



Body and Mind:

A Phenomenological and Corporeal Approach to J. M. Coetzee's
Characters in *Waiting for the Barbarians* and *In the Heart of
the Country*

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Introduction

Most of South African author J. M. Coetzee's postmodernist and postcolonial fictions feature unreliable narratives of the first-person narrators. This narrative mode reflects the South African colonial and postcolonial situation during and after the apartheid era, when issues of truth are constantly debated. For this essay, I have chosen to discuss Coetzee's two novels *In the Heart of the Country*, (1976, henceforth *Heart*) and *Waiting for the Barbarians*, (1980, henceforth *Waiting*). They were published before the official end of apartheid in South Africa, and are thus suitable when examining colonial systems of domination in both novels. In addition, the settings of both novels are unidentified, which can foreground oppression and victimization in different colonial situations. And finally, the novels are not widely discussed, in contrast to for example, *Disgrace* (1999), which won the Nobel Prize for literature.

Magda is the first-person narrator in *Heart*. She is a spinster and lives on a small isolated farm in South Africa with her Boer father and her African servants, who all ignore her. The novel is divided into 266 unchronological short vignettes, which makes it difficult to precisely determine an exact chain of events. Magda's thoughts are mainly occupied with her lack of identity. In addition, she is preoccupied by thoughts about punishing her father for having an affair with his servant's wife Anna, and about her own violent sexual relationship with the servant Hendrik. Her father's real or imagined death and a rape scenario are narrated several times and in different ways, which emphasize the unreliability of the narrative. The reader is left with the possibility that the events may not all be real. *Waiting* revolves around a magistrate of an unidentified colonized small town on a frontier, and he is also the narrator in the first-person. When Colonel Joll and his men, who represent the Empire, start to subdue rebellious barbarians in the area, the Magistrate sympathizes with the victims, and especially a barbarian girl. As a result, Joll considers him as a traitor and oppresses him for this reason. Coetzee uses the term "barbarian" in describing these rebellious people to show to the reader that they are uncivilized and inferior and to distinguish them from the men of the Empire, who represent the self. The Magistrate's perspectives of his situation and the other characters are limited, which affects his narration and makes it unreliable.

Themes of embodiment, madness and unreliability in Coetzee's novels are commonly approached from postcolonial perspectives, and colonial and postcolonial aspects will feature into my analyses. The central focus of the essay, however, is on the characters' bodies and minds and how they are influenced by their environments and by other characters in the colonial/postcolonial context. Therefore, I will take phenomenological and corporeal

approaches to both novels, building on findings by the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Elizabeth Grosz's development of these, in order to enhance my analysis and discussions of both novels. Grosz's *Volatile Bodies* (1994) and Daniel Punday's *Narrative Bodies* (2003) provide the main theoretical framework for the essay. Grosz uses a specific feminist approach in her work, which aims to illuminate gendered differences. Her ideas inform my analysis of Magda's and the barbarian girl's bodies and minds in relation to colonial and postcolonial aspects. Punday is more interested in narratology, in how characters' bodies are represented in novels and how they are affected by their environments. I have used specific aspects of Grosz's and Punday's works in discussing the bodies of the characters that are marked by torture in both novels, and how these marks influence their minds, in order to show how the connection between body and mind can be affected by the environment and by other characters. These connections are also influenced by vision and tactility, which will also be discussed in the essay. Hanna Arendt's theory of loneliness is used to demonstrate the characters' loss of connection between the body and mind and accordingly to the world. Finally, Foucault's theories of madness are discussed, and are related to my examination of various forms of oppression.

The first section of the essay examines the depiction of selected characters' bodies and minds in the two novels giving particular attention to how different forms of oppression are inscribed. Grosz claims that the body surface is marked by society, voluntarily or involuntarily, and that these marks have different meanings (142). In the context of the novels, the marks on bodies are effects of social standing and power in the depicted society. Since my aim is to consistently see bodies and minds in relation to each other, I will also discuss Merleau-Ponty's argument that the body should be tied to its surrounding environment. We can experience the world to a certain limit and in certain ways, because these experiences are grounded in our bodies and depend on our capabilities. The mind should train the body to exist in its social world and experience the meaningful world (MacLachlan 4). Finally, I will consider Punday's claim that literary spaces in novels symbolize societies. The environments the characters exist in are important to analyze since they connect to how the bodies and minds require agency (Punday 117). Literary spaces, such as nature versus town, and various domestic spaces, consequently influence the characters' bodies and minds and are tied to forms of oppression.

The second section of the essay will discuss vision and tactility in connection with the characters in the two novels and how these aspects influence their bodies and minds. Grosz claims that among the senses, sight in particular links the individual to the world (97). I will

discuss instances of impaired vision and metaphorical blindness in both novels, and demonstrate how the lack of literal and figurative sight prevents the linkage between body and mind, and makes an understanding of both self and others difficult. Grosz's work on tactility demonstrates how interaction through touching enables the body to become connected with the world (86). In *Waiting*, tactility will be discussed in relation to aspects of healing, or failing to heal. In connection with *Heart*, on the other hand, I will argue that Magda fails to be in contact with her world since her body and mind are not connected through her senses.

Mental and physical oppression can cause loneliness and madness; aspects that are discussed in the third section of the essay. According to Hanna Arendt, oppression can cause isolation and solitude. Arendt's idea of solitude means thinking alone without sharing thoughts with other people. Isolation on the other hand, occurs through the presence of tyrannies when segregating the person from her/his society (Shuster 476). In solitude then, the mind is separated from the social world, whereas in isolation the body is separated from the social world. Both solitude and isolation lead to loneliness, which affects the relationship between the self and the surrounding world. Magda's and the Magistrate's solitude and isolation will be discussed in this section and it will be argued how both characters end up in loneliness; they become unrecognized and rejected by their societies. Foucault argues that madness is a social failure and it opposes reason (xii). This argument will be used in analyzing the Magistrate's unreasonable behavior towards the barbarian girl and Magda's possibly imagined and unreliable narrative. I will also relate madness to passion, lack of knowledge, and instances in which imagined events are believed to be true.

This essay will demonstrate how different forms of oppression make the characters unable to connect their bodies to their minds. Therefore, they fail to make the necessary connections between themselves and their social world, and this often causes loneliness and madness. The essay will also show how vision and tactility can influence these connections. This form of analysis sheds new light on Coetzee's novels and on the colonial/postcolonial system of domination.

Research Context

Coetzee's work has received a lot of critical attention. When *Waiting* and *Heart* are discussed, the central aspects (body and mind) are often addressed. Concerning *Waiting*, Shadi Neimneh, Nazmi Al -Shalabi and Fatima Muhaidat, argue that the Magistrate and Joll are different readers of the barbarian girl's body. Joll's reading is violent, as he tortures her body in order to get the truth, while the Magistrate's is seductive in cleaning and oiling her body to assuage

his guilt and to understand the story of the torture (Neimneh et al. 2). Polly Detels, on the other hand, discusses the cleansing as a ritual of healing and not signifying sexual desire (n. pag.). She sees it as the Magistrate's attempt to decipher the secrets of the barbarian girl's damaged body and even himself. Detels also links cleansing to instances of torture and emphasizes its function as a "recovery of the soul" (n. pag.), as when the Magistrate asks an officer if he washes his hands after each torture before eating his food. These cleansings then, are like rituals to clean the soul. In the essay I will also discuss this and show that the scars on the barbarian girl's body illustrate inscribed texts. Joll and the Magistrate oppress the barbarian girl differently; Joll punishes her to make her remember her guilt through the scars and the pain of torture, whereas the Magistrate is trying to decipher the inscribed texts to learn about her torture, thinking that he can heal her body.

Brian May, who is explicitly interested in depictions of bodies, discusses both Magda's and the barbarian girl's bodies. In connection with the barbarian girl's body he argues that due to torture, she becomes "discrete precipitates of history that seem to lie outside history" (391). The girl has an unknown history, which is represented by the scars on her body. She is tortured by the Empire, abandoned by her people and exploited by the Magistrate. Her body does not heal since her history is unknown, and the Magistrate fails to see the girl's womanhood on her injured body, because it is fragmented (May 392). The other body discussed in this article is Magda's in *Heart*. Through her words, Magda creates herself and her body. She uses language to understand the true meanings of things by "adjoining clusters of words and images" (May 394). For example, she describes herself as a hole or vapor, which signifies that she sees her body as empty or meaningless. May also argues that she is a surrealist and her body is in "stasis," a lifeless and dehumanized thing (403). Laura Wright relates Magda's body to the land, "both of which are dry and hard" (19). Magda describes herself as a virgin spinster, as unproductive as the infertile land or the desert. In the essay, I will build on these ideas when analyzing how Magda describes her herself and argue that since Magda is ignored by her father, and since her mind is not linked to her body she feels that she does not exist in her social world.

Several critics have drawn attention to how the female characters in the two novels are either silenced by the narrative mode, or illustrate how meaning is contradictory. Coetzee's first-person narrator in *Heart* is a white Afrikaner female. She is a colonizer and at the same time she is a white female during the apartheid era in South Africa, when authority was in the white man's hand. This is mirrored in Magda's narration, Wright claims, and there is a "contradictory notion that all narratives are both true and false" (14). Magda fails to establish

her identity due to the contradiction of her gender and race. Wright claims that “her voice is not her own” (16). On the one hand, it belongs to the white male author, as the producer of the narrative. On the other, it belongs to the history of South Africa, when the white female desired to free herself from the patriarchal “rural South African landscape” (16). Moreover, Wright indicates that the barbarian girl in *Waiting* is “voiceless” (14), since the narrator is a white male. In the essay I will show that the Magistrate is silencing the barbarian girl through the cleansing rituals and that the scars of torture on her body also silence her. Even though Magda is the narrator in Coetzee’s novel, she is still seen by Wright as a silent dominated woman. She is silenced by her father, the male patriarch, because he is disappointed in not having a son (Wright 19). Mark Thwaite similarly argues that Magda’s narration is silent and shows her otherness. She does not interact with other people and her communications come in the form of a “mental position” that reveals her thoughts and feelings to the reader (n. pag.). This essay will discuss Magda’s narration and will relate it to solitude due to her lack of communication with other people. Thwaite also claims that the rape comes out of her imagination and might not be real. Here she is showing her otherness through her language: “it is an otherness brought into being by language” (Thwaite). In the essay, I will argue that the different scenarios of rape indicate that Magda is trying link her body to her mind to feel accepted by her society.

Jane Poyner argues that Magda and the Magistrate are unreasonable, and this proves their madness. Poyner describes Magda as an “oppressor, as a white colonial, and oppressed, as female” (33). This duality makes Magda struggle with her identity. Her unreasonable narrated events show that she is fighting against reason and this displays signs of madness. Magda’s madness is affected by her social condition, because she is oppressed and alienated due to her gender. Her writings indicate her madness, which renders her an unreliable narrator. Thwaite suggests in his article that Magda’s narrative is a sign of insanity or a “disordered state of mind” (n. pag.). He argues that “the novel loses any grip on the real”; however, there are some signs of normality in engaging social aspects such as gender, family and master-slave discourses (n. pag.). An example of Magda’s insanity can be seen in the last part of the novel, when her lack of Spanish does not hinder her from understanding Spanish voices. Madness is also evident in *Waiting*. The Empire in the novel dehumanizes the barbarians and turns them into enemies, which is, as Arif Dirlik calls it, the madness of civilization (Poyner 54). The Empire is mad by intentionally telling lies and mixing up reason with unreason to create an enemy. Another kind of madness is represented by “[t]he Magistrate’s desire for the barbarian girl [...] that it is based on a lack of reciprocity, self-

interest and an irrational neglect of truth” (60). By exploiting the girl’s body, he is satisfying his own desires and wishes to be recognized by her. Poyner relates the madness of the characters to Foucault’s theories of madness in relation to unreason (60). I will take these discussions further, demonstrating how Magda’s madness can productively be related to her fantasies, and what will be termed melancholia and delirium. I will also discuss how the Magistrate’s madness is the product of unreason, passion, lack of self-knowledge and immorality, and due to this he ends up being rejected by his society.

They were interested only in demonstrating to me what it meant to live in a body, as a body, a body which can entertain notions of justice only as long as it is whole and well.

(*Waiting* 126)

1. Bodies and Minds

This section of the essay will examine different effects of colonial domination and oppression illustrating how the characters' bodies and minds in the two novels are influenced by other characters and by their social environments. These influences make them oppressed, oppressors or both. Magda and the Magistrate are both oppressed and oppressors. This duality separates their minds from their bodies and affects their interaction with their worlds negatively. The barbarian girl's body is tortured, which leaves a negative effect on her mind and silences her. Like her, other victims of the Empire are oppressed, and their injured bodies show their otherness. Colonel Joll is the oppressor, and his body is voluntarily inscribed by him to show to people that he is the self. Magda's father's dying body loses its domination and power over Magda, but it still stands as an obstacle against her freedom.

- The Barbarian Girl

The barbarian girl, whose name is never revealed to the reader, features as a minor character in *Waiting*, but is central to its themes of oppression and to the Magistrate. The reader is not told anything about her background, all we know is that she is considered to be one of the barbarians. She is brought to the small town as a captive and is tortured by Joll and his men. When she is released, she is involuntarily taken care of by the Magistrate and forms a kind of relationship with him. Convinced of the wrongdoings of the Empire, the Magistrate eventually returns her to her people.

The Magistrate and Joll use the barbarian girl's body in different ways and for different reasons, and its scars carry particular connotations. Framing Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical ideas in a postcolonial context, Merete Falck Borch et al. claim that "the body is a suitable site for the inscription of guilt" (19). The guilt is marked on the body as an unwritten text. Nietzsche is specifically interested in theorizing pain and punishment, and according to him, pain is inscribed on the body in the form of scars, burns or other marks so that the victim will learn what needs to be remembered in society: "[t]he body becomes a tablet, a notepad for the texts" (Falck Borch et al. 19). The marked body can also make the colonized fear and obey the colonizer. Joll tortures the barbarian girl's body to get out the

truth: “[h]is work is to find out the truth. That is all he does” (*Waiting* 3). He punishes her to ensure obedience and order in his colony. Whatever the girl’s guilt may be in this context, the pain inflicted by the torture is marked on her body and will be remembered. The Magistrate is another kind of oppressor, who enjoys massaging the girl’s injured body, “I close my eyes and lose myself in the rhythm of the rubbing” (*Waiting* 32). He tries to decipher her scars to learn about the torture, thinking that if he does he would be able to heal her body through the cleansing rituals. However, “[i]t has been growing more and more clear to [him] that until the marks on this girl’s body are deciphered and understood [he] cannot let go of her” (*Waiting* 33). The Magistrate is attracted to the girl’s body and specifically to the marks inscribed on it, but he does not know the reason for this attraction. There is thus a selfish aspect to his desire to decipher the text the girl’s body constitutes, and rather than healing her for her own sake, this desire represents the Magistrate’s general need to understand his own context. The Magistrate realizes that he is not different from Joll: “The distance between myself and her torturers, I realize, is negligible” (*Waiting* 29). Although he has no intentions to harm the girl, the painful massages on the girl’s injured body become like a kind of torture. The different approaches to the barbarian girl’s body illustrate how both the Magistrate and Joll embody different forms of oppression.

Further, the Magistrate is trying to decipher the surface of the barbarian girl’s body to understand her mind and to connect her to her surrounding world. As noted, Falck Borch et al. discuss bodily inscriptions in connection with pain, whereas Grosz is interested in the social meanings written on the body. The body is a site where mind and culture are mingled; it is also considered as “the symptom and mode of expression and communication of a hidden interior or depth” (116). The body then is a social object that exists in its social world and is marked by social and cultural powers. Therefore, the texts on the body should be understood by others in order to connect the body with the mind, and the individual to the social world. The Magistrate believes that the girl is only a surface and that he cannot reveal her deep secrets: “with this woman it is as if there is no interior, only a surface across which I hunt back and forth seeking entry” (*Waiting* 46). The barbarian girl’s scars are embodiments of secret texts, and by failing to understand them, the Magistrate is not able to understand her mind and cannot connect her to her surrounding environment. The Magistrate cannot remember the girl from when he first sees her imprisoned with the other captives; she was forgettable before he knew her. This changes, however, as the Magistrate takes an interest in the girl and tries, in vain, to decipher her. Even when she reveals her nakedness to him, “[her] body [...] [is] closed, ponderous, [...] [and] seems beyond comprehension. [The Magistrate]

cannot imagine what ever drew [him] to that alien body [...] ‘She is incomplete’” (*Waiting* 45). Rather than understanding her as a woman, her nakedness works to emphasize wildness and animality, as he tells her: “I keep two wild animals in my rooms, a fox and a girl” (37). He cannot connect her body to her mind since he cannot read the inscribed texts her body holds. As a result, the barbarian girl remains forgettable, and when she returns to her people the Magistrate is unable to remember her face.

Coetzee depicts the barbarian girl’s body in a certain way; her body illustrates the unexplored land that attracts the colonizer to explore it and conquer it, which can be related to Elleke Boehmer’s readings of postcolonial fiction. Boehmer claims that wildness, otherness and punishment are marked on the oppressed female body in postcolonial works, and the binary trope in the discourse shows that the colonizer is the “white man, West, center of intellection, of control” (269). The colonizer is fascinated by and interested in the strange and primitive colonized, and specifically in his or her body. It is similar to the colonized mysterious and unexplored land, which is “amorphous, wild, seductive, dark, open to possession” (270). The scars of the barbarian girl’s tortured body are mysterious and they attract the Magistrate since they come from the torture, but they also confuse him: “it is the marks on her which drew me to her but which, to my disappointment, I find, do not go deep enough? Too much or too little” (*Waiting* 70). The Magistrate is not sexually attracted to the girl since the body is injured, but the scars make the body seductive in a different way. Fear and curiosity are different reactions towards the girl’s scared body. The Magistrate is the colonizer and the barbarian girl’s injured body represents the unexplored land that attracts the colonizer to explore it and conquer it. However, the Magistrate is not able to explore her body since the scars represent mysterious texts. The scars are like the darkness and wildness of the unexplored land, which attract the colonizer, but at the same time they are confusing and fearful.

The scars on the barbarian girl’s body silence her, and her silence becomes an obstacle against her healing and gaining her wholeness. Boehmer draws attention to the post-colonial theme of silenced bodies in fiction and argues that healing can be achieved through speaking of the pain: “the conversion of imposed dumbness into self-expression, the self-representation by the colonial ‘body’ of its scars” (272). The colonial body is loaded with pain and it is healed by language; the language that explains the wounds and tells their history. Boehmer argues that in fiction gender and race determine which colonized bodies are to speak. The black female body is prevented from representing itself, as it remains under domination due to its gender, even during the postcolonial period; it takes time to heal its wounds (272). When

the Magistrate asks the girl: “‘What did they do [to you]?’ [s]he shrugs and is silent” (31). The Magistrate is trying to heal the barbarian girl’s body through cleansing rituals; however, these rituals only continue to dominate her, since she never expresses a desire for them and they add pain to her wounds. The narrative itself silences the girl, since all the reader gets access to is the Magistrate’s perspective, and the fact that her name is never revealed silences and subordinates her even further. By being prevented from breaking her silence in revealing the story of her torture, the barbarian girl cannot gain her wholeness and her identity.

The barbarian girl’s body is also influenced by the different settings of the novel: nature heals her body, whereas town or modernity acts as an obstacle against its healing. Punday claims that literary spaces are the physical locations in novels that emphasize the characters’ bodies. He argues that “literary space is modeled on the body” (118), and that it affects how the body is represented in a novel. In *Waiting*, the Magistrate forces the barbarian girl to live in his place: “I give orders; she is brought to my rooms” (*Waiting* 27). Her new life is arranged by him and relatively comfortable, but she is not happy. Mai, a girl who works at the inn, tells the Magistrate at the end: “Sometimes she would cry and cry and cry. You made her very unhappy” (166). In this literary space, the girl is forced to live a new dominated life and “[s]he is as much a prisoner now as ever before” (60). However, the barbarian girl is changed during her trip home, because she is in direct contact with nature and this gives her a sense of freedom. The Magistrate takes three men with him on the journey. They all undergo great hardship confronting the ruthless weather and landscape, but the barbarian girl “does not complain. She eats well, she does not get sick, she sleeps soundly all night [...] She rides all day without a murmur” (*Waiting* 65). She is used to live in direct contact with nature and this makes her feel more comfortable than living in the Magistrate’s accommodations. However, her body is still affected by the existence of the Magistrate and his men. The men avoid her, “they barely address her, avoid looking at her, and certainly do not ask for her help with the food” (66). By avoiding her, they pay no attention to her existence, which influences her reaction in return and makes her feel uncomfortable and restrained. The two different spaces in the novel work differently on her body. On the one hand, modernity or the small town works against her body since it is a colonial space. This space leaves a negative effect on her body that makes it difficult for her scars to heal. On the other hand, nature, where her body belongs, becomes a healing space, which frees her body and makes it heal. She feels comfortable in the space of nature, in the context of nature. Whereas in the social context; the existence of the men in the nature context, she is still restrained since they are related to modernity or the colonial space.

- The Magistrate

In *Waiting*, the Magistrate is initially in a place of power. As the only official representative of the Empire in the small isolated frontier town; he symbolizes the colonizer. The arrival of other Empire representatives to this town brings about a change in how the Magistrate perceives himself and his position. He becomes aware of their injustice in how they try to subdue and torture the natives of the land. In rejecting the Empire's actions against the natives, he loses his power. His controversial identity as colonizer/colonized confuses his position, and he ends up lost in his society.

The Magistrate goes through a social transformation during the course of the novel: he loses his power as a colonizer and instead, his body is marked with pain, which influences his mind and makes him reject the Empire's actions. Grosz's discussions about Nietzsche's ideas in *The Genealogy of Morals*, describes how body inscriptions can be used to set up social order in a society. Nietzsche relates the inscribed body to active and reactive forces, which are personified through the figures of the aristocratic noble and the base slave respectively (Grosz 129). He adds that these two forces are not mainly based on the social class, but "there are aristocratic and base impulses within all individuals" (129). The Magistrate represents the active power personified in the aristocratic noble when he is working for the Empire. However, in supporting the victims of the Empire, he becomes an oppressed and a tortured victim. He loses his power of domination and becomes the reactive force represented by the base slave. The base slave is disappointed in her/himself and is always bound to the past and is never open to the present or to the future (130). The Magistrate is rejected by his society after losing his power in the Empire, but is still tied to his past, never contemplating to leave the town: "[f]rom dawn to dusk I am on view on the square, roaming around the stalls or sitting in the shade of the trees [...] people cease to fall silent or turn their backs when I come near" (*Waiting* 139). He rejects aspects of his past since it reminds him of being an oppressor in serving the Empire, but he cannot imagine starting another life. The active men of the Empire try to subdue the forces of the reactive Magistrate by torturing and inscribing his body with wounds, so that the pain will make him remember his guilt. However, the wounds marked on his body influence his mind and make him behave negatively towards the Empire by making him reject their actions in supporting its victims. Since the pain of torture is meant to remind the Magistrate of his guilt, he in return realizes that serving the Empire makes him an oppressor. He chooses instead to be oppressed instead as a sign of rejecting the Empire's actions against innocent people.

Before being scarred by the men of the Empire, the Magistrate realizes that time is an oppressor marking his body with wrinkles. Although no violence is involved, these marks are nevertheless forced on the body. For example, the Magistrate's, "flabby old man's breast [and] the turkey-skin of [his] throat" (*Waiting* 33), indicate that his body is involuntarily marked with no violence by time or by history. The Magistrate's aged body influences his mind since his mind does not accept the wrinkles on his body. It is important to understand the relationship between the interior and the exterior, the mind and the body. Merleau-Ponty argues that the body is not just an object since it is related to the mind and it is part of society: "as I live the body, it is a phenomenon experienced by me and thus provides the very horizon and perspectival point which places me in the world and makes relations between me, other objects, and other subjects possible" (Grosz 86). It is important for the mind to be connected to the body and treats it as a social object and relates it to other objects and to the surrounding environment. When the Magistrate realizes that his body is marked by time, he starts to reject it. This oppression, in addition to the Empire's oppression, separates his mind from his body, and his body becomes an object rejected by him.

- Victims of the Empire and Colonel Joll

Colonel Joll and his men represent oppression by the Empire in *Waiting*. Joll tells the Magistrate that he and his men came to gather information regarding the local people, who live outside the city and whom he calls barbarians. He does not seek the Magistrate's help in his investigations; and the Magistrate in return decides not to intrude, thinking that Joll and his men will leave town when their work is done. The term barbarian is used by the Empire to signify the native people who live around the town, but not in the town. The Empire spreads rumors telling the townspeople that the barbarians are planning an attack. The men of the Empire capture different groups of fishermen outside the town, claiming that they are related to the barbarians, and torture them to make them confess a crime that was never committed.

The men of the Empire reveal the skin of their captives and inscribe their bodies with different inscriptions to show their otherness, in order to establish a superficial difference between themselves and the barbarians. By presenting the captives naked in *Waiting*, Coetzee is showing negative otherness. In addition to their nakedness, they are physically tortured and marked: "[t]he Colonel steps forward. Stooping over each prisoner in turn he rubs a handful of dust into his naked back and writes a word with a stick of charcoal. [...] ENEMY [...] Then the beating begins" (*Waiting* 115). Revealing the skin color and the torture are meant to show to the townspeople that the Empire is the self and the civilized, whereas the captives are

the other. In addition, Joll and his men force their captives into constraints; “[a] simple loop of wire runs through the flesh of each man’s hands and through holes pierced in his cheeks” (*Waiting* 113). The wires mark their faces with guilt and savagery. Grosz argues that “violence is demonstrable in social institutions of correction [...] keeping the body confined, constrained, supervised, and regimented” (141). When the body is marked by violence, it shows that the person is guilty and the marks are meant to correct unwanted behavior. The marks will also remind the person to comply with the social order in society. The constraints that mark the captives are meant to show the captives’ savagery to prove them guilty and to convince the townspeople that the captives are related to the barbarians. This will increase the gap between the Empire and the barbarians since these inscriptions place the barbarians as the other of the Empire.

Colonel Joll’s body, on the other hand, is self-inscribed with legible texts to signal that it is civilized. Grosz notes that the body can be “incised through ‘voluntary’ procedures, lifestyles, habits, and behaviors” (142). Furthermore, clothing, hairstyle, makeup and other artificial corporeal inscriptions enable the person to decide how s/he wants to be contextualized or be read by others (142). Joll voluntarily marks his body “with his tapering fingernails, his mauve handkerchiefs, his slender feet in soft shoes” (*Waiting* 5). Joll also wears dark glasses and claims that “[t]hey protect one’s eyes against the glare of the sun [...] You would find them useful out here in the desert. They save one from squinting all the time. One has fewer headaches [...] [and] [n]o wrinkles” (1). Unlike the Magistrate, whose body is involuntarily inscribed by time, Joll has no wrinkles and he can protect his body against them. All these marks are chosen by him, and through them he tries to prove to people that he is a civilized man. The civilized body is the contrast to the savage body and its inscriptions are “legible, meaning-laden interiorities, subjectivities capable of experiencing themselves in and as a determine form, with particular qualities and capacities” (Grosz 140). Joll’s body is not inscribed with pain and savagery, rather his voluntary inscriptions are meant to send messages to indicate his selfness, and to show that he owns and controls his civilized body.

As previously discussed, the Magistrate comes to represent the base slave, Joll by contrast represents the active force personified through the aristocratic noble, who tries to establish social order and obedience in the colony that is achieved by spreading fear and torturing the innocents. Nietzsche argues that the noble impulses are characterized by freedom and independence. The aristocratic noble also values the pleasure of life and the body. The personality type “has no other binding ties, no connections or commitments to the weak, the underprivileged, or children. It affirms its own capacities as well as whatever contingencies

may affect it” (Grosz 129). Joll wants to believe that his mission in subduing the barbarians is successful: “[h]e has an air of sternly controlled triumph” (*Waiting* 25). In addition, the aristocratic noble is a free person, who does not look back to the past, but only to the future since the future is open and unlimited. By not looking back to the past, this person chooses to forget and has no memory (Grosz 130). Joll and his men do not want to admit and choose to forget that the barbarians are the native tribes on the land, “[t]here are old folk alive among [the barbarians] who remember their parents telling them about this oasis” (*Waiting* 55), and instead they consider them as strangers and rebellious. Joll also wants to believe that all his captives are guilty, and never admits his failure: “I can say that we have had some success. Particularly when you consider that similar investigations are being carried out elsewhere along the frontier in a co-ordinated fashion” (*Waiting* 25). Joll and his men do not know who the barbarians are, whether the barbarians are really rebellions or innocents. They do not want to admit it, because they think that people will consider them as ignorant and failures, which will make them lose their power and control. They bring innocent people and “beat them till their backs are washed clean” (115) without learning about their past or background, claiming that they are related to the barbarians, to show to people that they are succeeding in their investigations.

- Magda

Magda describes herself as a white spinster female and tells the reader in several instances that she does not exist in her social world. Her mind is occupied with narratives of punishing her body since her feelings of rejection affect her psychologically and make her feel useless. In addition, her father’s affair with a servant adds more grief in her life and makes her want to revenge. As a result, her narration is a mixture of real and fantasized events. In her narration, she tells the reader that she hates her body and her female identity for being oppressed. Therefore, she is also an oppressor, who oppresses herself. However, she tries to unify herself with her social world by the possibility of imagining a scenario of rape in order to believe in having contact with people.

Through Magda’s narrative in *Heart*, the reader is introduced to different literary spaces, and these spaces affect Magda’s body and mind in different ways, depending on the existence of the power of her dominant father. Punday relates twentieth-century texts to Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar’s discussions in *The Madwoman in the Attic* about the reflection of the female’s domestic fiction that they call body/house trope, which is a way “of imagining female identity [that] depends on traditional patriarchy” (Punday 119). Gilbert and

Gubar explain the traditional thinking of women's social space in nineteenth-century women's writing and how it gives a sort of duplicity effect. It indicates that "women are imagined either as the otherworldly 'angel in the house' that conventional writing describes or the 'monster'" (119). The house is a protective place for women and it shows the woman as an angel, but if the woman is oppressed in her house, a monstrous female identity is created and revealed. Punday argues that the perception is that "women are more pure than men" (119) and they require shelter and protection from men's actions. If this protection is lost, they try to revolt against their oppressors to gain their safety and freedom, which requires revealing a monstrous identity. Magda initially spends most of her time either in her room or in the kitchen, because these two rooms keep her away from the patriarchal force: "I am the one who stays in her room reading or writing or fighting migraines" she states, and even though her room isolates her from the rest of the house, she feels safe there (*Heart* 1). Nevertheless, the room also brings pain, which shows the influence of literary space on the character's body. Other literary spaces similarly have different effects on her body. When Magda is in the kitchen, her body is safe and her mind is comfortably thinking and planning since the kitchen is the proper place for women for being away from the patriarchal powers. However, there is a hidden monstrous identity that is oppressed by the patriarchal force in the house. Outside the house Magda's monstrous identity is revealed, fighting the patriarchal force of her father. For example, when she decides to kill her father, she finds the gun by the front door and commits her murder from the outside, through the open window (*Heart* 66).

Even when her father dies, in one of the narrative strands, Magda still does not feel completely free from the patriarchal power. Initially, she takes charge and starts to clean everything in her house by herself: "[m]y house has been set in order down to the last pin, and I have done it myself" (104). Her body, to an extent, is liberated from oppression and the house becomes safer since the patriarchal power disappears; she can take control over it and it becomes *her* house. However, Magda does not feel completely free due to the existence Hendrik. "I am his equal though I am the weaker" (89), Magda writes, indicating that even though there is a difference in social standing (she being the mistress of the house and he being the servant), her gendered body is weaker than his and thus is still controlled. The only place where her body feels safe is when she curls up in the porcupine hole, in which she decides to bury her father: "I search my heart and can find no reason to leave. I could make this my second home" (97). There is no room for anyone else in the porcupine hole; it thus frees her from any power of domination and she becomes safe there.

The monstrous identity grows greater within Magda the further she moves away from the kitchen and from the house itself. Magda describes herself as a monster in ways that underline the difference between indoors and outdoors:

I am in truth a sphere quivering with violent energies, ready to burst upon whatever fractures me. And while there is one impulse in me that tells me to roll out and erupt harmlessly in the great outdoors, I fear that there is another impulse [...] telling me to hide in a corner like a black widow spider and engulf whoever passes in my venom [...] I hiss, and spit, if spiders can spit. (*Heart* 43)

Her monstrous identity is thus revealed to the reader, but she tries to hide it by posing as a human. Her mind is monstrous, but her body should not reveal it, which indicates a split between mind and body. She is aware that revealing her monstrous identity is not acceptable by her society, which indicates that she is taking into consideration the rules of her social world.

Gender and the female body are of further significance since they are connected to a sense of guilt, which makes Magda reject her female body and treat it as an empty object. Magda is the only child and her mother died in childbirth: “[h]er husband never forgave her for failing to bear him a son” (2). Magda feels guilty for her mother’s death, believing that her mother would be still alive if she gave birth to a son instead of her, which makes her hate her female identity and her female body. She also believes that her father neglects her since he wished to have a son instead. She feels that she is contained in a body of the wrong gender: “I was born [...] in the wrong body” (56), and as a consequence, there is a disconnection between her mind and body. Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of embodiment helps to understand the relationship between mind and body, “between consciousness and nature and between interiority and exteriority” (Grosz 86). The body is connected to the mind, and this connection makes the mind reject the idea of the body being an object, and instead it treats it as a social object or a subject. The mind trains the body to experience the world and becomes part of it: “[t]he body is my being-to-the-world and as such is the instrument by which all information and knowledge is received and meaning is generated” (Grosz 87). The mind treats the body as a social being, which opposes how Magda sees her body. In her narration, Magda describes herself as a meaningless object: “I am simply a ghost or a vapour floating at the intersection of a certain latitude and a certain longitude” (*Heart* 19). Her body does not exist in her social world, because her mind rejects her female body; her female identity creates a split between her mind and body.

Magda wishes to have contact with people and to be part of her social world. On the one hand, she rejects her female identity. On the other hand, she realizes that to be part of a social context requires that she is no longer an empty object, and that finding a female identity is important. One uncomfortable strategy she adopts comes in the form of a rape scenario. Hendrik raping her is described in different versions that leave the reader confused as to whether the rape is imagined or real, or, in the latter case, which version is real. In the first rendition of the rape she is rejecting and resisting it whereas at the end she surrenders and seems to gain hope for a new identity: “Am I now a woman? Has this made me into a woman?” (*Heart* 117). The rape made her accept her female identity since it becomes a way to have contact with people. Before the rape she used to feel ignored by her people, “absent” and “not missed” and that “[her] father pays no attention to [her] absence” (*Heart* 2). She also says that she is “incomplete [and] a being with a hole inside [her]” (10). This makes her reject her body. However, after the rape she starts to accept her female body. According to Merleau-Ponty, the body has to be treated as a subject and experience the world to be linked to the mind: “[i]t is the body as I live it, as I experience it, and as it shapes my experience” (Grosz 86). When the mind accepts the body, it becomes connected to it and the body becomes part of the social world. Magda wants to have social contacts with other people to experience her social world and to be connected to it. As a result, her mind is creating these fantasies, or turning an instance of actual abuse into a series of possible scenarios, as a way to link her body to her mind and to feel accepted by her social world.

- Magda's Father

Magda's father is a powerful and a callous man, who lives on an isolated land with his daughter and his servants. He does not have a narrative perspective in the novel, and the reader thus knows very little about his reactions and emotions. Magda tells the reader that her father has an affair with Hendrik's wife, Anna, and that she, the daughter, is neglected by him. Magda is disappointed by her father's behavior and decides to kill him. In her unreliable narration, Magda seemingly murders her father twice, but she tells the reader at the end that her father is alive. She states that his power of domination has influence on her even after his death.

Alive, Magda's father both physically and psychologically represents an obstacle to Magda's pursuit of freedom, but even when he is dying, what she perceives as his consciousness continues to limit her freedom. Punday discusses how a conscious body in fiction leaves an influence on other characters and its environment and this is what

distinguishes between bodies and other objects. The body represents the human, “because it acts on and responds to the environment”, it is “the seat of consciousness” (Punday 59). The body is part of the setting and it influences other characters in a novel. When Magda claims that she shoots her father with the gun, she describes how he does not die immediately. His body becomes weak, struggling for life, but it is still a conscious body. This weak body leaves an impression on Magda’s mind and gives her a certain sense of freedom: “I go through the house closing doors: two living-room doors, two dining-room doors, bedroom door, bedroom door, sewing-room door, study room, bathroom door, bedroom door, kitchen door, pantry door, door of my room. Some of the doors are already closed” (*Heart* 70-1). Even though her father is dying and is losing his power of control over her, which is symbolized by how Magda is able to enter most of the rooms, there is still life in his body since his mind is conscious and he can still communicate with her: “‘Help me,’ he whispers, ‘get the doctor quickly.’ Tears roll down his cheeks” (74). The life that still exists in his body means that the body still stands as an obstacle against Magda’s freedom, which is symbolized by the closed doors that hinder Magda from entering some rooms. However, when he dies, his body gradually becomes an object that can be manipulated. For example, Magda describes how she and Hendrik clean and renovate the house and unlock every door in the house after her father dies. The body has become an object or a non-body that has little effect on Magda and Hendrik. Magda moves freely in the house entering any room she chooses without anyone to stop her.

Nevertheless, the dead body of Magda’s father still has power until it breaks its connection with the world. In the context of postcolonial literature, this can be read as an illustration of how the colonized goes through different stages until s/he is completely freed from the colonizer’s domination. There is a long process leading to the burial of the body. For example, when Magda and Hendrik put the body in the bathtub to wash it, it is uncooperative, “[t]he arms hang over the sides of the bath, the mouth gapes, eyes stare” (*Heart* 90). When they “bind the jaw and sew the eyes to” (90), they are trying to end its domination. Punday argues that the dead body in fiction can still influence the characters: “a dead body continues to be a *body* endowed with cultural and familial significance” (59). The dead body of Magda’s father resists being buried in the porcupine hole until she goes into the hole and pulls it inside; then finally “[t]he body slides in easily” (101). The dead body is following its dominated victim to continue practicing its powers of control, terminated only when it is inside the hole, because it is separated completely from the social world and it becomes an object, losing all its effect. As noted, however, Magda’s narrative is unreliable since the death

of her father is narrated twice in the novel, and at the end the father appears alive. She then describes him as a weak man with no power: “[h]e sees and hears nothing, for all I know he tastes and smells nothing [...]. Of me he knows nothing” (147-8). In this narrative strand, despite being alive, her father’s body still loses its connection to his mind and to the world. Magda’s narrative aims to convince herself that she gains her power by controlling her father’s body. Through her different narrative events of her father, she is trying to terminate his power of domination to gain her freedom.

2. Vision and Tactility

Vision and tactility emerge as important sensory impressions that have strong effects on the characters’ bodies and minds in both novels. This section will discuss how the sense of touch links the body with the mind and with the world in both novels. It also discusses how metaphorical blindness feeds into themes of neglect and power in *Heart*: what implications vision and lack of vision have for Colonel Joll and the barbarian girl, and how the Magistrate is afflicted by both literal and figurative lack of sight.

The Magistrate tries to understand the barbarian girl to connect her to her surrounding world through the sense of touch. Grosz suggests that the relation between subject and object, the toucher and the touched can place the body in direct contact with the world instead of seeing the body as isolated and separated. The toucher represents the mind since the nerves feel the touched, while the touched represents the body. Through tactility the mind gets in direct contact with objects and with the surrounding world and also put the touched in contact with the surrounding world (Grosz 95). The Magistrate washes and oils the barbarian girl’s feet and legs with his hands every day: “I can caress the foot with both hands [and] I lose myself in the rhythm of what I am doing” (*Waiting* 30). He even closes his eyes to focus only on his sense of touch to connect his mind to her body in order to understand her. The scars on the barbarian girl’s body and the pain of torture isolate her from her surrounding world and make her mind treat her body as an object since it is separated from her mind. Through tactility, her body and his mind are connected, which helps the Magistrate to understand the girl and to heal her body in order to be able to put it in direct contact with her social world. Also by healing her body, her mind will be connected to her body and the body will be treated as a subject.

There is no interaction between Magda and her outside world since she cannot see it or touch it; for this reason she cannot understand her outside world and be part of it, rather she stays imprisoned inside her body and her house. Merleau-Ponty argues that the senses help us

to develop our knowledge and our experience of the world, and he focuses mainly on sight since “the other senses are momentary and occasioned by events, vision is ongoing and need not be focused on or caused by any object” (Grosz 97). However, he claims that tactility plays an important role in connecting the body to the mind. In order to understand the world, the body and the mind form an interaction with the world through the senses. What he terms “double sensation” (100) facilitates this interaction. For example, when the right hand touches the left hand, the left hand is also touching the right hand. The left hand then “has the double sensation of being both the object and the subject of the touch” (100). The toucher as consciousness is the subject that feels objects through the tactility, whereas the touched is the object that is touched and felt by the toucher, the subject. Inside the house, Magda cannot touch the landscape since a sheet of glass stands between them: “[i]f [she] press[es] harder the glass will break [and her] blood will drip” (*Heart* 10). Therefore, Magda cannot be part of the landscape since the glass stands as an obstacle. Through the double sensation of tactility Merleau-Ponty claims that the same applies to the sense of sight: “every person who sees is capable of being seen by other subjects” (Grosz 101). His idea of double sensation is “ontological and not interpersonal” (101), which means that objects can also be treated as subjects in being able to see. An example illustrated by him is that the painter sees the trees, and the trees in some sense can see the painter. It is necessary for Magda and the landscape to see each other in order to create a double sensation. During the night, Magda cannot see the landscape. The landscape is also metaphorically blind: “I stare out through a sheet of glass into a darkness that is complete [...] that does not regard me, that is blind, that does not signify but merely is” (10). There is a lack of interaction between Magda and the landscape since the double sensation does not exist, which makes it difficult for her to be connected to her world. The landscape represents the outside world, whereas Magda is inside the house: “I live inside a skin inside a house. There is no act I know of that will liberate me into the world” (10). She describes herself as a prisoner inside her body and inside the house. The landscape is the outside world, which will free her from her imprisonment, but since the glass stands as an obstacle between them, she cannot be connected to her outside world.

Metaphorical blindness, represented by the landscape above, can also be seen in how Magda’s father and Hendrik neglect Magda; they do not perceive her or consider her as a subject. Merleau-Ponty claims that “[p]erception is a realization of the visible” (Crossley 411). There is a meaningful perception in the gaze, which is not achieved in Magda’s case: “[t]o my father I have been an absence all my life” (*Heart* 2). The seer realizes the seen and considers her/him as a subject and not an object. The seen leaves an impression on the seer

and makes the seer think about the seen. Magda feels invisible since no one is aware of her presence or pays her any attention. She describes herself as “a blind spot hurtling with both eyes open” (47). Magda perceives her father and Hendrik and sees them as subjects, whereas she is ignored by them and does not exist in their world; she is treated as an object. Magda repeatedly narrates that she is absent to her father since he wishes to have had a son instead and does not recognize her as a female: “[m]y father creates absence. Wherever he goes he leaves absence behind him [...] He has murdered all the motherly in me and left me this brittle” (40-1). He does not perceive of her as a female, and this makes her hate her female identity and oppress her body. Since it is only Magda who perceives her father, there is no double sensation between them and his gaze creates an absence.

The mutual understanding between the Magistrate and the men of the Empire is lost, which creates a metaphorical blindness, and this confuses the Magistrate’s view towards the Empire and his position, and makes the men of the Empire see him as a traitor. Referring to Merleau-Ponty’s studies, Nick Crossley argues that when a person sees others, s/he sees meaningful behaviors, and these behaviors affect the person and her/his reactions towards others and create an access to them. Further, when the other’s look is not understood, “when this mutual recognition is not realised; when we feel that we are individuated and objectified in the gaze of the other,” there is an inhuman gaze (Crossley 415). The Magistrate works for the Empire, but he does not understand or approve of its actions against the barbarians. His disapproval is a metaphorical blindness since he does not understand why the Empire considers the barbarians as their enemy. He tells one of the officers who works for the Empire: “we have no enemies [...] [u]nless we are the enemy” (85). He realizes that the barbarians are innocents and that they become the victims of the Empire, which is contrary to what the Empire believes. The men of the Empire are also metaphorically blinded since they do not understand why the Magistrate is protecting the barbarians and “the false friendship between [the Magistrate and the Empire comes] to an end” (84). The Empire suspects the Magistrate and sees him as a traitor: “[y]ou have been treasonously consorting with the enemy” (85). He is then humiliated and tortured and becomes the enemy of the Empire. Joll and his men give the Magistrate an inhuman look since there is no mutual understanding, which creates a metaphorical blindness.

The theme of vision is continued by Joll’s dark glasses and the barbarian girl’s damaged sight; they are both reflective and they mirror the Magistrate. It is difficult for him to understand them since they “tend to focus the Magistrate’s deciphering activities back on himself” (Detels n.pag.). The barbarian girl is almost blind and the Magistrate is a blur to her,

and this parallels how the Magistrate is metaphorically blind in not being able to understand her: “[w]hat this woman beside me is doing in my life I cannot comprehend [...] as if I had spent nights copulating with a dummy of straw and leather” (*Waiting* 50). Since her sight is damaged, the barbarian girl’s mind cannot get clear information from her surroundings. The Magistrate is also unable to see Joll’s eyes since they are hidden behind dark glasses: “his partly theatrical mystery of dark shields hiding healthy eyes” (*Waiting* 4). By not being able to look into Joll’s eyes, the Magistrate feels that he cannot understand how Joll thinks and why he is torturing the innocents. This creates a gap between him and Joll. The Magistrate’s metaphorical blindness is illustrated by not being able to understand the barbarian girl and Joll, and this in turn makes him fail to understand himself.

Since the barbarian girl’s sight is partly damaged from torture, she cannot completely link her mind and her body to her surrounding world when she is under the Magistrate’s protection. Merleau-Ponty’s notion of perception is “midway between mind and body and requires the functioning of both” (Grosz 94). The body and mind are involved in creating an understanding and a perception of the surrounding environment, and this happens through the interaction between them; an interaction between the physiological and psychological. Sight is the linking space between the seer and the seen. It improves the knowledge of the mind since through sight the mind gives meaning to the objects seen by the eye. Sight then links the body and the mind to the world since the knowledge of the mind gives meaning to the surrounding world. The barbarian girl describes her sight to the Magistrate: “[w]hen I look straight there is nothing, [...] [t]here is a blur. But I can see out of the sides of my eyes” (*Waiting* 31). Her sense of sight does not function properly, which means that there is no complete perception to her world. Her mind is not receiving clear information about her surroundings. The interaction between her body and her mind is not complete, which makes it difficult to perceive her world and makes her partly separated from her world.

Colonel Joll represents the governing power; his dark and reflective glasses align him with the function of the guard tower in Foucault’s analysis of the Panopticon. Jeremy Bentham’s Panoptical prison was designed to produce “disciplinary surveillance” through a circular structure of cells around a dark tower (Crossley 402). The cells are illuminated and the center, where the wardens sit, is darkened. Resulting from this, only the wardens are able to see the prisoners, whereas the prisoners observe themselves, knowing that they are watched. Joll’s sunglasses fill the same function as the dark tower, “[they] are dark, they look opaque from the outside, but he can see through them” (*Waiting* 1). They enable him to observe those around him, while limiting them from seeing the direction of his gaze. His

prisoners in effect discipline themselves, because they are never sure of whether they are being watched or not. Visibility and invisibility are central to Foucault's discussions about "penal power" as "the visible' or the order of visibility is what is seen, and the invisible is the processes and the practices involved in the making visible of the visible which are not themselves visible" (Crossley 401). The power is invisible, while the ones who are subjected to it must remain visible in order to keep them under surveillance. Joll wears dark and reflective glasses not only outdoors and in the desert but indoors as well: "his eyes are shaded as ever" (*Waiting* 115). Although he is visible like the tower of the prison, the power he exerts remains invisible, hidden behind the dark glasses. People cannot see his gaze, which means that they cannot understand him.

However, Joll's power is lost at the end of the novel, and his gaze does not leave an effect on people. His loss of power is illustrated by revealing his eyes: "[t]he dark lenses are gone" (160). Crossley's concern with the gaze is that it is not objectifying; the prisoners are "aware of the presence of another subject, not of an object" (405). He also claims that this distinguishes between the self and other. The wardens' gaze is subjective since they are powerful and they represent the self. Joll's gaze through his dark glasses gives him more power. The prisoners' gaze, however, is not effective, which proves their otherness. With the loss of power Joll's gaze is no longer effective and "[h]e is no stronger than a child" (*Waiting* 161). No longer protected by dark glasses, his gaze becomes similar to the prisoners'. His dark glasses represent the power he owned as a colonizer, and with the loss of power his gaze leaves no effect on people.

3. Loneliness and Madness

Loneliness and madness are related in both novels and are caused by the separation of the mind from the body and from the social world. Hanna Arendt's notion of loneliness can be related to how the Magistrate and Magda end up living in loneliness; they are rejected by their societies and are separated completely from their worlds. Arendt states that loneliness is the result of solitude and isolation, and they all "originate from a common source: the relationship between the self and the world" (Shuster 476). Madness in Coetzee's two novels can be related to Foucault's argument in relating madness to unreason. This person is passionate and lacks knowledge, like the Magistrate, or is delirious and melancholic, like Magda. Since Magda's and the Magistrate's behaviors are related to madness, they end up in loneliness and are rejected by their societies.

Magda's narration shows that she lives in solitude since she does not share her thoughts with other people. Referring to Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Martin Shuster writes that "a certain sort of solitude is a prerequisite to thought" (476). In solitude, according to Arendt, the person does not share her/his thoughts with others; it is the state of thinking alone, of being alone with the self away from people. These thoughts are dialogues between the person and the self, or two-in-one as she calls it (476). Solitude produces a different ego since the person uses her/his own ways of thinking without relying on society, and "the results of thinking are fundamentally unstable" (479). Shuster adds that this thinking dialogue also involves surrounding people, who do not actually participate in the dialogue, but are imagined by the thinker, and it is only the person in solitude who leads the dialogue. In other words, in the thinking process the thinker is not "having a conscious experience" rather s/he is "thinking about that experience" (Shuster 477). Since Magda's narration is unreliable, it is possible that she is making up all the events in the novel. Her reflections can represent the dialogues she carries on with herself without involving real people. Magda writes: "[a]lone in my room with my duties behind me and the lamp steadily burning I creak into rhythms that are my own, stumble over the rocks of words that I have never heard on another tongue. I create myself in the words that create me" (8). She spends her time in her room putting her thoughts in writing. Her room is where she can find her privacy and safety, but at the same time it isolates her from people and puts her mind in solitude. She claims that she creates her identity through her words without the help of other people. Since Coetzee is never clear on what actually happens between Magda and the other characters in the novel, some of the dialogues and exchanges could be imagined that they are only coming from Magda's mind, which indicates that she lives in solitude.

Since Magda does not always succeed in communicating and exchanging her thoughts with people, she cannot create her identity and ends up in loneliness. Arendt argues that producing thoughts is not enough to create an identity; it is only a step towards identity creation. Communicating with real people is the next step to confirm the identity and this step is like crossing the bridge between the self and the world (Shuster 478). Getting in touch with the outside world through exchanging thoughts and communicating with people unifies the person and the self, the two-in-one. The person is a member of her/his society that includes also other people, and their presence enables an exchange of ideas to create an identity and create the person as a whole. (479). It is a way to connect the mind with the outside world. Although Magda communicates sometimes with the people around her, she claims that she does not have true conversations with them: "I have never learned to talk with another person

[...] I have never known words of true exchange” (*Heart* 110). Magda describes herself as an empty container, as “a vacant inner space.” She adds: “I move through the world not as a knifeblade cutting the wind, or as a tower with eyes, like my father, but as a hole, a hole with a body draped around it [...] I am a hole crying to be a whole” (44). She feels that her body is an empty object with no interior since her identity does not exist. She can only establish a connection with the world if she can really communicate with people, but this cannot be achieved since she stays alone in solitude. Magda feels that she is ignored by everyone and she describes her body as an ‘absent’ and ‘vapour.’ According to Arendt, solitude and isolation cause loneliness. Loneliness is not a kind of solitude or isolation, rather it results from them. It is “a state of affairs where others are somehow missing” (Shuster 481). In loneliness the person does not exist in her/his social world and is not recognized by others. Magda does not exist to the people around her and ends up in loneliness.

Contradictions in Magda’s narrative, along with some situations that are illogical, lead to an interpretation of these as existing only in her mind, as imagined events, which are products of melancholia and delirium, and these are signs of madness. Magda is a sufferer and her madness is the result of her melancholia: “I toss about in the dark whipping myself into distraction. Too much misery, too much solitude makes of one an animal” (58). Foucault claims that melancholia is caused by grief, and it puts the person in denial and affects the mind, “which permits the sufferer [...] to speak in an unknown language [...] the same which brings to the sleeper’s mind those dreams which [...] announce events to come, and cause him to see ‘strange things’” (Foucault 101-2). According to Foucault, there is no problem if these images occur in dreams. However, if the images are seen during the waking state, then it is called delirium, and it is related to madness since these images are not related to reason. These deliriums deceive the mind since the person believes that they are real. In delirium, only the mind is involved in experiences since the body is not literally participating, which means that the mind is separated from the body. Magda believes that she sees flying machines and communicates with them. Voices speak to her in Spanish: “I know no Spanish whatsoever. However, it is characteristic of the Spanish that is spoken to me out of the flying machines that I find it immediately comprehensible” (*Heart* 137). Her melancholy, a result of loneliness and oppression, makes her imagine things and believe them.

As noted, it is hard to tell true from false events in Magda’s narrative since there are many narrative strands that contradict each other. For example, she kills her father and buries him, but then at the end of the novel she tells the reader that he is still alive: “[s]ometimes when the weather is fine [...] I carry my father out of his room and seat him on the stoep”

(147). Either her father's death is false or his existence at the end is false. It is also possible that both events are created by her, and her father does not exist at all, but she believes in what she is narrating. Magda's narrative consequently becomes associated with unreason. However, Magda indicates that her mental state is functioning normally: "How can I be deluded when I think so clearly?" (137). A reasonable person would know that fantasies are not true, whereas the madman/woman would believe in dream images and s/he becomes part of them. Magda's loneliness makes her create her own world and beliefs, and these beliefs became real to her since her mind believes in the events she narrates. Further, by creating her own imagined world without the interaction of real people, she is separated from her social world.

Since the Magistrate is isolated by the Empire and by the people of his town, and his narration shows that he is in solitude, he also ends up in loneliness. Being the first-person narrator indicates that he is deserted in his thoughts. In other words, he is lost in the split of the two-in-one and is deserted by the self and by other people, which produce his solitude. The Magistrate also becomes isolated by the Empire and by his people; his social world is progressively rejecting his existence. Isolation, according to Arendt, has the same origin as solitude; they both involve the relation between the self and the world. However, isolation differs from solitude in that the former does not include thinking rather it includes existence. Isolation happens "either as a repressive state of political affairs or as a necessary element of socio-economic existence" (Shuster 476). This happens in a situation of oppression, when an individual's power is questioned and her/his actions are frustrated. Isolation eventually means eliminating the existence of a person in the social world: "once this loss of self and other occurs, then the world, too, is lost" (Shuster 483). Even though the Magistrate is the official person who runs the frontier town, Joll and his men do not seek his help in interrogating the prisoners or listen to his suggestions and advice: "[w]hen [Joll] has heard enough he dismisses my objections: 'I have a commission to fulfill, Magistrate. Only I can judge when my work is completed'" (*Waiting* 12). Further, the Magistrate distances himself from the Empire by refusing to oppress the victims, and he starts taking care of them including the barbarian girl. As a result, the Empire treats him as a traitor since he is required to serve the Empire and not standing against its actions; and accordingly, he is isolated from his social world. Rejected by the Empire and by the people in his town, he becomes unrecognized by everyone. He describes himself as an "old clown who lost his last vestige of authority [...] a starved beast at the back door" (136). Through isolation and solitude, the Magistrate loses contact with his social world and ends up also living in loneliness.

Foucault's discussions about lack of self-knowledge, unreason, immorality and passion help illuminate the ways in which the Magistrate can be read as embodying particular kinds of madness. To begin with, his situation as both oppressor and oppressed induces "a kind of double consciousness that can only lead to madness" (Poyner 54). His double consciousness confuses him and produces a lack of self-knowledge. Poyner relates the Magistrate's condition to Foucault's discussions about madness which he claims "is premised on boundaries, on what marks off reason that is always already bounded by systems of power from an unreason that resists" (Poyner 54). The madman, according to Foucault, is not a mentally impaired person, but a person who performs unreasonable behaviors due to the lack of self-knowledge. There is a contradiction in the Magistrate's behaviors, as he does not know why he is attracted to the barbarian girl and why he is washing and oiling her body every night since there is nothing sexual in the proceedings: "[t]here is no link I can define between her womanhood and my desire. I cannot even say for sure that I desire her" (*Waiting* 46). The Magistrate's unreasonable behavior and attraction towards the barbarian girl well exemplifies his double consciousness. This double consciousness makes him perform unreasonable behaviors since he does not know where he stands. Foucault also claims that the unreasonable individual is rejected by society since her/his behaviors show immorality. The mad person learns a new fake knowledge, which makes her/him accept "error as truth, lies as reality, violence and ugliness as beauty and justice" (Foucault 26). The madman follows a new path of false learning, and this new path can be rejected by society. Poyner claims that "[t]he Magistrate's desire for the barbarian girl also should be read as mad" (60). The Magistrate is learning a new fake knowledge when he is using and hurting the barbarian girl's injured body through massages, thinking that he is healing it. He is hurting her body to satisfy his own desires; it is a desire to dominate the girl and control her through the massages: "[s]he is as much a prisoner now as ever before" (*Waiting* 60). Also, forcing the girl to stay in his place is another kind of domination. He forces her to live a new life planned by him, thinking that he is protecting her.

In addition to his confusion and lack of knowledge, the Magistrate has no control over his passions, which affects his mind and his body: "more often in the very act of caressing her I am overcome with sleep as if poleaxed, fall into oblivion sprawled upon her body, and wake an hour or two later dizzy, confused, thirsty" (*Waiting* 33). Foucault writes about François Boissier de Sauvages, who claims that the uncontrolled passion or excessive and blind surrendering to desires distracts the mind. This can cause melancholy, which leads to madness in the end (Foucault 85). Foucault adds that passion affects the unity of body and mind, as the

communication between them will be limited: “[m]adness ends by being a movement of the nerves and muscles so violent that nothing in the course of images, ideas, or wills seems to correspond to it” (91). The uncontrolled movements of the nerves and muscles are unreasonable; they do not have any meaning since they are not controlled by the mind rather they are set off by passion. Passion can fragment the mind and then isolate the person from her/himself and from reality. The Magistrate is passionate through his attraction to the barbarian girl: “[m]y eyes close. It becomes an intense pleasure to keep them closed, to savour the blissful giddiness. I stretch out on the carpet. In an instant I am asleep” (*Waiting* 30). The Magistrate’s body is affected by his passions. The massages and the cleansing rituals are performed by his muscles and are uncontrolled by his mind. This passion exhausts his body and his mind. His uncontrolled passion makes his mind lose control over his body since the communication between his mind and his body is lost.

Conclusion

In this essay I have approached Coetzee's novels *Waiting* and *Heart* from perspectives that allow for a special attention towards the characters' bodies and minds; how bodies and minds are linked, how this linkage is prevented and how it is influenced by the characters' societies or by other characters. In the post-colonial context, and in the segregated South African culture that the novels depict, there are various forms of oppression that have impact on both bodies and minds. In Grosz's studies, the body is voluntarily and involuntarily inscribed by society and in Coetzee's novels, the oppressors represent voluntariness and the oppressed involuntariness.

A central idea in this essay comes from Merleau-Ponty, who claims that the body must be connected to the mind and the mind must treat the body as a meaningful subject since the mind controls the body and trains it to be part of society through different experiences. The analyzed characters struggle to make the connection but are often prevented from achieving a positive result. They are also affected by literary spaces, which Punday describes as importantly influencing bodies and minds. In *Waiting*, the Magistrate fails to link the barbarian girl's body to her mind since her body is inscribed with the scars of torture. However, she starts to heal when she is returned to her people. The Magistrate's inscribed body prevents him from connecting his body to his mind; and as a result, he cannot be connected to his social world. Magda in *Heart* cannot connect her body to her mind since her mind is rejecting her body and is treating it as an empty object. In addition, her father's domination and Hendrik's oppression hinder her from gaining her freedom since they both represent oppression. However, her narration of rape indicates that she is trying to make her mind accept her female body to be connected with her world.

Merleau-Ponty's studies on senses interlink body and mind. He argues that sight is the dominant sense since it is ongoing and it does not need to be affected directly by other objects, whereas other senses are momentary and occasioned by other events. The barbarian girl's almost completely damaged sight and Joll's dark glasses both influence the Magistrate and limit his perspectives and levels of insight. This kind of metaphorical blindness shows a loss of mutual understanding between the Magistrate and the men of the Empire that leaves the Magistrate confused in understanding himself and his position in his society. Metaphorical blindness is also seen in *Heart* through the themes of neglect and power. Magda's father's and Hendrik's metaphorical blindness is manifested in them ignoring Magda and treating her as an object. This blindness affects the link between Magda's body and mind. Tactility is another

sense that links body to mind and helps the mind to connect the body to the world and both novels illustrate the importance of this sense, often by drawing attention to failed attempts to connect.

Finally, madness and loneliness are results of oppression, when there is a failure in connecting the body to the mind. Madness, according to Foucault, is unreason. The madman/woman is passionate and lacks knowledge. Loneliness is the result of solitude and isolation. Solitude separates the mind from the world, whereas isolation separates the body from society. Magda and the Magistrate end up in loneliness since they are oppressed and rejected by their societies. However, although Magda ends up living alone on her farm, she succeeds to free herself from the dominant powers that were controlling her life. The Magistrate also learns to stand against the oppression of the Empire and support its victims. He realizes that serving the Empire will make him an oppressor; his resignation then becomes a sign of rejecting the system of oppression.

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