA.

L'orientation éditoriale de cette revue inscrit les résultats pragmatiques et novateurs des recherches sur fond social de médiation, d'inclusion et de réciprocité qui permettent de maîtriser les racines du mal et réaliser les objectifs du développement durable déclencheurs de paix partagée.

Lomé, le 20 octobre 2020.

Le directeur de publication,

Professeur Ataféï PEWISSI,

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### ***Ligne éditoriale***

**Volume :** La taille du manuscrit est comprise entre 4500 et 6000 mots.  
Format: papier A4, Police: Times New Roman, Taille: 11,5, Interligne 1,15.

### ***Ordre logique du texte***

Un article doit être un tout cohérent. Les différents éléments de la structure doivent faire un tout cohérent avec le titre. Ainsi, tout texte soumis pour publication doit comporter:

- un titre en caractère d'imprimerie ; il doit être expressif et d'actualité, et ne doit pas excéder 24 mots ;
- un résumé en anglais-français, anglais-allemand, ou anglais-espagnol selon la langue utilisée pour rédiger l'article. Se limiter exclusivement à objectif/problématique, cadre théorique et méthodologique, et résultats. Aucun de ces résumés ne devra dépasser 150 mots ;
- des mots clés en français, en anglais, en allemand et en espagnol : entre 5 et 7 mots clés ;
- une introduction (un aperçu historique sur le sujet ou revue de la littérature en bref, une problématique, un cadre théorique et méthodologique, et une structure du travail) en 600 mots au maximum ;
- un développement dont les différents axes sont titrés. Il n'est autorisé que trois niveaux de titres. Pour le titrage, il est vivement recommandé d'utiliser les chiffres arabes ; les titres alphabétiques et alphanumériques ne sont pas acceptés ;
- une conclusion (rappel de la problématique, résumé très bref du travail réalisé, résultats obtenus, implémentation) en 400 mots au maximum ;
- liste des références : par ordre alphabétique des noms de familles des auteurs cités.

### **Références**

Il n'est fait mention dans la liste de références que des sources effectivement utilisées (citées, paraphrasées, résumées) dans le texte de l'auteur. Pour leur présentation, la norme American Psychological Association (APA) ou références intégrées est exigée de tous les auteurs qui veulent faire publier leur texte dans la revue. Il est fait exigence aux auteurs de n'utiliser que la seule norme dans leur texte. Pour en savoir

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Le comité de rédaction exige APA (Auteur, année : page). L'utilisation des notes de bas de pages n'intervient qu'à des fins d'explication complémentaire. La présentation des références en style métissé est formellement interdite.

### **La gestion des citations :**

**Longues citations :** Les citations de plus de quarante (40) mots sont considérées comme longues ; elles doivent être mises en retrait dans le texte en interligne simple.

**Les citations courtes :** les citations d'un (1) à quarante (40) mots sont considérées comme courtes ; elles sont mises entre guillemets et intégrées au texte de l'auteur.

### **Résumé :**

- ✓ Pour Pewissi (2017), le Womanisme transcende les cloisons du genre.
- ✓ Ourso (2013:12) trouve les voyelles qui débordent le cadre circonscrit comme des voyelles récalcitrantes.

### **Résumé ou paraphrase :**

- ✓ Ourso (2013: 12) trouve les voyelles qui débordent le cadre circonscrit comme des voyelles récalcitrantes.

### **Exemple de référence**

#### **Pour un livre**

Collin, H. P. (1988). *Dictionary of Government and Politics*. UK: Peter Collin Publishing.

#### **Pour un article tiré d'un ouvrage collectif**

Gill, W. (1998/1990). "Writing and Language: Making the Silence Speak." In Sheila Ruth, *Issues in Feminism: An Introduction to Women's Studies*. London: Mayfield Publishing Company, Fourth Edition. Pp. 151-176.

#### **Utilisation de Ibid., op. cit, sic entre autres**

**Ibidem (Ibid.)** intervient à partir de la deuxième note d'une référence

source citée. Ibid. est suivi du numéro de page si elle est différente de référence mère dont elle est consécutive. Exemple : ibid., ou ibidem, p. x.

**Op. cit.** signifie ‘la source pré-citée’. Il est utilisé quand, au lieu de deux références consécutives, une ou plusieurs sources sont intercalées. En ce moment, la deuxième des références consécutives exige l’usage de op. cit. suivi de la page si cette dernière diffère de la précédente.

### **Typographie**

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### **Tableaux, schémas et illustrations**

Pour les textes contenant les tableaux, il est demandé aux auteurs de les numérotter en chiffres romains selon l’ordre de leur apparition dans le texte. Chaque tableau devra comporter un titre précis et une source propre. Par contre, les schémas et illustrations devront être numérotés en chiffres arabes et dans l’ordre d’apparition dans le texte.

La largeur des tableaux intégrés au travail doit être 10 cm maximum, format A4, orientation portrait.

### **Instruction et acceptation d’article**

A partir du volume 2 de la présente édition, les dates de réception et d’acceptation des textes sont marquées, au niveau de chaque article. Deux (02) à trois (03) instructions sont obligatoires pour plus d’assurance de qualité.



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## **LITTERATURE**

# Cultural Reconciliation in John Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace*

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Reçu le : 12/10/2023    Accepté le : 03/12/2023    Publié le : 25/01/2024

## Abstract

This research investigates the postcolonial concept of cultural reconciliation in John Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace*. It analyses Whites' and Blacks' races, traditions, ideological institutions and languages as postcolonial cultures through which Whites and Blacks reconcile themselves. Standing on postcolonial theory, the study reaches the point that John Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace* is a narrative of postcolonial cultural reconciliation.

**Keywords:** Appropriation, culture, language, postcolonial, race, reconciliation.

## Résumé

Cette étude explore le concept de la réconciliation culturelle dans *Disgrace* de John Maxwell Coetzee. L'étude analyse les races, les traditions, les appareils idéologiques et les langues des blancs et des noirs comme des cultures postcoloniales à travers lesquelles les peuples noirs et blancs se réconcilient. En faisant usage de la théorie postcoloniale, l'étude atteint le point selon lequel le roman de l'écrivain est une narration postcoloniale qui prône la réconciliation culturelle.

**Mots clés :** Appropriation, culture, langue, postcolonial, race, réconciliation.

## Introduction

Critics take different insights into the concept of culture. Said (1974: 148) contends: "A man was not a child of the culture.... Culture is a construct... a quasi-organic structure". From this assertion of Said, it is understood that culture is a social construction. Therefore, anybody, no matter his or her origins can re-appropriate other cultures. Bhabha (1994: 162, 163) is rich in giving credence to such a stance when he discusses

cultures to be “dialogical or transferential” thus, “‘forms of activity which are both at once ours and others’.” Culture in this standpoint of dialog allows communities from different races such as Whites and Blacks to communicate by mutually appropriating the different cultural values. As Said (1974: 293) argues, in studying other culture, “‘we’ can get to know another people, their way of life and thought, and so on”. There is nothing better than knowing people because it helps give consideration to their concerns and live in cohesion. Other critics such as Walker go further to imply race in culture. Critics such as Walker’s (2001: 47) asserts: “Race is a social construction, not a biological datum.”

Culture, as viewed by the different critics, give room for the current in reassessing the concept in order to give it a new dimension that can enhance togetherness of human races regardless of gender, color and class. It also allows this present study to view tradition, languages, ideological institutions and even race as cultures through which white minority ruling class and black people overcome Apartheid to reconcile themselves. Put in more details, the study aims at analyzing the mulatto as a third space subject. Then, it views melting pot in South African narrative context of Coetzee’s piece of fiction as the birth of a rainbow Nation. Next to that, the work explores cultural negotiation as a condition for the colonizer and the colonized’s mutual acceptance before analysing the English language as a component of global culture that encompasses white and black people.

The theoretical framework of this study leans on post-colonial approach to discuss the key concept along the trends of Ashcroft et al. and Young. Ashcroft (1998: 2) uses the concept of post-colonial to “cover all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day”. Since John Maxwell Coetzee’s *Disgrace* is a partial representation of South Africa from Apartheid to post-Apartheid, this present study deems it right to use the hyphenated post-colonial for its theoretical framework. Since “postcolonialism as a political philosophy means first and foremost the right to autonomous self-government of those who still find themselves in a situation of being

controlled politically and administratively by a foreign power” (Young, 2003: 113–114).

The work is organized in four sections. The first section is about the mulatto as third space subject. The second section is concerned with melting pot as the birth of South African rainbow Nation. In the third section, cultural negotiation is viewed as a condition for colonizer and the colonized people to mutually accept one another. The fourth section is about the use of the English language as global culture which encompasses white and black people.

### **1. The Mulatto: A Third Space Subject**

Broadly defined, a mulatto is an individual with one black parent and one white parent. In *Disgrace*, John Maxell Coetzee portrays a mulatto. In the novel, when Lucy, the white daughter of the white man David Lurie is raped by Pollux, the black boy of Petrus community, Petrus tells her that the boy will marry her and she also decides to keep the pregnancy. Reporting Petrus’s voice, the narrator mentions: “‘He will marry her,’ he says at last. ‘He will marry Lucy, only he is too young, too young to be married. He is a child still’” (Coetzee, 1999: 202). Besides this decision of Petrus for Pollux to marry Lucy, Lucy is perceived in the novel read to keep the pregnancy. Lucy instructs her father:

‘Go back to Petrus,’ .... ‘Propose the following. Say I accept his protection. Say he can put out whatever story he likes about our relationship and I won’t contradict him. If he wants me to be known as his third-wife, so be it. As his concubine, ditto. But then the child becomes his too. The child becomes part of his family. As for the land, say I will sign the land over to him as long as the house remains mine. I will become a tenant on his land’ (Coetzee, 1999: 204).

The decision to be married and keep the pregnancy is done by consent. Both Lucy and Petrus are not forced to accept the proposal. They willingly decide to be married and keep the pregnancy. The stake in bringing this interracial issue is the mulatto. The existence of the mulatto gives rise to new race considered as third space. Since, to recall Walker’s

(2001: 47), “race is a social construction, not a biological datum”, to consider the mulatto as a third space is not a wrong idea.

The mulatto as a third space becomes even more interesting since space is also a culture. Ojaide (2012: 67) is rich in given details: “Environment is broadly speaking a place. A people’s environment involves culture, society, and geography, especially the fauna and flora that are often evoked in literary works”. Since Ojaide makes a comparison between environment and space, therefore, whatever environment involves, space also involves. Thus, space involves culture, society, and geography, especially the fauna and flora. From this analogy, it rises that when saying that the mulatto is a third space, it involves that mulatto is a third culture.

The third culture by the mulatto encompasses both the white race of Lucy and the black race of Petrus. The two races exist in the mulatto at an equal footing. The mulatto is a clear proof that “culture is a process, not a static phenomenon” (Walker, 2001: 60). John Maxwell Coetzee’s representation of the mulatto as a third space that encompasses both white and black races is interesting for it shows

Margins and centers should communicate through a dialogical osmosis so that the center ceases to be center because everything that the center has should travel the periphery for exchange. Similarly, the margin will not be the margins in the binary set (Pewissi, 2017: 16-17).

Nothing is illustrative of the mulatto in Coetzee’s novel as the pregnancy of Lucy. The seed sown by Petrus and his black community in Lucy’s womb makes her bear a mulatto baby. It is this mulatto baby which is taken for third space because it is the representation of both white and black communities. The existence of the mulatto as third space makes say that Coetzee’s narrative is a renaissance since Asante (2007: 68) defines renaissance as the “rebirth of the culture”.

Lucy’s mulatto refers to the rebirth of South African culture because both black and white people recognize themselves in it. Like Appiah (1992: ix), who lives with his father’s multiple identities that are Asante,

Ghanaian, African, Christian and Methodist, and make use of these “many identities without, ... any significant conflict”, the South African mulatto represented by Lucy’s pregnancy lives in the country with his white and black identities. Not only that but also, this mulatto brings both white and black people to mutual acceptance one another because both races identify themselves through it. Culture, as portrayed by John Maxwell Coetzee, is thus dialogic rather than conflictual.

## **2. Melting Pot and the Birth of a Rainbow Nation**

Referring to Young (2003: 60), a melting pot is nothing but “a mosaic of nations”. In *Disgrace*, John Maxwell Coetzee fictionalizes South Africa as a mosaic of nation. The same country of South Africa exists as traditional and Western world. Petrus’s following answer to David Lurie’s statement for which Lucy does not want to marry is illustrative: ““Yes, I know,’ say Petrus. And perhaps he does indeed know. He would be a fool to underestimate Petrus. ‘But here’, says Petrus, ‘it is dangerous, too dangerous. A woman must be *marry*’” (Coetzee, 1999: 202).

Traditional and Western worlds can be perceived in the above conversation between the white man David Lurie and the black man Petrus. The traditional world encompassed in Petrus. His idea for which a woman must be married translates perfectly the features of African traditional womanhood constructed by patriarchy for women. As hooks (1984: 120) contends:

Patriarchy allowed all men to completely rule women in their families, to decide their fate, to shape their destiny. Men could freely batter women with no fear of punishment. They could decide whom their daughters were to marry, whether they could read or write.

hooks in this quotation shows women’s governance by patriarchal ideology as a feature of the traditional community. Petrus’s stance for which women must be married makes him be taken for a traditional man who incarnates the features of the South African patriarchal society. The life led by Petrus in the black community shows very well that he does

not merely state womanhood as the norms of the traditional community to David Lurie and his daughter, but himself puts into practice this norm. The following words from Lucy well illustrates the traditional life that Petrus lives in the black community:

He has a cow that will calve in the spring. He has two wives, or a wife and a girlfriend. If he has played his cards right he could get a second grant to put up a house; then he can move out of the stable. By Eastern Cape standards he is a man of substance (Coetzee, 1999: 77).

Standing on Nnaemeka's (1998: 5) following stance, "Patriarchy constructs the institution of motherhood while women experience it", Petrus's marriage to two wives reveals more the traditional feature of his black community appear as a traditional community. Petrus's wives do not refuse the definition of "women's status as childbearer whose lot is to conceive, bear, feed" (Minh-ha, 1997: 31). That is why they marry Petrus and conceive as Petrus's conversation with David Lurie reveals: "We hope he will be a boy." "We are praying for a boy," "Always it is best if the first one is a boy. Then he can show his sisters – show them how to behave" (Coetzee, 1999: 130). Petrus's preference for a male child unveils him as a phallogocentric man, a great feature of a traditional patriarchal man. Next to his phallic attitude, Petrus is also "a peasant, a *paysan*, a man of the country" (Coetzee, 1999: 117).

In the traditional community, a peasant marries several wives and gets many children his wives and children constitute his main d'oeuvre for his farms as it is with the case of Petrus. Since Petrus has animal and land farms, his wives and children constitute his first main oeuvre for his traditional activities. As Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1987: 23) contends: "The peasantry had no complexes about their ... cultures they carried". Petrus has no complexes about carrying his farm activities which constitute his traditional culture since he mirrors his life through it. In this vein, Ojaide (2012: 9) contends: "Culture involves a shared experience of belief systems, worldview, traditions, and aesthetic standards".



Since “to think about a people land ... is to think about the peasantry and the whole spectrum of needs of the world’s poorest people” (Young, 2003: 51), John Maxwell Coetzee’s portrayal of the peasant Petrus can be regarded as his thinking about the existence of the traditional community in South Africa. The novelist represents Petrus as a peasant in order to show the existence of the traditional community in South Africa despite the advent of Apartheid. Petrus in this line of reflection is in perfect line with Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1993: 60) when he contends: “Culture is a product of a peoples’ history. But it also reflects that history and embodies a whole set of values by which a people view themselves and their place in time and space”. Petrus perfectly mirrors his life with his land culture. His traditional activities allow him to live and answer the concerns of his black community.

But since John Maxwell Coetzee intends to show the mosaic feature of South Africa despite Apartheid, he portrays Western world in its co-existence with the traditional community. David Lurie’s following statement to Petrus for which Lucy does not want to marry can illustrate the existence of western world in South Africa after black people have reversed the white minority ruling the country: ““Lucy does not want to marry. Does not want to marry a man. It is not an option she will consider. I can’t make myself clearer than that. She wants to live her own life”” (Coetzee, 1999: 202). What David Lurie aims at uncovering when informing Petrus that Lucy does not want to marry is her attachment to another type of marriage which is perceived in Western world. David Lurie following description about Lucy’s intimacy with Helen is worth mentioning:

Helen is a large, sad-looking woman with a deep voice and a bad skin, older than Lucy. He has never been able to understand what Lucy sees in her; privately he wished Lucy would find, or be found by, someone better (Coetzee, 1999: 60).

This intimacy that Lucy has with Helen uncovers that she is from a gender different from the heterosexual marriage mostly advocated by the traditional patriarchal community. Lucy is perceived as lesbian who is a

homosexual. To give more credence to his daughter's lesbianism, Lucy's father David Lurie describes her further as follows:

He pretends he is tired and, after supper, withdraws to his room, where faintly the sounds come to him of Lucy leading her own life: drawers opening and shutting, the radio, the murmur of a telephone conversation. Is she calling Johannesburg, speaking to Helen? I his presence here keeping the two of them apart? Would they dare to share a bed while he was in the house? If the bed creaked in the night, would they be embarrassed? Embarrassed enough to stop? But what does he know about what women do together? Maybe women do not need to make beds creak. And what does he know about these two in particular, Lucy and Helen? Perhaps they sleep together merely as children do, cuddling, touching, giggling, reliving girlhood – sisters more than lovers. Sharing a bed, sharing a bathtub, baking gingerbread cookies, trying on each other's clothes. Sapphic love: an excuse for putting on weight. The truth is, he does not like to think of his daughter in the throes of passion with another woman, and a plain one at that (Coetzee, 1999: 86).

If womanhood is one of the features of African or black women theorists, lesbianism is recognized as white feminist feature. From this assumption, it appears that lesbianism as bore by Lucy is part of the features of Western cultural world. She applies the Western conception for which genders are “acts, gestures, enactment ... *performative*” (Butler, 1990: 136). She complies with Wittig's stance by Butler (1990: 113): “One is not born a woman, one becomes one; but further, one is not born a female, but one *becomes female*; but even more radically, one can, if one chooses, become neither female nor male, woman nor man”. John Maxwell Coetzee represents such a homosexual reality in South Africa in order to show the existence of Western tradition in the country despite the power reversal. The co-existence of reality of Western world in South Africa is even too much visible when voices David Lurie to Petrus that it is not the way we do things “We Westerners” (Coetzee, 1980: 202) as a reply to Petrus request to marry his white daughter Lucy. The existence of both Western and African traditions in the same territory brings the country to be a rainbow nation. The term Rainbow Nation was first

coined by Bishop Desmond Tutu. It refers to South Africa where diverse culture and ethnicities live together and are heard, understood and most importantly, celebrated.

The novelist takes higher Molefi Kete Asante's (2007: 53) standpoint when the latter asserts:

One other challenge facing us is the discourse around the value of multiculturalism in a heterogenous, industrial nation. The debate around multiculturalism is richly textured because the issues are paramount in the modern world. If we say that multiculturalism simply refers to 'many cultures,' we have a fairly good starting place for a discussion about society.

John Maxwell Coetzee challenges western politics of holistic culture when he portrays the existence of both black and white cultures in South Africa. For Westerners, culture is holistic, that is one. But Coetzee's representation of many cultures in the country shows his eagerness to reconcile the two cultures that Apartheid brings to exist in an antagonistic position. As Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1993: 42) contends:

Cultural contact can therefore play a great part in bringing about mutual understanding between peoples of different nations. Instead of armaments and nuclear weapons, instead of imposing one's own version of democracy on tiny islands and continents through Rapid or Low Deployment Forces, let people of the world dialogue together through culture.

The following section is to show how the presence of many cultures in South Africa brings about mutual understanding between black and white people.

### **3. Cultural Negotiation and Mutual Acceptance in Coetzee's *Disgrace***

Molefi Kete Asante (2007: 114–115) gives an insight into cultural negotiation when he argues:

One can live in many places, but one's identity may be transformed by circumstances and condition. However, basic personality structure and all the elements that go into culture are negotiable by you regardless of your value. Nevertheless, the Jew cannot escape his Jewishness by claiming that he is an American citizen. He simply adds a layer onto his identity. He could be a citizen of France, Britain, or Germany, but he remains a Jew. In the same way, Diawara remains an African."

In the fictional world represented by John Maxwell Coetzee in *Disgrace*, Whites and Blacks undertake cultural negotiation that brings both races to resolve the conflict created by white domination. Such a cultural negotiation occurs in the novel through black people educating themselves in Western cultural institutions. In the novel, the white university professor David Lurie expresses white domination through his sexual harassment against the black university student Melanie. But due to Melanie's university education which is considered as her negotiation of white culture, the two antagonists succeed in resolving this conflict and accept each other. An insight into the following narrative perspective helps better understand how Melanie's cultural negotiation helps resolve the sexual harassment to reach a mutual acceptance:

'It's late, David, we know why we are here,' says Hakim, 'so let's get to the point. How can we best tackle this business?'  
'You can fill me in about the complaint.'  
'Very well. We are taking a complaint laid by Ms Melanie Isaacs. Also about' – he glances at Elain Winter – 'some pre-existing irregularities that seem to involve Ms Isaacs' (Coetzee, 1999: 40).

This passage is the hearing of David Lurie held by the committee of inquiry known as the University-Wide Committee on discrimination. Such a hearing from David Lurie's attitude of harassing Melanie occurs as the result of justice. The issue becomes interesting in the context of cultural negotiation that resolves conflict in several dimensions.

From the onset, Melanie lays a complaint for sexual harassment because she is conscious of fighting against any domination. Her education in the

Cape Technical University formerly called Cape Town University College emancipates her about her right against white domination. When arguing that “the world’s cultures are bound together now through institutions, through histories, through writings”, Appiah (1992: 27) can be said to unveil school education as a cultural institution through which cultures are negotiable. From this stance, there is no crime in arguing that Melanie negotiates western culture via her university education. Her university education emancipates her. It grants her with western educational norms through which she makes her complaint when her right is violated.

Melanie does not abrogate her blackness to the sole benefit of western culture. Her complaint to rectify David Lurie’s hegemonic position is a blueprint that she is proud of her black origin and asks white people to respect this Africanity, with Africanity being “a state of being” (Asante, 2007: 118). In this condition, she can be said to keep her black identity and simply adds western cultural identity through her university education. Melanie’s education in such a standpoint of cultural negotiation is an Afrocentric manifesto. Asante (2007: 115) sustains:

Afrocentricity announces that there is no longer any warrant to discuss identity as a fixed idea, but as an infinite quest to regain, reclaim, or construct identity. Afrocentricity further advances this position by claiming that one often has to learn culture or negotiates this identity.

Melanie’s education is thus her infinite quest to construct herself as an African woman who is also endowed with western culture in order to reconcile to two worlds. Her cultural negotiation is in perfect line with Walker’s (2001: 67) standpoint who argues: “cultural change ... was essential to the Africans’ survival ... They could not remain completely embedded in Africanity. Mastery of the dominant culture was an important strategy for survival”. It is due the negotiation of Western culture that Melanie survives.

Melanie’s negotiation of western culture helps her break the white domination. She breaks through David Lurie’s sexual harassment. As she lays the complaint, the University-Wide Committee on discrimination

conducts an inquiry and resolves the conflict. Dr Flarodia Rassool, the chairman of the University-Wide Committee on discrimination is perceived holding David Lurie's sexual harassment as follows:

'It's always complicated, this harassment business, David, complicated as well as unfortunate, but we believe our procedures are good and fair, so we'll just take it step by step, play it by the book. My one suggestion is, acquaint yourself with the procedures and perhaps get legal advice' (Coetzee, 1999: 41).

The fact of conducting good and fair procedures helps the resolves the conflict of harassment that exists between the black university student Melanie and white university professor David Lurie. David Lurie pleads "guilty to the charges" (Coetzee, 1999: 48) while also Melanie overcomes her pain. After the inquiry, Melanie's father Mr. Isaacs tells David Lurie:

'Melanie is well, since you ask. She phones every week. She has resumed her studies, they gave her a special dispensation to do that, I'm sure you can understand, under the circumstances. She is going on with theatre work in her spare time, and doing well. So, Melanie is all right' (Coetzee, 1999: 166).

The resuming of her school education shows that there is a time where Melanie stops her university education. Such a stop symbolizes the mutual rejection of the black Lucie and the white David Lurie. On the opposite, Melanie's resuming of her university education and David Lurie's pleading guilty are tropes for mutual acceptance. Melanie's school education is thus her negotiation of western culture that helps her combat David Lurie's domination to reach mutual acceptance.

#### **4. Language as a Tool for Interracial Reconciliation in *Disgrace***

By holistic language, the study refers to English as "a common language" (Young, 2003: 63). In *Disgrace*, John Maxwell Coetzee represents both black community and white people speak English. The novelist portrays two major black communities in *Disgrace*: Mr. Isaacs's family and Petrus's community. In Mr. Isaacs's family, the majority of the members

are educated in Western cultural institution. The father Mr. Isaacs is a school teacher at “MIDDLE SCHOOL (J. M. Coetzee, 1999: 164). His daughter Melanie is a student in Cape Technical University where she lays her “complaint” (Coetzee, 1999: 40) about David Lurie’s sexual harassment. Desiree, Melanie’s sister is also a student as her attitude after the meal indicates: “They get through the meal. Desiree excuses herself, goes off to do her homework. Mrs Isaacs clears the table” (Coetzee, 1999: 171).

In this black family composed of four people, only the mother Mrs. Isaacs is not involved in western education. Despite that, she uses English to communicate as the following passage indicates: “‘Desiree,’ she commands, ‘come and help carry’” (Coetzee, 1999: 170). In this perspective, Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1987: 13) contends: “Language, any language, has a dual character: it is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture”. English is the medium of communication of Mrs. Isaacs though she does not go to school. English is adopted by Mr. Isaacs as a means of communication. In this sense, English is a language of integration. It is a medium through which Mr. Isaacs’ family integrates Western world.

As far as the black community of Petrus is concerned, none is represented by the novelist to be educated in western school. But strikingly, English is their medium of communication. Petrus’s communication with David Lurie occurs in the English Language. Petrus is perceived in the novel using the English language to defend his black community as follows:

You ‘see,’ says Petrus, frowning, ‘David, it is a hard thing you are saying, that this boy is a thief. He is very angry that you are calling him a thief. That is what he is telling everyone .... ‘the boy is not guilty. He is not a criminal. He is not a thief (Coetzee, 1999: 137–139).

Petrus’s mastering of the English language allows him communicate with David Lurie to defend his black community against any racial stereotype. When analyzing cultural fixity of the colonial discourse and its conflict, Bhabha (1994: 75) argues that “the stereotype is ... a false representation of a given reality. ... it is an arrested, fixated form of representation”.

David Lurie stereotypes Pollux. He describes Pollux as a criminal and thief with the intention of denigrating him.

But Petrus makes use of the English language to defend Pollux against the racial stereotype. In this respect, Ngugi (1993: 34) asserts: “Any group learning the language of another group is a positive thing”. Petrus’s mastering of the English language brings him to protect his community against any white domination. Petrus in this view reflects Malcolm X when Asante (2007: 154) describes him as follows:

There is a reason that African Americans felt that Malcolm X brought the persona of morality when he entered a room. The meaning of this is that he brought with him the full complements of blackness, he expected rhetoric against oppression, the optimism of victory over evil, courage to speak his mind, and the validity of struggle for a good cause.

Petrus’s courage in defending Pollux against any aggression is considered as his blackness. In Africa, it is not the individual that takes over the community. It is rather the role of the community to elevate the individual. Therefore, when defending Pollux, Petrus puts the community above his personal interest. He fights for the wellbeing of the community. Such a combat for the collective is opposed to western philosophy for which “every person is an end in himself and should not be required to give up anything for the sake of another individual.” (Asante, 2007: 141). This western philosophy is what Molefi Kete Asante calls aggressive individualism. “It aligns itself against community and the goodwill of society in order to elevate the individual” (Asante, 2007: 142) which is African philosophy of living in community.

Petrus does not abrogate his culture to the benefit of Western English language. He keeps his African cultural value and appropriate Western English language to enrich it. He uses the English language to convey his Africanity. Petrus’s non-respect of the standard of the English language in the following passage ““A woman must be marry”” (Coetzee, 1999: 202) shows that he does not appropriate English to become like the English but rather to use it to defend his traditional culture. Ashcroft et al. (2002: 38) are rich in giving details:



Appropriation is the process by which the language is taken and made to 'bear the burden' of one's own cultural experience, or, as Raja Rao puts it, to 'convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own'.

English language is no longer only for the English but it is also for the black community. Their non-respect of the standards of the English language shows that black people in South Africa have domesticated this imported language. It is added to their culture. Petrus's "knowledge is the product of several cultures" (Mbembe, 2001: 23). In these lines of reflection, English is thus a language that encompasses both white and black people.

### **Conclusion**

The stake in this work has been to analyse cultural reconciliation in John Maxwell Coetzee's *Disgrace*. Its main concern has been to argue that race, traditions, ideological apparatuses and languages are cultures through which white and black people reconcile themselves. To achieve that, the study has centered on mulatto as a third-space, melting pot and the birth of rainbow nation, cultural negotiation and mutual acceptance and English and holistic culture.

The mulatto is found being a third-space subject when both the white woman Lucy and the black man Petrus are bound due to this baby. Lucy refuses to abort the mulatto pregnancy and Petrus accepts marrying Lucy because of the mulatto. The mulatto becomes a third space where no race dominates or is dominated. The two races are equal in the mulatto. In the same individual are represented the two races in an equal footing. The two different races that the Apartheid society set in conflict are reconciled on behalf of the mulatto.

Melting has been interesting in the novel by the simple fact that despite the advent of the Apartheid, both white and black world coexist in the same country. Petrus and his black community represent black community and David Lurie and his daughter Lucy are the white minority ruling the country reversed by the black people. Despite the power reversal, both worlds still exist in the same country, hence the existence of the country as a mosaic nation.

The existence of white and black cultural worlds in South Africa leads black people to negotiate western culture through which they combat white domination. This has been exemplified through the university education of the black daughter Melanie of Mr Isaacs. The university education of Melanie has helped her be endowed with western apparatus to combat the sexual harassment of the white university professor David Lurie. The school education has equipped her with self-consciousness through which she claims and obtains equality and justice vis-à-vis the white David Lurie.

To be able to communicate with white people and show them that Africans also have culture, black people appropriate the English language. They use the English language and domesticate. With their mastering of the imported language, the black people defend their community and culture. This has brought English to be a language that encompasses both white and black races. It is not for only white people, it is also for black people since they have domesticated this language. Such domestication has been perceived through Petrus's use of the English language to defend his black community without respecting the standards of this language. *Disgrace*, it must be said, is John Maxwell Coetzee's clear-cut representation of the reconciliation of white and black people in South Africa. The novelist has succeeded to show that races, cultures, institutions and languages are cultural wealth through which white and black can be reconciled.

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