Name

Professor Name

February 14, 2018

Thesis statement: Post-apartheid African themes are apparent in Coetzee's Disgrace, portrayed in the explosive violence and racial segregation of blacks.

J.M Coetzee in the novel “Disgrace” captures the South African patterns of violence that exhibits the post-apartheid African themes. Radicalized and class-based discourses have provided deeper meaning to crimes like rape and murder. The violence is the result of misconstrued dreams and expectations. Hatred and violence exhibit the social categories of class, race, and gender. The crime like murder is complicated with race and class. The concept of radicalized contingency connects the fiction to post-apartheid African history.

Lurie and his daughter Lucy are the victims of blackness that connects them to the south African history. Post-apartheid South African themes are visible in Lurie's relationship with a white woman and the rape of Lucy (Mardorossian).

Lurie is provoked to take a role outside social boundaries by starting an affair with his white student, Melanie. He wants to have a life free of all the stereotypes, taboos and the labels. Post Apartheid themes are visible as the Lurie gets rusticated for his affair with a white girl. The jury didn't consider the will of Melanie and ignored that she made her own choice. He justifies his actions by claiming the right to desire. Lucy, daughter of Lurie, is raped brutally by two black men that build connections of African culture with violence. “What if what if that is the price one has to pay for staying on? Perhaps that is how they look at it; perhaps that is how I should look at it too” (Coetzee, 158). Lucy accepted her fate due to the power redistribution in post-apartheid Africa. The overall analysis portrays the African community as a product of violence and suffering. She is unable to escape rape due to her connections with the African race. The violence encountered by Lucy defines racial relationships in South Africa (Fai).

Fear of Lucy is used for recreating gendered issues faced by women in post-apartheid South Africa. The repressed states of the young girls reveal a lack of power. Lucy mentions, "I can't talk anymore, David, I just can't', she says, speaking softly, rapidly, as though afraid the words will dry up" (Coetzee, 155). The experience of Lucy how the community of blacks presented a link between rape and construction of race. This had relevance with American history when rape charges provided opportunities for the lynching of the blacks. The rape policies were existing for the protection of white females only. Lucy is also a victim of rape like other black women of the post-apartheid South Africa. There were no laws that could offer protection or dignity to African-American women. This reveals that black women faced high risks of rapes and violence, but the laws only guarded white women against African males (Mardorossian).

The elements of poverty, social status, and absence of political power confirm the relevance of Disgrace with South African history. Rape is not represented only as a social issue, but it also shows its operation in isolation of other power of axes. Lucy couldn't report sexual aggression because she was black. Coetzee describes the attackers of Lucy as a product of South Africa’s past. They portray the exact picture of young Africans who lack socio-economic opportunities. The brutal assault conveys the historical perspective on inequality and black segregation. Sympathy and sorrow of Lucy transmit individualized attention to the traumatic experience of the victim under rapist assumptions.

Work Cited

Coetzee, John. Disgrace. New York: Viking, 1999. Print. Stranger Shores: Literary Essays 1986–1999. New York: Viking, 2001. Print.

Fai, Dr. Gilbert Tarka. "Post-apartheid South Africa and Patterns of Violence in J.M. Coetzee’s Disgrace and Phaswane Mpe’s Welcome to Our Hillbrow." International Journal of Humanities and Social Science 4.8 (2014).

MARDIROSSIAN, CARINE M. "Rape and the Violence of Representation in J. M. Coetzee's Disgrace." RESEARCH IN AFRICAN LITERATURES 42.4 (2011).