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Re-writing the History of Empire in J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master's Degree

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Declaration

I, Islam Larbaoui, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “Re-writing the History of Empire in J. M. Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians*” is my own work and all the sources I have quoted have been acknowledged by means of references.

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Dedication

To my dear mother and in memory of my father.

Abstract

This dissertation seeks to shed light on the political nature of the Empire in expanding its influence over the desert, where barbarian tribes and nomads live, by using a contrived truth in order to redeem the idea of the empire in J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980). Additionally, this research scrutinises the role of torture and violence in constructing the truth of the "Unnamed Empire" in the novel. By the same token, it investigates the impact of torture on a man of conscience. The study also attempts to explore the consequence of oppression that leads to fear of the barbarians and the dehumanisation of society. As the final objective, it inspects the representation of soft power and hard power and how the two main characters, correspond to these types of power respectively. Eventually, it is concluded that these two men are two sides of the same coin, and both are "agents of the empire" whose oppressor consciousness allows them to reconstruct the truth of the empire through both violent power and ideology. To accomplish the research objectives, the dissertation relies on five major theoretical insights: Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism,* Foucault's theory on Power/Knowledge, Louis Althusser's 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,' Paulo Freire's seminal text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and Tzvetan Todorov's *Fear of Barbarians: Beyond the Clash of Civilizations*.

Keywords: Truth, Power, History, Violence, Torture, Culture, Imperialism, Empire, Fear of Barbarians.

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General Introduction

> I was the lie that Empire tells itself when times are easy, he the truth that Empire tells when harsh winds blow. Two sides of imperial rule, no more, no less
>
> — J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

The death of Queen Elizabeth II triggered criticism of the British Empire's violent barbarities. Academics, among others, used social media and other means of communications to voice their opinion about the British monarchy and Britain's legacy of colonialism. Many people saw the Queen's death as an unpleasant reminder of the British Empire's violent exploitation of countries throughout history – resulting in decades of suffering, death, and economic and social devastation – whilst millions around the world mourned the death of Queen Elizabeth II. Mukoma Wa Ngugi, Cornell University professor, tweeted on the 8th of September 2022: "If the queen had apologized for slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism and urged the crown to offer reparations for the millions of lives taken in her/their names, then perhaps I would do the human thing and feel bad. As a Kenyan, I feel nothing. This theater is absurd." In addition, on Democracy Now news broadcast, University of Cambridge postcolonial studies professor Priyamvada Gopal said that the British monarchy "has come to represent deep and profound and grave inequality" (qtd. in Rios). For former British colonies, the British monarchy serves as a bitter reminder of the past history.

During the Nineteenth century, in the wake of British imperial power, the English language emerged as an academic discipline. The expansion of Empire and English studies flow from a single ideological climate, and the latter's development is naturally linked with the development of the other. For example, both are propaganda tools at the level of usefulness and at the unconscious level, where, on the one hand, it constructs values (e.g. civilization, humanity, etc.), and on the other hand, it founded 'savagery', 'native',

'primitive', as their antitheses and as the object of a reforming zeal (Ashcroft et al. 3). With widespread of English language, due to colonialism, there has been a significant increase in literature writing by writers who are foreign to the language. This "new literature" is called post-colonial literature.

The basics of post-colonial studies were found upon (two major books) the work of Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) and Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978). The latter exposes Eurocentric universalism which presumes the superiority of what is European or Western and the inferiority of what is not. Said recognises a European culture of 'Orientalism', which is a way of classifying the East as 'Other' and inferior to the West (Barry 186). *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) is another major contribution by Said, which expands the arguments present in *Orientalism*, to the field of post-colonial studies. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said examines the history of imperialism and its manifestations within Western culture. Moreover, he gives another reading of the European writings of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park*, Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, and Giuseppe Verdi's opera *Aida*, on colonised countries, and "presents it as constitutive of the ideological discourse of European domination and representation of these lands and people during the modern Western imperialist periods" (Oliver 111).

Many renowned writers of different nationalities and ethnicities took to the criticism of the devastating legacy of Imperialism on different Nations that were once great and wealthy before the plunder of the Empire. One of the most remarkable works that offer an interesting account of Empire is J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians.* The novel presents the ideological discourse of Europeans through the 'Unnamed' Empire and the barbarians demonstrate how Europeans view the "Other."

In 2003, The South African novelist John M. Coetzee was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature. The Nobel Prize committee describes him as one "who in innumerable guises portrays the surprising involvement of the outsider" ("Nobel Prize in Literature 2003"). His first book, *Dusklands*, was published in South Africa in 1974. His second book, *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), was published in Britain and the USA and won the CNA Prize. *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) received international notice. His reputation was confirmed by *Life & Times of Michael K* (1983), which won Britain's Booker Prize. It was followed by *Foe* (1986), *Age of Iron* (1990), *The Master of Petersburg* (1994), and *Disgrace* (1999), which again won the Booker Prize. Coetzee also wrote fictionalised memoirs and lectures, and essays, such as *Boyhood* (1997), *Youth* (2002), *The Lives of Animals* (1999), *White Writing* (1988), etc. *Waiting for the Barbarians*, the third novel, first published in 1980, won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize for fiction. The novel was chosen by Penguin for its series of Great Books of the 20th Century.

Waiting for the Barbarians tells the story of an imaginary Empire, without a name, set in an unspecified place and time. The Empire is marvellous. At the Empire's frontiers live barbarian tribes, nomads who visit the border towns only for trade or medicine. The Magistrate, an officer of the Empire, is the unnamed narrator. Coetzee's main character surveys his realm with a good nature and fills out the book in an unbroken present tense. This Magistrate performs two functions: first, as an observer of the event, and second, as a commentator. At the outset, the protagonist is visited by Colonel Joll, a heartless bureaucrat sent by the secret service of the Empire, "the Third Bureau." Claiming that the barbarians are preparing to mutiny, Colonel Joll arrives looking to interrogate the barbarians. Whilst interrogating, Colonel uses cruel tactics that horrify the Magistrate. The Third Bureau sends armed forces into the land beyond the frontiers of the Empire to pursue and terminate the

barbarian enemy. Thus, they open the gates of horror, in the tradition of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

Waiting for the Barbarians is a distinguished piece of fiction. Coetzee creates an imaginary Empire that could fit any Empire throughout human history. All empires have one common characteristic which is expanding power and dominion by direct territorial acquisition or by gaining political and economic control of other less powerful areas. However, more often than not, they reach their expansion not only through torture, violence, and hard power but also through soft power, cultural and diplomatic power. Coetzee's novel captures how the Empire uses propaganda and military tactics to expand its power and dominion over Barbarians. Not only that, but the Empire often retorts to deception and manipulation of truth in order to establish the Empire's power. Therefore, this study is going to analyse how the Empire alters the truth using both hard and soft power to justify imperialism and its existence in J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

This dissertation will attempt to answer the following main question: How does the 'Unnamed' Empire use propaganda, the truth, about the Barbarians to expand its power and dominion over the boundless desert? This question will be answered by introducing sub-questions: How do torture and violence help to construct the truth of the Empire? How does oppression lead to fear of the barbarians and the dehumanisation of society? How are soft power and hard power represented in the novel and embodied in the characters of the story?

This study seeks to shed light on the political nature of the Empire in expanding its influence over the desert, where barbarian tribes and nomads live, by using a contrived truth about the barbarian. In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives are introduced. Firstly, this research scrutinises the role of torture and violence in constructing the truth. By the same token, it investigates "the impact of the torture chamber on the life of a man of

conscience" (Coetzee 363). Secondly, the study attempts to explore the consequence of oppression that leads to fear of the barbarians and the dehumanisation of society. As the final objective, it inspects the representation of soft power and hard power and how the two main characters, the magistrate and Colonel Joll, correspond to these types of power respectively.

The choice of this novel as the corpus of this very study is inspired by the criticism of the British Empire that was raised after the Queen's death. What makes this novel significant is that Coetzee does not give the Empire a name or place which makes an allegory for many empires. Thus, this work will help us provide a greater understanding of how the Empire increases its influence over tribes in the desert by using lies. Moreover, it ameliorates our understanding of the use of torture and violence by the Empire in achieving its goal of domination over the barbarians and the desert. Furthermore, the novel takes on a journey into the psyche of a man in the torture chamber. Thereupon, undertaking this research will promote awareness about the nature of the Empire. To this end, Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* is a great example to illustrate our issues.

The South African novelist and Nobel Laureate J. M. Coetzee is widely studied around the world and attracts considerable critical attention. With the publication of *Disgrace*, Coetzee began to enjoy popular as well as critical acclaim. He is a difficult writer who engages with complex ideas, thus, sending readers and scholars on a journey to explain and understand his complex ideas.

Ibtissam Djebbar's MA dissertation (2017) studies the representation of Otherness in the South African writer J.M. Coetzee's fiction, *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) and *Disgrace* (1999), using a Hegelian reading. First, she outlines the concept of Otherness. Then, she discusses Hegel's theory and attempts to relate his concept of the Master/Slave with the Self/Other relationship found in Othering. To transmit a complete picture, she also discusses

the history, culture, and political context of South Africa. Her findings are that writer J.M. Coetzee discusses Otherness and the complications of the master/ slave relationship on many different levels by including sex, gender and race. This dissertation is different from hers in terms of investigating how lies are established as truth to justify imperialism and the existence of the empire.

Patrick Lenta's article entitled "*Waiting for the Barbarians* after September 11" (2006) discusses the post-September 11 context in relation to J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*. The United States responded to the attacks with its "War on Terror". Hence, the US administration authorized the capture and torture of those that it deems its enemies. Lenta argues that these acts of torture are similar to the use of torture by colonial and imperial powers. Moreover, he claims that J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* (1980) offers allegorical terms for comprehending the connection between torture, law and power in the post-September 11 context.

In "The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse: Waiting for the Barbarians in the Gaze of the Other", Andrijana Aničić sees J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* as fundamentally disrupting the binary logic that supports colonial discourse. Aničić writes, "The binary constructs an image of the civilized, rational and good, and the primitive, irrational and evil on the opposite sides of a fixed border" (383). She identifies the ambivalence and inversion of colonial identity – which are seen as a reflex of the fear of the indigenous other – as the most important themes. The article focuses on the motifs of vision and surveillance in the novel and Lacan's psychoanalytic notions of the gaze and the scopic drive. It discovers ambivalence within the characters and the inversion of their constructed colonial identities (383).

Many critics and researchers have been reading *Waiting for the Barbarians* as an allegory. However, a 2010 article titled "Waiting for the Barbarians: The Journey from Duty to Moral Choice" written by Emanuela Tegla reads the novel on the basis that it does not contain specific temporal and special references. The article focuses on Coetzee's treatment of otherness and moral responsibility from a different perspective. It analyses the textual elements which indicate the moral journey of the narrator, the Magistrate, from the passive fulfilment of his duty to the development of a moral awareness of injustice and the insidious ways one participates in it.

In a *Washington Post* newspaper, Webster Schott describes the novel in a review titled 'The Farthest Outpost of Civilization WAITING FOR THE BARBARIANS' as beyond the ordinary and that he "cannot imagine anyone reading it and remaining unmoved by its anguish and sense of futility." He compares the mood of Albert Camus as he inspected the condition of an existential man in *The Stranger* to the mood of the story (Schott). Also, he argues that "memories of Kafka and Faulkner dart through Coetzee's surreal fable of racial brutality and injustice." It is no surprise then that Coetzee was influenced by Kafka. The novel overflows with moral investigation and religious analogy. He argues that Coetzee suggests that ethical weakness dwindles the flesh and the spirit. For a religious analogy, he claims that the Magistrate bathing the girl is an act of penance and purification (Schott). "[The] Magistrate is [a] modern man in search of conscience," Schott explains. The Magistrate is "a modern man morally wounded and left helpless by the political society he has created" (Schott). At the end of the review, Schott writes, "The intelligence Coetzee brings us in *Waiting for the Barbarians* comes straight from Scripture and Dostoevsky: We possess the devil. We are all barbarians. The terror and emptiness belong to the 20th century. Coetzee, who teaches and writes in South Africa, has found us alive but sick in the soul." The story reflects the human condition and the clash of morals.

This being said, the primary research insights this dissertation relies upon are Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism,* and Foucault's Theory on Power, Knowledge, and Truth. The given methods will be used to form an understanding of the use of power and motive of the 'Unnamed' Empire in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*. Also, the study will use other theories to help in forming a better understanding of the Empire and how it subjugates and dominates its subjects.

This Dissertation is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the discussion of the Empire and Imperialism in general. In addition, this chapter sheds light on the relation between culture and imperialism that is put forward by Edward Said. Additionally, it explains the concept of Power and Knowledge by Michel Foucault. Moreover, the fifth part defines the concept of torture and explains Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) as a way to understand the oppressor's consciousness in an exploitative imperial context. The sixth part sheds light on the state control using Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" essay. The last part explains the notion of the fear of barbarians by Tzvetan Todorov.

The second chapter is related to the analysis of the novel using five major theoretical insights. It begins with an overview of the author and the novel. The fourth part analyses the novel in terms of history and imperialism that redeemed the idea of the Empire using Edward Said's and Paulo Freire's theories. It also explores the fear of the other in the novel. Then, the fifth section deals with the representation of torture by Coetzee and the use of violence by the 'Unnamed' Empire in order to rewrite its own truth according to its ideology. The final part investigates the versions of truth and re-writing the truth of the 'Unnamed' Empire.

Chapter One: Navigating the Nexus: Empire, Power, and Control

> The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it, not a sentimental pretence but an idea: and an unselfish belief in the idea--something you can set up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to...
>
> — Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

1. Introduction

Throughout human history, empires played a significant role. Many empires rose to power and flourished and lasted for centuries on end only to face an inevitable demise. Nevertheless, the history of empires has often been one of conquest, expansion, and exploitation. They come into being with a ruling figure or class exercising control over a community or larger population. Accordingly, this chapter shall provide a general outline of the emergence of empires and offer a glimpse into the unequal relationship between the empire and the periphery. The first section provides an explanation of how the empire comes into being. Then, the second deals with imperial and cultural relations and how imperialism is embedded in a culture based on Edward Said's insights on Imperialism. The third section explores the relationship between power, knowledge, and truth using Foucault's theory in order to further highlight how truth and knowledge are important in establishing power. The fourth and fifth sections deal with Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed and Louis Althusser's Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses mirroring state apparatuses on imperial oppressive power in order to explore how empires can use state apparatuses to oppress the people within the empire. The chapter ends by defining the terms "barbarism" and "barbarian" and how the fear of others would lead to being one of them using Tzvetan Todorov's "The Fear of Barbarians" theory.

2. Empire and Control

According to Webster's Online Dictionary, an empire is "a major political unit having a territory of great extent or a number of territories or peoples under a single sovereign authority" (def. 1a1.). At its core, an empire is a political unit controlling or dominating a far-reaching territory. The term "empire" is first used in the 14th century; however, its meaning is as old as state-building. Early in recorded history, city-states attempted to grow by taking over their neighbours. An empire is born when they succeeded in dominating other states. However, the aggressor often becomes a core state that controls several independent marginal states (Davidson). As an illustration, Sparta was a core state that had control over a league of states. Peter Davidson writes in his article titled "Empire" on the World History Encyclopaedia website that "[a]n empire is an unequal relationship between a core state and a periphery of one or more states controlled from the core." To emphasize his words, the "unequal relationship" means formal or informal domination: formal domination such as military occupation, or political intervention; informal domination such as economic or cultural influence.

Many scholars have undergone studies about ancient and modern empires. They try to define and compare empires which can be categorized into two main schools. Dominic Lieven, argues in his book titled *Empire: The Russian Empire and Its Rivals*, "The first takes its basis in the modern European maritime empires. It therefore defines empire as the relationship between metropolitan core and colonial periphery … In the other camp stand those whose interests lie mainly in the great military and absolutist land empires" (24-25). When it comes to studying empires throughout history, there are two approaches to the subject of empire. The first approach is to study an empire from its relationship with colonial peripheries, economic exploitation, cultural hegemony, and political domination, like the

British and French empires. The second one studies an empire based on military power and absolutism, for example, the Roman Empire.

Why do empires exist? Dennis RM Campbell, an associate professor of History at San Francisco State University, answers the question in his article "What is an Empire." He argues, "There is no single reason [why] empires existed" (5). The books of history tell stories about empires and how they come into being. Every empire has its own reasons and push forces to exist. For example, in the 16th century, the British Empire colonises overseas lands for lack of precious materials, like metals, sugar and tobacco, similarly, the Mesopotamia Empire lacks vital resources, such as hardwood, stone, and metal ore; however, the Roman Empire is born from the fear of others and collapses by the other, 'barbarians.'

Operating an empire is difficult, thus, it necessitates a centre to control peripheral states. The inequality between those who live in the peripheral and those who live in the centre is created by the empire. Markedly, most peripheral people are oppressed, therefore, it often leads them to rebel against the oppressor. Consequently, keeping the peripheral people under control is expensive, thus, the expansion and control over the periphery need to be worth the high cost (Campbell 4). One of the reasons for the fall of the Ottoman Empire is the incapability to control the peripheral states, the Ottoman Empire contains various peoples who grew more and more defiant (Kiger). Controlling an empire is like an English language teacher entering a Multilanguage classroom with beginner-level students and trying to control and communicate with them.

As stated before, the relationship between the core state and the periphery is defined by inequality. In his book, *Empires*, Michael W. Doyle states, "The domain of empire is a people subject to unequal rule" (36). Empires usually use the legal system to strengthen this inequality. In the "Declaration of Independence," Thomas Jefferson describes the relationship

between colonies and Great Britain as “a long train of abuses and usurpations.” The colonised people do not possess the same rights and protections as the coloniser or those of the centre. For example, when Angles-Saxons invade the Britain isles, the Roman Empire did not assist Britain. Thus, Empire’s community is divided into two societies those of the coloniser and those of the colonised, the other. This unequal relationship results in the outset of the modern movement of nationalism.

Across the lifetime of empires upon the earth, they face many challenges that threaten their very existence. However, with time, they learn from bygone empires on how to deal with issues. Campbell argues, “Empires have formed across the world throughout history. The earliest were short-lived and not very successful, but over time, empires became better at holding on to their control over other people” (6). To illustrate, the Mesopotamia Empire only lasted less than 200 years in contrast to the longest-lasting empire, the Roman Empire, which lasted over 1000 years. The American Empire grew from the ruins of the British Empire and its experiences. Uncle Sam prefers economic and cultural influence–informal domination–unlike John Bull who prefers formal domination.

Nevertheless, throughout history, empires had the same problem, which is the problem of defending frontiers. Doyle argues, “Nineteenth-century empires had, as Rome had, a ‘frontier problem’” (26). For the centre, the nomadic peoples living beyond the frontier of the empire could be a potential problem. With their neighbouring empires, they had a complicated relationship. Frequently, they seek wealth from the empire. Regardless, due to being treated as ‘barbarians,’ they had to assault the empire to get what they desire (Campbell 6). The frontier is expansive to maintain and control. For empires, frontier regions are the hidden enemy. The expansion of the empire results in the problem of longer borders that cost more to defend against outsiders. For this reason, the Roman Empire struggled to guard its extensive frontiers against invaders such as the Germanic tribes.

Post-Renaissance empires have been shaped by three factors. Doyle argues, “The course of modern empire has been determined by changes in the character of the international environment, in the domestic society of the metro pole, and in the development of social change and the balance of collaboration in the peripheries” (353). The Second World War changes international relations with political alliances. Empires cannot exist as before in Europe or other continents, resulting in the centre and the periphery as political partners, however, it paves the way to informal colonisation. Both the centre and peripheries undergo political movements, such as liberal democracy, decolonisation and nationalism. During the Age of Imperialism, European powers bring nearly the entire African continent under their control as part of their separate empires, the act is known as the Scramble for Africa.

Modern empires could be easy to distinguish from ancient empires in terms of imperialism. The centre and the periphery have three different characteristics, such as culture, religion, and language. Lieven argues, “By the standard of most empires in history it is rather easy to distinguish on the one hand the British and French metropolitan polities, and on the other hand their overseas colonies” (4). However, the British and French empires have one distinguishing feature. Kennedy states that “imperialism was intended to be permanent. Unlike the fleeting visits paid by Cheng Ho, the actions of the Portuguese and Spanish explorers symbolized a commitment to alter the world's political and economic balances” (27). Even though the empire and the colonies are different, the British and French empires want to stay in the foreign land. Ireland and Algeria were defined as part of the empire itself in constitutional terms. For instance, France claimed Algeria as part of French territory during the colonisation period; ‘l’Algérie Française.’ The explorers, also, alter the relationship between the West and the rest.

Culture has an important role in keeping imperialism intact because it is through a culture that the assumption of the ‘divine right’ of imperial powers to rule is vehemently and

authoritatively supported. This role cannot be overestimated. From this hypothesis, Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) claims that imperialism is nothing without the power of the culture that maintains its institutional, political and economic operations (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 85). In the 19th century, imperial adventure-romance novels, such as Jules Verne's *Among the Cannibal*, Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*, and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, feed the curiosity of Europeans about the exotic lands.

In the world today, Edward Said is known for his controversial and intellectual ideas. He is considered a vocal public intellectual for Palestine before a world audience. For a time, his contribution to post-colonial studies through his book *Orientalism* and his emphasis on the importance of the 'worldliness' or material contexts of the text, and the critic placed him outside the mainstream of contemporary theory. Regardless, his place in the political and cultural functions of literary writing has been vindicated (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 1).In the Orient, where Said's influence is overwhelming, his book is part of the university syllabus, translated and wildly read and discussed. In addition, Scholars, around the world, have been fundamentally influenced by Edward Said's works and voice.

As an exiled Palestinian intellectual living in America, Edward Said developed a paradoxical identity. Ashcroft and Ahluwalia argue, "Paradoxes linked to this question of identity run throughout Said's work, but far from being disabling, such paradox is a key to the intellectual force of his writings" (2). Post-colonial and exiled peoples throughout the world have complex identities. Said is reflecting those people through his works. Therefore, the question of identity runs deep throughout his works. Such paradox is not weakening but the essence of his writing.

Culture and Imperialism (1993) is a prolongation of *Orientalism*'s idea of the worldliness of imperial texts. In this work, he maintains that the political realities of

imperialism are subtle in the cultural production of the West. For instance, British writers are oblivious to the way in which the empire was represented in their works. Nevertheless, Said's favourite topic is rehearsed in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993), which is how the post-colonial world should react to the dominance of imperialism (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 8). In his book, Said focuses on Western canon to advocate for his theory of resistance called 'the voyage in,' where post-colonial writers take hold of the canon of literary writing to expose their culture to a world audience, for example, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North*.

In "Presences and Absences in Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism*," Lyons argues that Said's book "might be described as an extended scrutiny of the literary representation of colonial history" (101). Said argues, in the first part of the book, that colonial project hinge upon art as much as gunboats for its success. He inspects various methods in which resistance has been documented in counterpoint to colonial and neo-colonial motifs in the second part of the book (Lyons 101). Narratives about Africa not only tell a story but also lean towards revealing much about the mentality of the authors. Early narratives depict Africa, as the "Dark Continent," as a peripheral part of the world of Europeans. Edgar Rice Burrough's *Tarzan of the Apes* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* are good examples. Edward Said highlights this point in *Culture and Imperialism*, as he ushers the reader through numerous literary works, including the products of writers that are considered to be the greatest among their peers, for example, Joseph Conrad, Jane Austen, and Rudyard Kipling, among many others (Riddell 86). Said criticises such works to reveal the hidden nuances of empire and imperialism.

In his dissection of these works, Said employs a basic modernist method known as 'contrapuntal.' Using this approach, he seeks to uncover historically privileged attitudes (Ninkovich 99). In his *Culture and Imperialism* review, Ninkovich explains, "He

demonstrates that while the colonized world was relegated to the margins of the narrative, it was undeniably essential to the metropole's sense of home and identity" (99). It is shown in the adventure-romance genre that takes the reader on a journey to the exotic world to evoke a sense of home. Furthermore, the cultural inner of this colonised world remained almost unknown even in works where the authors want to present empire as part of the natural order of things. The inability to understand the thoughts and sentiments of the local inhabitants by Europeans results in the incapability to conceive of the deep resistance generated by the European presence (Ninkovich 99). In addition, the civilising mission made them unable to understand this resistance.

Culture and Imperialism has two dominating themes that make the book as an attempt at something new and a sequel to *Orientalism*. Said writes, "These two factors-a general world-wide pattern of imperial culture, and a historical experience of resistance against empire--inform this book in ways that make it not just a sequel to *Orientalism* but an attempt to do something else" (xii). The first theme examines the development of justification of imperialism and the reinforcement of the establishment and exploitation of empire. The second theme deals with the resistance against an empire. Europeans have been intimidated by the rise of a new type of narrative that focuses on the local narrative. Those authors write back at the centre to show the hypocrisy and flaws of society.

Cultural productions, such as films and literary works, have a profound investment in shaping the political character and vice versa. Said remarks in an early interview with *Diacritics* Journal that "culture is not made exclusively or even principally by heroes or radicals all the time, but by great anonymous movements whose function is to keep things going, keep things in being" (34). The anonymous movements are the political ideology in a culture that keep things moving and in being. Moreover, it shows the complex relationship between culture and political ideology. However, William Blake says, in his remarks on

Reynolds's *Discounes*, “The Foundation of Empire is Art and Science. Remove them or Degrade them and the Empire is No more. Empire follows Art and not vice versa as Englishmen suppose” (qtd. in Said 13). The anonymous movements that made culture also help empires to exist. In other words, there is no empire without its culture.

Oxford Dictionary defines Imperialism as “a system in which one country controls other countries, often after defeating them in a war” (def. 1.). In general, Imperialism refers to the formation of an empire: one nation extends its domination over one or several neighbouring nations. Furthermore, Said defines imperialism as one that invokes the active effects of culture. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said writes, “As I shall be using the term, ‘imperialism’ means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory; ‘colonialism,’ which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory” (9). To clarify, Said defines imperialism as the practice, theory and attitudes that the centre uses to rule a periphery, and colonialism as a consequence of imperialism, which is the settlement on a distant territory. Because many scholars use imperialism and colonialism interchangeably, Said wants to distinguish the two terms in order to link imperialism to culture. He removes the concrete aspect of imperialism and changes it to a conceptual term to link to an abstract culture.

Additionally, the books discuss how imperialism is embodied in Western culture. Said writes, “In our time, direct colonialism has largely ended; imperialism, as we shall see, lingers where it has always been, in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as in specific political, ideological, economic, and social practices” (9). In other words, imperialism dawdles in the cultural sphere along with political, ideological, economic, and social practices; therefore, he aims to disclose the culture as imperialism and to expose the link between culture and imperialism. Colonialism has ended, but imperialism is still present in culture and culture productions nowadays. In the first chapter, Said writes:

> But there is more than that to imperialism and colonialism. There was a commitment to them over and above profit, a commitment in constant circulation and recirculation, which, on the one hand, allowed decent men and women to accept the notion that distant territories and their native peoples *should* be subjugated, and, on the other, replenished metropolitan energies so that these decent people could think of the *imperium* as a protracted, almost metaphysical obligation to rule subordinate, inferior, or less advanced peoples. (10)

Imperial discourse demonstrates a constant circulating and recirculating notion that native peoples should be subjugated and imperial powers had a metaphysical right to rule them; thus, this indicates a tight relationship between imperial aims and culture. The poem "The White Man's Burden" by Rudyard Kipling proves this discourse. Imperial aims, the 'Burden,' are hidden between lines of books and in culture to promote the presence of empire and to feed the hidden superiority complex.

According to Said, the modern European empires are differentiated from the Roman, the Spanish or the Arab because they are systematic companies, continually reinvested. He argues that "the earlier empires were bent on loot, as Conrad puts it, on the transport of treasure from the colonies to Europe, with very little attention to development, organization, or system within the colonies themselves" (89). When modern European empires move into a country, they do not loot it and leave, but they stay there not for greed but for an immensely reinforced notion of the civilising mission. This belief strengthened the idea that imperial nations, western, have the right and the obligation to rule those nations 'lost in barbarism' (Ashcroft and Ahluwalia 86). Ancient empires' main concern was to loot and transport treasures to the empire, however, the British and French empires build infrastructure and develop a system within the colonies, they view some colonies as part of the centre and want

to make their empires long-term. Nevertheless, the coloniser did not want the colonised to have the same right.

Marlow juxtaposes Roman colonisers with modern empires in *Heart of Darkness*. In this regard, Said argues that Conrad speaks of redemption through Marlow. According to Conrad, what redeems the mission of imperialism "is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea" (7). Said says that if we are rescued from the short-term conquest, then the idea of redemption would take this further. Although it was constructed to achieve dominance over the colonised, the imperialist is redeemed by the self-justifying practice of imperialism's idea of mission and venerates this idea (69). Marlow juxtaposes the Roman and the British Empire to give his argument credibility that they were unlike the Romans but the irony is shown with the exploitation of ivory. The mission of civilising is crafted to camouflage the greed and superiority complex and to satisfy the Christian soul.

In the same way, Conrad captures two different aspects of imperialism in *Heart of Darkness*. Said argues that

> Conrad encapsulates two quite different but intimately related aspects of imperialism: the idea that is based on the power to take over territory, an idea utterly clear in its force and unmistakable consequences; and the practice that essentially disguises or obscures this by developing a justificatory regime of self-aggrandizing, self-originating authority interposed between the victim of imperialism and its perpetrator (69).

The quote highlights how imperialism works. When the metropolitan centre sees the open land as a given right, then they go on to justify the metaphysical right to dominate through ideas and cultural productions.

Said exposes the link between them Culture and Imperialism. However, many artists are oblivious to the way they represent imperial ideas in their works; for instance, *Heart of Darkness*. Culture and its production play an important role to preserve imperial ideas. Due to cultural imperialism, western powers have the urge to civilise those primitive people in their eyes. And, this idea of civilising is what redeems the acts of imperialism. I can argue that culture is a vehicle and imperialism is driving it.

3. Power Is Everywhere: Foucault's Theory on Power, Knowledge, and Truth.

Said investigates and shows the existence of imperialism in the cultural sphere beyond economics and politics. Those two terms seem unrelated and cannot have a tortuous relationship, however, Edward Said proves the opposite. The French philosopher Michel Foucault does the same with power and knowledge; those two terms cannot be viewed behind their basic definitions. However, as Edward Said has shown the link between Culture and imperialism, Foucault does the same with power and knowledge. Empire uses power to alter knowledge/culture to make its presence legitimate, thus, making imperialism dwells in the new adjustments.

Foucault speaks and writes in French, thus we need to understand what he means by power/knowledge (*pouvoir/savoir*) in his first language. Often the original French term in philosophy follows English translation. In French, knowledge is expressed in two different ways which are "folk knowledge" and "book knowledge" as known to English speakers. In his earlier works, Foucault is fascinated in exploring the implicit knowledge (the *savoir*) and the explicit knowledge (the *connaissance*). The implicit knowledge is the "common sense" of the time/place/people that fashions the explicit knowledge that it exists in the disciplines that

make up the human sciences (Feder 55). Most foreign language learners would mix the *savoir* to be both folk knowledge and book knowledge.

In addition, *pouvoir* as a noun is translated as 'power.' However, it is also the infinitive form of the verb meaning "to be able to", and is the most common way of saying "can" in Romance languages. In this dual sense, power (*pouvoir*) must be understood as English speakers normally take it, which could also be translated as *puissance* or *force* in French, and as a kind of potentiality, capability or capacity. Foucault tells us to understand power to be more complex than a term like *puissance* expresses; it has multiple forms and can issue from "anywhere" (Feder 55-56). Feder expounds that "Foucault urges us not to think of power only in terms of its "old" monarchical form, as something an individual possesses or wields over another or others. For him power works *through* culture and customs, institutions and individuals" (56). He introduced us to a new way of seeing power through the implicit knowledge.

Basumatary clarifies that "Michel Foucault claims in his analysis of power that there is an implicit conjunction between knowledge, power and truth" (1). Although knowledge and power seem two different phenomena, they control the production of each other. Ensuring their existence, power and knowledge are close, but it is truth that always goes with power (1-2). In "Truth and Power," Foucault writes, "'Truth' is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it" (133). Truth and power sustain and produce each other as they intertwine in the power relations.

European empires ascertain the civilising mission using power. In the collection of essays entitled *Power/Knowledge*, Foucault investigates the way in which something is established as a fact or as true. He wants to focus on the abstract institutional processes at

work that validate something as a fact or as knowledge, rather than his previous works where he focuses on the individual thinkers who developed certain ideas or theories (Basumatary 10). The classical view of knowledge is that it is created by the intellect; for example, Einstein and Pasteur. They are considered extraordinary people who were able to formulate totally new ideas and theoretical viewpoints. By the same token, the History of Ideas within the philosophical tradition is primarily concerned with individual thinkers, who changed the course of intellectual endeavour. Nevertheless, Foucault wants to produce a model of knowledge-production that is anonymous, institutionalised and rule-governed (Mills 67-68). Foucault's theory changes our view on science as objective research, for example, Europeans, during the Age of Imperialism, produced scientific research that non-white people are less superior to white people to help establish the notion of 'Mission Civilisatrice.'

Mills explains that, in *Power/Knowledge*, Foucault reasons that knowledge is a combination of power relations and information-seeking, which he terms 'power/knowledge' (69). Foucault argues that "it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power," in an essay entitled "Prison talk" (52). In other words, knowledge is not impartial but an essential part of struggles over power. Also, it draws attention to the idea that one is claiming power when producing knowledge (Mills 69). Although they are two dissimilar concepts, knowledge and power are integrated with each other. Thereupon, where there is knowledge, there is power (Basumatary 5). Hence, Power and knowledge depend on each other. We cannot use power without knowledge, and Knowledge gives rise to power when it is used.

Therefore, there will be a production of knowledge where there are imbalances of power relations between groups of people. Foucault argues that information is produced about women because of the imbalance in power relations between men and women in Western countries; thus, we find many books in libraries about women but few about men

(Basumatary 6). Correspondingly, there are many books about the problems of Black people, but not about Whites. Indeed, one might claim that anthropology is the study of those who are politically and economically marginal in relation to a Western metropolis. Foucault reasons that the object of such study is often people who are in less powerful positions. Thus, the production of knowledge about economically disadvantaged people plays an important role in maintaining them in this position (Mills 69-70). When the less powerful people produce knowledge about themselves, they may contribute to the imbalances of power and their subjugation because some of them use the knowledge given by the powerful to write about themselves.

Mills clarifies that "Foucault characterises power/knowledge as an abstract force which determines what will be known, rather than assuming that individual thinkers develop ideas and knowledge" (70). We have formulated an idea about the development of knowledge which is due to scholars who have worked continuously to expand on past knowledge. In Foucault's vision, this knowledge is produced by power/knowledge and the individual scholars are simply the vehicles. (Mills 70). Foucault coins the term power/knowledge and destroys the classic order of viewing the production of knowledge; he explains that it is not knowledge that produces knowledge but power/knowledge that produces knowledge.

Truth, like knowledge, is not an abstract entity as many scholars have assumed. Foucault argues in an interview entitled "Truth and Power" that "Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint" (131). The true statements will be disseminated throughout society and reproduced in books. They will be commented on, described and assessed by others in books and articles. Within a society, these statements will be held to be 'common-sense knowledge.' However, the statements which are held to be false will not be reproduced. Each society has its own 'regime of truth' that distinguishes between true and false statements (Basumatary 15). "Foucault's main concern is

to assert that truth is constructed by individuals in society and it continues to operate through a wide range of power strategies which support and affirm its existence and which exclude and counter alternative versions of events that try to disagree and falsify it," explains Basumatary (16). Therefore, power is not limited to a group of people. Rouse clarifies that "Power is not possessed by a dominant agent, nor located in that agent's relations to those dominated, but is instead distributed throughout complex social networks" (109). Power is everywhere, thus allowing the regime of truth to exist. George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* demonstrates this idea: Winston works at the Records Department in the Ministry of Truth, where his job is to rewrite history and destroy documents. He prevents the truth from recirculating again and produces what the Party needs.

In an interview entitled "Power and Sex," Foucault examines the way that 'truth' or 'facts' are produced by a complex web of social relations, mechanisms and prohibitions (112). He states, "My aim is not to write the social history of a prohibition but the political history of the production of 'truth'" (112). Furthermore, in 'Questions of method', he says that "my problem is to see how men govern (themselves and others) by the production of truth . . . (by the production of truth I mean not the production of true utterances, but the establishment of domains in which the practice of true and false can be made at once ordered and pertinent)" (79). Hence, he merely describes the production of truth as a realm where true and false statements determent its reliability, and how it governs people.

Thus, truth, power and knowledge are intricately connected. Foucault is concerned to establish the interconnectedness of power and knowledge and power and truth. He studies the ways in which knowledge and truth do not simply emerge from scholarly studies, but it is produced and maintained in societies through the work of various organisations and practices. Thus, he alters our view on knowledge as objective and impartial to a view which sees knowledge as working for the benefit of certain groups (Mills 79). In addition, Rouse

explains that “Foucault objects to the very idea of a knowledge or a truth outside of networks of power relations” (102). Knowledge or truth cannot be used alone outside of power relations as a means of domination. Michel Foucault has shaped our understanding of power. However, we can view only the truth of those who have power; the other less powerful’s version will be destroyed in ‘the Ministry of Truth.’ This intricate link between power, knowledge, and truth can be visible in the way states and empires use torture and oppression as a form of power to produce knowledge and truth.

4. Oppression and Torture

Torture and oppression are the tools that the empire uses to change the opinion and thoughts of the periphery and coerce the tortured and oppressed to into giving false truth. Those tools have damaging effects on the consciousness of both the coloniser and colonised. Both the torturer and tortured will leave the prison changed persons. In this regard, Paulo Freire’s insights on the consciousness of the oppressor/oppressed and on the concept of false generosity of the oppressed can be important tools to explain the practices of the imperial power that can dehumanise the oppressed. Despite the fact that Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) is an important text within Marxist studies, it can be applied in the context of this research to further explain the consequences of using power in the creation of knowledge and truth.

For scholars occupied with literature on the subject of critical pedagogy, Paulo Freire’s seminal text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, is a crucial reading. However, the work has not been employed much by scholars who are concerned with contemporary issues in the developing world though it has been regarded as an educational theory since the 1970s (Thomas 253). In his article, titled “Revisiting Pedagogy of the Oppressed: Paulo Freire and Contemporary African Studies,” Thomas argues that “Freire’s work transcends disciplines,

and speaks beyond questions of pedagogy in a manner that is useful for the study of Africa's post-colonial condition" (253). As a dialogical exercise, Freire's understanding of an essential process of liberation can be a feasible point to analyse the failure of many African states to enrich their people's lives in the continent (253). Freire's ideas help us understand the relationship between the coloniser and colonised under the sphere of post-colonial theorists, such as Albert Memmi and Frantz Fanon.

Freire dedicates his book "to the oppressed, and to those who suffer with them and fight at their side" (5). A vital factor to comprehend his work is to understand the author's identification with the oppressed. He endeavours to align and conceptualise the phenomenon of the oppressor and the oppressed. The Author traces two paths of oppression, which results in the basic dehumanisation of man and society (Borelli 630). Freire contends, "Both humanization and dehumanization are real alternatives, only the first is the people's vocation" (43). There will be little motivation for basic humanisation and freedom when oppression exists in a given situation. Freire perceives that the oppressor is as much a victim of oppression as those he tries to dominate; similarly, an oppressed individual becomes a 'suboppressor' when the same individual betters himself via social mobility. Thus, it ensues a malicious cycle of oppression (Borelli 630). Freire uses the famous tyrant-salve analogy to explain the dehumanisation of society.

The oppressed suffer from the fear of freedom, which may result in a desire in them to the role of the oppressor or participate in tolling the oppressed. They internalised the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines. Thus, the journey to freedom demands them to deny this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility (Freire 46-47). "Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift," writes Freire (47). The journey must be pursued continually and responsibly (47). Freire argues that freedom is not a myth or an ideal located outside of man but is the essential condition for the quest for human completion (47). In

addition, he contends, “The oppressed suffer from the duality which has established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically. Yet, although they desire authentic existence, they fear it” (48). They have an internal struggle with the oppressors that they have internalised, which prevent them from seeing themselves as independent being.

Paulo Freire sees the pedagogy of the oppressed in two stages: the first stage, “the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation” (54); the second stage comes after the transformation of oppression, people commit themselves to the “the expulsion of the myths created and developed in the old order” (55). Thus, for Freire, central to the construction of the pedagogy of the oppressed was the problem of the ‘oppressed consciousness’ and the ‘oppressor consciousness.’ It means the way they look at the world and themselves (Kumar). These concepts by Freire can allow us to see how a group of people develop a consciousness that allows them to oppress others and make it seem natural for the oppressed to accept their oppression.

Freire claims that fatalism is “a trait of national character” (61). He explains that it is a result of a historical and sociological situation, not an essential characteristic of a people's behaviour. Furthermore, it is related to religion and the power of destiny, and the oppressed, especially the peasants, see it as the will of God (62). When Algeria was under French colonial rule, some religious people believed and preached that the French were our destiny. Additionally, Freire argues, “As long as the oppressed remain unaware of the causes of their condition, they fatalistically ‘accept’ their exploitation. Further, they are apt to react in a passive and alienated manner when confronted with the necessity to struggle for their freedom and self-affirmation” (64). This fatalism also contributes to fear of freedom, and the main cause for procrastination by colonised to liberate themselves.

Freire draws on Fanon's perspective on violence in *The Wretched of the Earth* where Fanon asserts, "The almighty body of violence rearing up in reaction to the primary violence of the colonizer" (50). This means that the initiative of violence is the coloniser. Darder explains that "Freire stresses, violence is founded upon a dehumanizing ideology that transfigures the living into "things," which can then be controlled, manipulated, eclipsed, or extinguished" (99). The violence against the oppressed is committed through subtractive schooling, labour inequalities, labour discrimination, policing abuses, or mass incarceration. When violence is created, it supports despotism, alienation and the negation of humanity (99). Hence, Freire argues, "It is not those whose humanity is denied them who negate humankind, but those who denied that humanity (thus negating their own as well)" (55). When the oppressor initiates violence, he rejects the humanity of the oppressed and their own. In *Heart of Darkness,* Kurtz denies the humanity of African people, thus he becomes 'hollow.' However, Freire maintains that "Once a situation of violence and oppression has been established, it engenders an entire way of life and behaviour for those caught up in it—oppressors and oppressed alike. Both are submerged in this situation, and both bear the marks of oppression" (58). In line with Fanon, both sides participate in violent and oppression acts, like *The Battle of Algiers* film. However, only the oppressor can use torture as a ferocious act of domination.

An empire uses torture and oppression to preserve its existence, as many totalitarian states nowadays do. Amnesty International received reports from every region of the world of torture in 141 countries between January 2009 and May 2013. Torture and other forms of ill-treatment are illegal under international law. For instance, 172 countries have prohibited torture and other forms of ill-treatment under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights law; 165 countries are parties to the UN Convention against Torture. Nevertheless, many governments around the world continue to disobey international law by

torturing people. It is barbaric and inhumane. When states permit its use, no one is safe (Amnesty). Torture is a worldwide and historical phenomenon. Humans cannot finish a chapter without mentioning torture while writing their history upon the earth.

The eighth edition of Oxford defines torture as “the act of causing somebody severe pain in order to punish them or make them say or do something” (def. 1). However, different organisations define torture more or less broadly. Nevertheless, it is uncontroversial that torture incorporates both physical and psychological methods of inducing pain, distress or harm. Physical methods of torture, which are common, are beatings, burning, suspensions and stress positions, suffocation and drowning and electrical shocks. Common methods of psychological torture are threats of execution and torture, threats against family members, mock executions, extended solitary confinement, sensory deprivation or overload, sleep deprivation, humiliation, and forced participation in the torture of others. Usually, torture involves both physical and psychological methods (McColl et al. 1-2). The tools and methods of torture vary across history and regions.

Forrest argues, “Torture is inflicted in many different ways, some of them characteristic of a particular country or culture, others universal” (77). Indeed, some ways to inflict torture are particular to a country or a culture. The torturers, in some situations, inflict injury haphazardly without paying attention to conceal their deed, often leaving gross scarring, fractures and paralyses. On the contrary, the torturers, in other countries, are apprehensive not to leave tell-tale sequelae that could be potential evidence in court; thus, they develop techniques which cause only temporary bruising. Psychological methods are detrimental as physical yet leave no physical mark at all (Forrest 77-78). The environment will govern the methods that the torturers would use in a given situation.

Torture survivors' experience changes in their view of the current self as "different" and unable to preserve their own integrity, they are overwhelmed by feelings of depersonalization and estrangement; in addition, they have basic assumptions about the self as worthy and undeserving of deliberate punishment. Causing anxiety and bewilderment, the memories of torture intrude into the survivors. Under those circumstances, the pre-torture self has a tendency to be observed as altered and better than the current self. Because survivors were unable to say, "That's enough!" and stop the torture, they cannot halt the unpleasant memories, resulting in homicidal and suicidal impulses to surface. Therefore, the major psychotherapeutic involvement is to make available a safe environment for survivors to explore as lengthily as possible the torture events, and combine the torture experience within a context that confirms torture as a violation of their human dignity (Gonsalves, et al. 357). Torture is an inhumane act that will take humanity and dignity from both the torturer and tortured.

Often, as justification for torturing people, Governments use national security as an excuse. Amnesty has documented in Cameroon how the security forces have set up hidden torture chambers for people often with zero evidence to charge them. A woman who calls herself Fatima told Amnesty International how she was isolated at a military base for nine months. Fatima was beaten with numerous objects, such as the flat part of a machete and wooden sticks (Amnesty). She says, "At the base in Kousseri, I was held in a cell with two women, [The soldiers] beat me for three days all over my body, especially on the soles of my feet, with all sorts of objects, in order to make me admit things I knew nothing about. By the end of the third day, my soles were going to explode" (qtd. in Amnesty). This is to show that regardless of what the tortured knows about the truth or does not know, the torturer will keep going on until their inquiry is satisfied or the truth reshaped through lies or truth.

In a similar vein, in the name of the "war on terror," the United States established Guantánamo Bay in January 2002. And, it has since become symbolic of the gross human rights abuses committed by the US government. Without charge and subjected to torture, what the US calls "enhanced interrogation techniques," hundreds of people were held there for years. Former prisoners have testified that they were being waterboarded, deprived of sleep, subjected to constant blasting music and freezing temperatures, or forced into stress positions (Amnesty). This is but an example of how many empires and states have Special Forces to conduct interrogation and torture to impose their ideology or manipulate truth and knowledge through the unlawful exercise of power.

5. Empires and State Control

Empires use propaganda and force to uphold their existence, control the people and stop rebellions. Althusser's theory of the ISAs shows us how the hegemony of the ruling class/state is maintained through Repressive State Apparatuses and Ideological State Apparatuses. Just like the modern capitalist states Althusser describes use both repressive power and ideological control, an empire uses propaganda, as part of ISA, to control people and stop rebellions, and it also uses force, as part of RSA, to impose with force the propaganda on the people. Althusser's theory, though it may not seem applicable in the context of a postcolonial study of empires, can help further explain how the state/empire keeps order and hegemony. This argument will prove highly relevant and useful in the analysis of this research's case study.

5.1. Louis Althusser's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" - Repressive State Apparatuses and Ideological Apparatuses of the State

The French philosopher Louis Althusser's most influential contribution to literary and cultural studies has been his theory of ideology, notably his essay, "Ideology and Ideological

State Apparatuses," (1970) constituting excerpts from a lengthier work on the reproduction of the relations of production. (Ferretter 82-83). Althusser was zealous to pioneer a theory of the state that spreads beyond its official borders, as well as beyond its monopoly of legitimate force. It is best understood as comprising two separate fields of influence, Repressive State Apparatuses (RSA) and Ideological State Apparatuses (ISA) (Reoch 91-92). "The former are largely predictable – the police force and the army – the latter are myriad in number, ranging from schools to families," Reoch explains (92). Althusser demonstrates how those two institutions help sustain the existence of the state.

Following Gramsci, Althusser argues that forms of state law create the public and the private distinction and the state is 'above the law' (144). Its function, the representation and defence of class society define the state. By their function, the ideological state apparatuses are recognised as state apparatus; the reproduction of the relations of production. Despite their seeming and necessary variety, they are unified by their function and by the fact that they all represent the ruling class ideology. Therefore, the ISAs are unified by their function and the foundation of their function, ruling class ideology and the ruling class. The state in Althusser's analysis can be considered as unified by the function to maintain the class society (Hirst 393). Thus, the state apparatuses are unified under the ideology of the ruling class that holds state power.

In Marxist theory, the State is considered the 'State apparatus,' that is the government, the civil service, the courts, the police, the prisons, the army, and so on – the institutions by which the ruling class preserves its economic dominance (Ferretter 83). Althusser argues that "the Marxist classics treated the State as a more complex reality than the definition of it given in the 'Marxist theory of the State'" (142). In another word, the State has been treated as a more complex reality than Marxist theory has made explicit. Through a reading of the history of Marxist political practice, he claims that the State apparatus consists of two intersecting

but different sets of institutions. On the one hand, Althusser calls the repressive institutions through which the ruling class imposes its rule the 'Repressive State Apparatus.' It contains all that Marxist theory has recognized as part of the State apparatus. On the other hand, Althusser says that the State also contains what he calls the 'Ideological State Apparatuses.' Those are different and specialized institutions: for example, the religious ISA, the educational ISA, the family ISA, the legal ISA. the political ISA, the trade union ISA, the communications ISA, and the cultural ISA (Ferretter 83-84). Althusser re-thinks Marxist classics and gives a depth explanation of the state and its function to prove that a state's dominion cannot be upheld by crude force only. That is why, he insists that ideological indoctrination, especially within the school ISA, can be more effective than RSA.

In "Ideological State Apparatuses in Dystopian Novels," Wise expounds, "Althusser examines the ways in which a state asserts power over its subjects and controls them for the purpose of reproducing labour power" (9). Althusser explains that this happens through Repressive State Apparatuses and The Ideological State Apparatuses. The first uses direct state control, which belongs to the public domain, to control subjects, such as the police, the army, the prison, and the courts. RSA acts as an agent to impose the state's ideology. However, The Ideological State Apparatuses, which belongs to the private domain, uses ideology to control the subjects within the state, such as schools, churches, families, culture, literature, and means of communication.

The difference between the Repressive State Apparatus and the Ideological State Apparatuses is that the RSA 'functions by violence' while the ISAs function mainly by ideology. Althusser states that "The (Repressive) State Apparatus functions massively and predominantly by repression (including physical repression), while functioning secondarily by ideology. (There is no such thing as a purely repressive apparatus.)" (146). The RSA's purpose is to maintain the economic dominance of the ruling class through violence. For

example, in France nowadays with yellow vests protests, the police, as part of RSA, functions by violence first but secondarily by the ideology of the state, in this example, the ideology of Macron. There is no RSA without ideology, the police and the army, for instance, function through the ideologies of nationalism and patriotism.

On the other hand, Althusser states that "the Ideological State Apparatuses function massively and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondarily by repression, even if only ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic (There is no such thing as a purely ideological apparatus)" (146). To illustrate, schools function first by ideology but second by repression, violence here is not like the police but repression through punishments. Wise argues, "Authors of dystopian literature fear ISAs the most because they enable the state to maintain its power, force a loss of identity among individuals, and strip subjects of the knowledge and ability they would need to easily go against the state" (9). ISA aims to brainwash people into accepting the state's ideology and to maintain the economic dominance of the ruling class. In addition, the RSA and the ISAs work together to maintain the order of the state. Sometimes, ISA can hold an ideology that does not represent the state but a whole civilisation or culture. One such powerful ideology that dominates Western Civilisation and that has been perpetuated through different cultural products and state manipulation and falsification is "the fear of barbarians."

6. *La Peur des Barbares*: Beyond the Clash of Civilizations

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said writes that "all the major French theoreticians except Deleuze, Todorov, and Derrida have been…unheeding and…blinded to the matter of imperialism" (278). French-Bulgarian philosopher Tzvetan Todorov's seminal study of xenophobia in the West entitled *The Fear of Barbarians: Beyond the Clash of Civilizations* (2008) explains that "The twentieth century was dominated, in Europe, by the

conflict between totalitarian regimes and liberal democracies" (1). Dedicated to Edward Said and Germaine Tillion, the book takes a hard and well-timed look at European perceptions of the Islamic world in response to Samuel Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* (1996). Todorov offers a corrective to the assumptions of this infamously divisive work that categorises and establishes an irreducible difference between 'cultures' (Bradd 214). "Civilization, he argues, can only be spoken of in the singular and bears the sense of a "moral judgement," while it is culture that must be conceived in terms of plurality and as a morally neutral form of life," explains Bradd (214). Unlike Huntington, who categorises civilisation based on culture, religious, and historical differences, Todorov categorises civilisation based on moral judgement. In addition, Huntington suggests a natural barrier between civilisations. McNaughton explains that, for Todorov, this is more than just what Said called a 'clash of ignorance'; he expresses surprise at the paradox of walls in the age of globalisation (399). By the same token, Todorov states, "The cloud from Chernobyl did not stop at the Rhine" (185). His critique of Huntington is sharp and strategic.

Furthermore, Todorov's book looks at Western countries today as dominated by fear, specifically the fear of barbarians. Under the banner of the 'war on terror,' U.S. reactions to the attacks on September 11 demonstrate the dangers of giving in to this fear. His central thesis is that their fear of barbarians threatens to turn them into barbarians; Guantánamo and Abu Ghraib prisons symbolise the kind of barbarism this fear supplies. Todorov argues that we, which he refers to the West, set out to protect democratic and humanist values to eventually sacrifice and betray them (Boletsi 58). He argues, "The fear of barbarians is what risks making us barbarian. And we will commit a worse evil than that which we initially feared. History teaches us this lesson: the cure can be worse than the disease" (6). In *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow's racist remark would summarise this theory. When he heard the inhabitants shout, he argues in a racist way that a primitive part of him is responding to them.

The barbarian side would emerge when it contacts with behaviour that targets it. However, during the Trump administration, his political discourse about China and the Mexican wall fed this fear of others, which results in Asian hate and reinforcement of the Mexican stereotype. Todorov argues, "Attacking immigrants is not politically correct" (9). Some Americans start to assault Asian people after Trump said they bring and produce coronavirus. In addition, Trump's discourse about Mexicans coming to America to steal their jobs results in many job application refusals. More importantly, the Trump wall literally symbolises and demonstrates the fear of others in Western civilisation.

Todorov describes barbarism and civilization as moral categories. "Barbarity and civilization resemble less two forces struggling for supremacy than two poles of one axis, two moral categories that enable us to evaluate particular human acts," he explains (25). By narrowing down the meanings of the 'barbarian,' he rejects the definition that is based on the physical feature, which states that everyone who has different feature and lives in a different style is a barbarian as Marlow describes the other as those "who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves" (Conrad 7). Moreover, Todorov defines Barbarians as "those who deny the full humanity of others" (16). His definition revokes the traditional view of the "barbarian" as less than human by locating barbarism in the act of perceiving others as non-human, not in perceiving others as subhuman (Boletsi 59). In addition, Ammaturo explains that he intends to reveal that the concept of 'barbarity' originates from the inability or denial to have empathic feelings for the other who does not speak your language or does not have the same customs (427). Through the analysis of the use of 'barbarian' and 'civilization' in ancient Greek and Roman history and literature, he traces the definition of those terms back to Europe. Todorov asserts that "the notion of 'barbarian', found in Europe but not in other great cultures such as China" (178). We may, hence, argue that the fear of

others started in Western civilisation after the barbarians succeeded in taking the Roman Empire and Europe in the 5th century.

7. Conclusion

Thus, the links between imperial control and the manipulation of its truth and history are undeniable. The chapter explored the relationship between the empire and the periphery. It begins by seeing that the urge to civilise what they call 'barbarian' is embedded in the culture of the imperial power. A great example put forward by Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* is Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* who could not see an alternative to imperialism. Then, we have seen how power can alter the truth based on Foucault's discussion of Power/Knowledge dynamics. Moreover, we have seen the relationship between the state/oppressor and the oppressed by using Paulo Freire's insights on the oppressor/oppressed consciousness. The chapter concludes with defining the terms "barbarism" and "barbarian" using Tzvetan Todorov's 'The Fear of Barbarians' theory. Using all of the above serves to lay a solid foundation to effectively explore and analyse the way in which an "Unnamed Empire" waits with fear for the "Barbarians" in J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*.

Chapter Two: The Mark of the Empire: History, Versions of Truth and Torture

> They form an allegory. They can be read in many orders. Further, each single slip can be read in many ways. Together they can be read as a domestic journal, or they can be read as a plan of war, or they can be turned on their sides and read as a history of the last years of the Empire—the old Empire, I mean. There is no— agreement among scholars about how to interpret these relics of the ancient barbarians.
>
> — J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

1. Introduction

Forming an empire is a way to guarantee the survival of a tribe, nation, or race. To assure the survival of the empire against natural and unnatural causes, empires, throughout history, go to the extreme to prevent the doom's day from coming by changing the truth and violence. This chapter will analyse J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* using different theories to understand the means the empire uses to write of truth and its impact on people and where the idea came from. The chapter initiates the discussion with an introduction of the author and the novel. Then, using Edward Said's, Paulo Freire's, and Tzvetan Todorov's theories, it aims to shed light on the various aspects of the empire and the imperial idea that is embodied in Western culture and consciousness. Furthermore, Foucault's Power-Knowledge theory explains the versions of Truth and Re-writing the Truth of the "Unnamed" Empire presented in the novel. The last part sheds light on how Coetzee uses language to depict violence and torture.

2. The Author: J. M. Coetzee

J.M. Coetzee is considered to be one of the most significant and distinguished authors in the world today. He was the first writer to receive the Booker Prize on two occasions 1983 and 1999 and the second South African writer, after Nadine Gordimer, to receive the Nobel

Prize for Literature (2003). Also, He received several other literary awards including the Prix Femina Étranger, the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and the Jerusalem Prize for the Freedom of the Individual in Society (Mehigan 9).

The Emeritus Professor of English Literature at the University of Nottingham Dominic Head argues in his book *The Cambridge Introduction to J. M. Coetzee* that Coetzee's novels are widely known to be difficult to read and puzzling to interpret. It can be equally said about the author himself. Notorious for being ambiguous with interviewers, Coetzee is a very private person. However, in the latter half of his career, Coetzee crafted a complex form of confessional writing in which autobiographical elements are noticeable, namely the two memoirs, *Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life* (1997) and *Youth* (2002). His adolescence was governed by cultural conflicts due to his situation as an English-speaking white South African, and the social location of his mother and father, who worked respectively as a schoolteacher and periodically as a lawyer. While conversing in Afrikaans with other relatives, he spoke English at home (Head 1).

In the USA, Coetzee has held numerous professorships, but not permanently, at Johns Hopkins University, Harvard University, the University of Chicago, and others. The novel Disgrace in 1999 and the award of the Nobel Prize in 2003 put Coetzee on the map for a wider readership beyond academia. He moved to Australia in 2002 to take up an honorary research fellowship at the University of Adelaide, which was offered in recognition of a significant contribution to a research field in collaboration with university staff (Head 2). In this period after Coetzee emigrates to Australia, themes of postcolonial and political and intellectual questions arising from the underlying dialectic of master and slave persevere, but they are broadened beyond the realm of the postcolonial and betray a general concern to commence what might be called a complete project of ethical comprehension of self and world and ethical thinking in general. For example, the 2003 novel Elizabeth Costello tells a

story about Elizabeth Costello an ageing Australian writer who travels the world on lecture tours, providing speeches on subjects such as censorship, vegetarianism, and the proper treatment of animals (Mehigan 15). The character Elizabeth Costello represents this disposition in Coetzee's writing in the 21st century.

The censorship board in the apartheid era had barely been bothered by Coetzee's elusive examinations of the colonial psyche, however, the ruling ANC (the African National Congress) in the new South Africa was infuriated by *Disgrace*. They condemned its portrayal of black violence and the promotion of racial hatred. This reception must have been one reason he left South Africa (Head 2). His fiction and critical essays have produced an excess of scholarly research both in South Africa and abroad and have put forth a challenge for worldwide readers, not least for the controversial interferences the oeuvre makes through Coetzee's singular, modernist mode into South African politico-cultural discourse and the field of postcolonial studies.

To a greater or lesser extent, all novels – only five of the eleven novels set in South Africa – address themes and issues relevant to the postcolonial and apartheid situations: those themes and issues figure prominently in his works such as colonial discourse, the other, racial segregation, censorship, banning and exile, police brutality and torture, South African liberalism and revolutionary activism, the place of women, the relationship of South Africa's peoples to the land and, not least, the ethic-politics of writing (Poyner 1). Challenging both the late-colonial violence and oppression of apartheid, his works serve as an intellectual challenge (Head 22). He stages the paradox of postcolonial authorship to bring the stories of the peripheral and the oppressed to light, stories that have been suppressed or silenced by oppressive regimes (Poyner 2). This concern with the peripheral and the oppressed, and the construction of truth through power and authority, can be seen in his novel *Waiting for the Barbarian*, which is the case study of this research.

3. A Critical Overview of J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*

At the outset of the novel, the nameless protagonist, the magistrate, meets a sinister official, Colonel Joll, of the Third Bureau– the Empire's secret service. The Third Bureau alleges that the barbarians are planning to attack the frontier regions. For this reason, the Colonel sets out on a trip to search for rebels and returns with a group of fisher people and frightened nomads in chains. However, the Magistrate argues that the barbarians are innocuous, and he does not accept the theory of a barbarian threat. He has been living in peace with the nomads and trading with them.

Nevertheless, Colonel Joll's way of conducting an interrogation brushed aside the possibility of the barbarians' innocence of any revolutionary plans. Joll's presence causes a storm in the world of the Magistrate. He is horrified and doesn't accept that Joll's Empire is the same one he serves. He avoids confronting the fact that Joll's prisoners are being tortured in the barracks. The prisoners are released by the Magistrate after Joll's departure to the capital to submit his report, nonetheless, they are shocked and damaged.

After their release, the prisoners leave except one woman; She is blind and her legs are broken at the ankles. The Magistrate sees her begging for food in the street, so he tells her that she cannot beg on the street. With the urge to help and reconstruct her, he takes her to his room. He washes and oils her feet, broken ankles and body. He could not explain his desire to clean her. And, he attempts to see her for what she was before Joll's presence. Although he pleads with her to tell him what happened to her, she refuses to talk about it. After She tells him how the torturers burned out her eyes and use a two-pronged fork on her body and killed her father in front of her, he starts to see the nomad girl as hideous though he doesn't know why. He cannot see the new phase of torture that he puts her through. Loaded with bewildered feelings about the girl, the Magistrate decides to take her back to her people.

When the magistrate gets back to the settlement, he finds a man from the Third Bureau waiting for him there. The man informs the magistrate that he is being charged with treason. He is interned, but he finds a way out of his cell. One night Colonel Joll's troops return with prisoners after the Third Bureau sends them out to find the enemy. The townspeople gather to watch the prisoners being tortured in public and they join in. The magistrate demands that they stop torturing the Barbarians which ends in him being beaten and returned to his cell. Joll interrogates and tortures the magistrate, though the process of torturing is not described. Leaving Mandel, the warrant officer, in charge of the magistrate, Joll sets out again with more soldiers. Mandel tortures the magistrate in front of the townspeople.

Chapter five begins with a description of the fear of the barbarians that has swept through the town. After learning that the barbarians have flooded the fields, people begin to pack up and leave the settlement back to the capital. Even though Mandel denounces those who leave as traitors, more and more people pack up and leave at night. Mandel leaves and takes all but three soldiers after the arrival of a dead and bloated, crucified soldier on a horse. The magistrate is getting healthier and returns to the old apartment.

In the final chapter, he takes charge and encourages people to grow vegetables within the city walls for the winter. Everyone is waiting for the barbarians; it seems as though they are watching the town. However, with a couple of frightened soldiers, one night Colonel Joll returns in his black carriage. They learn that Mandel has gone. The magistrate tells Joll that he released evil upon himself. Then the magistrate asks one of the soldiers to tell him what happened. The soldier tells him that they were lured by the barbarians deeper and deeper into the desert and mountains, who were uncatchable. The men end up starving in the desert and when they're picked off, they retreat. This leaves them horrified although they have never faced the barbarians in a battle. Joll and the soldiers escape at night. With a few townspeople

and only three soldiers, the Magistrate remains, and they wait for winter. They await the barbarians' attack. The snow begins to fall, and the Magistrate remarks that he may have lost his way a long time ago.

The title of the novel was taken by Coetzee from the poem of the same name by C. P. Cavafy, the Greek poet. His poem portrays the Roman Empire as decadent and precarious. They are waiting for the arrival of 'the barbarians' who will take over the machinery of government (Head 49). Head writes, "This 'waiting' is an anticipation of the imperialist self-prophecy, a form of justification that is also self-negation: the imperialist project is based on the perception of the barbarian other, and the anticipation of the eventual succession of this other" (49). The imperialists perceive the other as a threat, and the act of 'waiting' is an anticipation of this threat that will come and eventually be defeated. Greek poet Constantine Cavafy describes the Roman Empire where public life stopped to wait for the arrival of the barbarians. The senators stopped legislating, and the emperor–sitting enthroned–orators, consuls and praetors waiting at the city's main gate for the barbarians. At the end of the poem, people's faces become serious and the streets are emptying swiftly, they went home lost in thoughts after the night has fallen and they learnt that there are no barbarians at the border. The speaker questions what will happen to them after the barbarians, who embodied a kind of solution, cease to exist.

Cavafy writes, "Now what's going to happen to us without barbarians? / Those people were a kind of solution" (34-35). The idea of the poem is apparent in Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians,* which is the contradictory dependence on the other that supports imperialism. However, Joll and the Magistrate are waiting for a different manifestation of barbarism (Head 49). Head states, "Joll, like the Romans in Cavafy's poem, needs to discover barbarians to validate his mission and the existence of Empire" (49-50). Moreover, he argues, "the magistrate finds barbarism in the activities of Joll and his garrison for him, the waiting has

been for the true nature of Empire to be revealed; and, following the revelation, he begins the difficult process of disentangling himself from its ideological control" (Head 50). Both Joll and the Magistrate view the barbarians differently. For Colonel Joll, like the Romans in Cavafy's poem, they serve as a way to authenticate imperialism, however, for the Magistrate they serve as a light in the dark to expose the true nature of Empire and imperialism.

Coetzee also alludes to Kafka's short story "In the Penal Colony" in the scene where the word 'enemy' is written on the back of barbarian prisoners, and they were lashed until the word cannot be read anymore. In Kafka's short story, the writing on the back of a censured prisoner is divulged to be a self-destructive expression of power. Ironically, however, Coetzee alters the element of self-defeat to make it refer to the Empire, which is purged when the word 'enemy' on the barbarians' backs is lashed away (Head 50). Beckett's and Kafka's works are influential in his writings. Beckett's influence on Coetzee's novel can be seen in the way they both portray the act of waiting for a notion that is constructed and will probably never come, as seen in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.

This being said, it is no surprise that the novel won the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize for fiction. In 1982, two years after the novel's publication, it was nominated for the Philip K. Dick Award. At the end of the millennium, Penguin Books named *Waiting for the Barbarians* for its series "Great Books of the 20th Century." On 2 Oct. 2003, the Nobel Prize committee described *Waiting for the Barbarians* in the press release as "a political thriller in the tradition of Joseph Conrad, in which the idealist's naivety opens the gates to horror" ("Nobel Prize in Literature 2003"). Just like Kurtz in Heart of Darkness, Colonel Joll opens the gates to horror.

On 18 April 1982, Irving Howe reviewed *Waiting of the Barbarians* in *The New York Time* under the title 'A Stark Political Fable of South Africa.' He argues that the story results

in “a realistic fable, at once stark, exciting and economical.” At the beginning of the story when the Magistrate and Colonel Joll meet, we recognise that the novel is not about shades of characters but about a clash of moral styles and a drama of representative ways of governing. The dangerous journey into distant regions to take the girl back to her people reminds him of a certain punishing journey in T.E. Lawrence’s *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (Howe). Moreover, when the Magistrate comes back, he is charged with treason and he is tortured. Howe states that “as he [the magistrate] later reflects, he learns the great lesson of the 20th century.” The lesson is the meaning of humanity that the torturer showed him.

Howe makes an interesting claim that Colonel Joll represents one kind of politics and the Magistrate another and links them to *Heart of Darkness*. He quotes a London review of the novel named Bernard Levin: “Mr Coetzee sees the heart of darkness in all societies, and gradually it becomes clear that he is not dealing in politics at all, but inquiring into the nature of the beast that lurks within each of us ...” (qtd. in Howe). The idea that “heart of darkness” dwells in societies and a monster ‘lurks within each one of us’ might be true. However, Howe explains, “such invocations of universal evil can deflect attention from the particular and at least partly curable social wrongs Mr Coetzee depicts. Not only deflecting attention but encouraging readers, as they search for their inner beasts, to a mood of conservative acquiescence and social passivity.” Howe argues that Coetzee in his novel invokes the concept of universal evil that would drive the attention of the reader away from the social wrongs. In *Waiting for the Barbarians,* the universal evil is the torture and violence used by the ‘Unnamed’ Empire that drives away the reader from how the other is perceived and doomed to be the threat because they have different features.

One of the most important aspects of the novel is the portrayal of an unknown empire. The imperialist ideology is demonstrated throughout the novel by the employees of the ‘Unnamed’ Empire through violence and the perception of the other. Also, the ‘Unnamed’

Empire fears that it will cease to exist, thus it creates the barbarian as an enemy by changing the truth to justify the imperial mission. Therefore, it results in the fear of the other eating the souls of the empire and the inhabitants, which is another aspect of the novel.

Additionally, the novel depicts colonialism as having both physical and psychological aspects. It shows the horror of colonialism on people and earth. However, it affects both the coloniser and colonised. The act of torture brought by colonialism leaves the tribal nomads suffering both physical and psychological damage. Moreover, the earth suffers from the violence that colonialism brought: In Chapter Five, the barbarians flood all the fields. A quote that is attributed to Nietzsche can give an explanation of colonialism, he says, "And if thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee." The 'Unnamed' Empire gazes into the abyss through colonialism, and they gaze back at them. In this way, *Waiting for the Barbarians* shows profound violence and upheaval of Colonialism.

Power is another significant aspect that features in *Waiting for the Barbarians.* The novel analysis the relationship of power between the 'Unnamed' Empire and its subjects. It is shown in the demonstration of the power of Colonel Joll and his men on townspeople and the barbarians, they stole and use the town as a military base. Furthermore, another aspect of power is shown in the unusual relationship between the Magistrate and the girl. Using torture, also, is another aspect of power demonstrated by the 'Unnamed' Empire.

4. History, Culture, and Imperialism: Redeeming the Idea of the Empire

Writing history using the pen of the dominant group is a major theme in *Waiting for the Barbarians*. The Magistrate's hobby of digging for old artefacts makes him reflect on the history of the 'Unnamed' Empire. After he uncovers a large structure, he says

> Perhaps in my digging I have only scratched the surface. Perhaps ten feet below the floor lie the ruins of another fort, razed by the barbarians…Perhaps when I stand on the floor of the courthouse, if that is what it is, I stand over the head of a magistrate like myself, another grey-haired servant of Empire who fell in the arena of his authority, face to face at last with the barbarian. How will I ever know? (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 16)

The words of the Magistrate at first suggest that he believes the barbarians are responsible for the razing of the permanent settlement he finds. However, he later comes to realise that the 'Unnamed' Empire is the one responsible for wiping out the ancient settlements. In chapter five, he reflects

> It is the fault of Empire! Empire has created the time of history. Empire has located its existence not in the smooth recurrent spinning time of the cycle of the seasons but in the jagged time of rise and fall, of beginning and end, of catastrophe. Empire dooms itself to live in history and plot against history. One thought alone preoccupies the submerged mind of Empire: how not to end, how not to die, how to prolong its era. (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 146)

The 'Unnamed' Empire suppresses the existence of a previous nation/civilization/empire, they are suppressing a whole narrative of other peoples in order to give the impression that they existed there naturally and do whatever is necessary to survive. The magistrate's words offer a critical perspective on the nature of the empire and its relationship with the time of history. It implies that the nature of the empire and the fight against the natural flow of history would bring about the downfall of the empire.

One of the ways to justify their existence is through imperialism. Julius Caesar's famous phrase "I came, I saw, I conquered" reveals the imperial idea that is embodied in

Western culture. As seen in the previous chapter, Edward Said argues that the urge to conquer is embodied in culture. The 'Unnamed' Empire makes a usual life cycle appear as a threat to justify the conquest. The raid that happens near the outpost is enough for the empire to justify the deployments of the army and the Third Bureau of the Civil Guard. The Magistrate explains, "This so-called banditry does not amount to much. They steal a few sheep or cut out a pack-animal from a train. Sometimes we raid them in return. They are mainly destitute tribespeople with tiny flocks of their own living along the river. It becomes a way of life" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 4). Also, he clarifies early, "There is not much crime here and the penalty is usually a fine or compulsory labour" (2). The 'Unnamed' Empire is like any state who has many crimes and bandits the barbarians impose no big threat to the empire, but it uses crimes done by the barbarians and makes them appear as a threat to its existence to defend the urge to conquer that is embodied in culture and to redeem the idea of imperialism.

However, the barbarians are the source of commerce in the frontier. The Magistrate comments,

> There have been no barbarian visitors this year. It used to be that groups of nomads would visit the settlement in winter to pitch their tents outside the walls and engage in barter, exchanging wool, skins, felts and leatherwork for cotton goods, tea, sugar, beans, flour. I have encouraged commerce but forbidden payment in money. (40-41)

The Magistrate does not see the barbarians as enemies but as a source of commerce, and he could live in peace with them. However, Colonel Joll could not see the barbarians as a source of commerce but as an enemy and "incapable of independence", like Marlow in *Heart of Darkness*, who sees Africans as "incapable of independence" and "European tutelage was a given," as Said argues, "Conrad does not give us the sense that [Marlow] could imagine a

fully realized alternative to imperialism" (25). In the novel, invading the barbarians had no economic gain but simply the notion of the civilising mission and they change the truth to justify it.

In this respect, Todorov argues that Western civilisation culture is dominated by the fear of barbarians that eventually would turn them into barbarians. Following the same trajectory as Todorov, Nietzsche says, "And if thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee." Fearing something turns you into that thing. In *Waiting for the Barbarians,* Chapter Five begins with a description of the fear of the barbarians that has terrified the townspeople. The Magistrate says,

> I have barbarians come out at night. Before darkness falls the last goat must be brought in, the gates barred, a watch set in every lookout to call the hours. All night, it is said, the barbarians prowl about bent on murder and rapine. Children in their dreams see the shutters part and fierce barbarian faces leer through. "The barbarians are here!" the children scream, and cannot be comforted. Clothing disappears from washing- lines, food from larders, however tightly locked. The barbarians have dug a tunnel under the walls, people say; they come and go as they please, take what they like; no one is safe any longer. (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 134)

Later in the novel, we learn that those who had stolen from the townspeople are Mandel's soldiers. The Magistrate says, "There have been incidents in which soldiers have gone into shops, taken what they wanted, and left without paying. Of what use is it for the shopkeeper to raise the alarm when the criminals and the civil guard are the same people?" (135). And, he comments that they did not capture any barbarians and the soldiers lowered their guard, they did not take the barbarians' threat seriously because they are the barbarians who stole

from townspeople. The Magistrate says, “Despite the parade of vigilance on the ramparts and the weekly sweep along the lakeshore (for lurking barbarians, though none has ever been caught), discipline is lax” (135). The fear of barbarians turns the officers of the empire and the town’s people into barbarians: fearing that they will invade them, the empire invades them in return; fearing that they will steal, the empire steals beforehand. The ‘Unnamed’ Empire acts in the same way they paint the barbarians’ acts.

Seen this way, the barbarians in the story function as the ‘Shadow’ archetype of the empire. We can explain the fear of others using the Shadow archetype by Carl Jung. In his article titled “The Shadow,” Jung writes, “The shadow is a moral problem that challenges the whole ego-personality, for no one can become conscious of the shadow without considerable moral effort. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real” (8). Ego-personality keeps the dark characteristics concealed, it takes self-awareness and moral effort to acknowledge this dark aspect. Jung argues that the close inspection of the shadow reveals that it is constituted of inferiorities: “an emotional nature, a kind of autonomy, and accordingly an obsessive or, better, possessive quality” (8). Emotion, Jung argues, is when something happens to him that would reveal “a certain degree of inferiority” (9). Jung writes, “On this lower level with its uncontrolled or scarcely controlled emotions *one behaves more or less like a primitive,* who is not only the passive victim of his affects *but also singularly incapable of moral judgment*” (9; my emphasis).

Due to a certain degree of inferiority, the ‘Unnamed’ Empire acts like a primitive, it accuses the barbarians of acting this way, with incapable of moral judgement that those barbarians are humans as well. The shadow resists “moral control and prove almost impossible to influence,” and it projects its dark side into other to protect itself (Jung 9). “These resistances are usually bound up with *projections*, which are not recognized as such, and their recognition is a moral achievement beyond the ordinary” argues Jung (9). The

‘Unnamed’ Empire rejects that the dark aspects exist and projects them on the barbarians by changing the truth, which eventually they fall into the truth they created.

Moreover, Todorov describes barbarism and civilization as moral categories; He defines Barbarians as “those who deny the full humanity of others” (16). By the same token, Freire argues that oppression results in the dehumanisation of man and society. In the episode of the public torture, we see the dehumanisation of Colonel Joll and the townspeople and denying of the humanity of the barbarians. During the episode, the narrator says, “‘Not with that!’ I shout. The hammer lies cradled in the Colonel's folded arms. ‘You would not use a hammer on a beast, not on a beast!’” (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 117). Using a hammer to torture people is denying their humanity and showing that other people are things without feeling, we would not ‘use a hammer on a beast’ as the Magistrate said. Therefore, according to Todorov’s definition, the ‘Unnamed’ Empire and Colonel Joll are barbarians. However, Freire argues that the dehumanisation of society results in violence from both sides.

When the Colonel uses a hammer to beat the barbarians, he is decreasing their human value by the act of immoral torture itself manifesting a consciousness that is in line with Paulo Freire’s discussion of the oppressor/oppressed consciousness. He argues that the oppressor’s consciousness has the tendency to decrease people into objects to conquer. Western civilisation has deemed people who “have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses” as animals in the words of Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* (Conrad 7). Throughout the novel, there are a few occasions where barbarians are referred to as animals. For example, the Magistrate jokes about what the people are saying about him to the girl, he says, “People will say I keep two wild animals in my rooms, a fox and a girl,” he comments further, “She does not see the joke, or does not like it” (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 37). Juxtaposing a wild animal as a fox with a girl reduces the girl’s humanity. The oppressor has to decrease barbarians into animals to make the conquest easy and without sympathy.

Although the magistrate seems a better person compared to Joll, he himself is unconsciously dehumanising the girl and the other tortured barbarians and embodying an oppressor's consciousness. He seems to be taking care of her because he pities her, but in fact this stems from a sense of "false charity" as Freire describes the oppressor's charity that does not aim to liberate the oppressed. He argues that the oppressor engages in a "false charity" with the oppressed in order to limit their power, to keep them inhuman and always extend "their trembling hands" (Freire 45). Throughout the novel, we see that the Magistrate's consciousness is conflicted, at first he engages in false charity with the girl and the other barbarians. When he tries to stop Colonel Joll from torturing the barbarians using a hammer, he shouts, 'You would not use a hammer on a beast, not on a beast!'" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 117). The expression he uses here reveals that he unconsciously perceives them as less than human, therefore, one has to take pity on them as you would a helpless animal. This act of dehumanising the other, allows the oppressors to torture the "Other" barbarians in the name of the empire.

5. "The horror! The horror!": Torture and Violence

As discussed in the previous chapter, and as explained by Althusser, a state has two apparatuses by which it exerts control and domination over its subjects in order to secure its existence. If we compare the 'Unnamed' Empire in the novel to the state Althusser refers to, we can notice that the Magistrate and Colonel Joll correspond to the two types of state apparatuses, Repressive State Apparatus and Ideological State Apparatus, respectively. The Third Bureau of the Civil Guard represents the Repressive State Apparatus that functions through violence first then ideology. Furthermore, Ideological State Apparatuses, which function by ideological discourse, can be seen in the story about the Barbarians who are the enemy and who allegedly are about to attack the empire.

We see throughout the novel how the Third Bureau imposes this ideology through violence and torture. The narrator says,

> But last year stories began to reach us from the capital of unrest among the barbarians. Traders travelling safe routes had been attacked and plundered. Stock thefts had increased in scale and audacity. A party of census officials had disappeared and been found buried in shallow graves. Shots had been fired at a provincial governor during a tour of inspection. There had been clashes with border patrols. The barbarian tribes were arming, the rumour went; the Empire should take precautionary measures, for there would certainly be war. (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 8-9)

Those rumours–ideological discourse–circulate among the frontier and help in marking the barbarians as the enemy alongside violence and torture done by the Third Bureau as a Repressive State Apparatus. By the end of the novel, there were no barbarians, and only the fear and hatred towards them intensifies. Those stories are mostly rumours. These rumours justify the torture of the captives and the hostility towards the "Other." The state is ideologically controlling the consciousness of the inhabitants of that outpost in order to justify violence and make people believe that it is acceptable to torture the barbarians and that it was an act of defence to preserve the outpost. The magistrate's conflicted consciousness starts awakening and thus initiates a process of liberation from the state's ideology. Unfortunately, the outcome of this awakening is repressive torture that silences him and deprives him of his humanity.

It is clear then, that these rumours become ideological alibis to initiate violence. This is in line with Freire's and Fanon's argument that the initiative of violence is the coloniser. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon asserts, "The almighty body of violence rearing up in

reaction to the primary violence of the colonizer" (50). In the same vein, Freire maintains that "Once a situation of violence and oppression has been established, it engenders an entire way of life and behaviour for those caught up in it—oppressors and oppressed alike. Both are submerged in this situation, and both bear the marks of oppression" (58). The violence, most often does not come from the oppressed/colonised's side, but rather from the ones who unlawfully initiate oppression and violation of others' rights and lands.

In the novel, we are told that the initiative of violence is the barbarians, however, it is revealed that those violent acts are just how things go on those frontiers, "It becomes a way of life" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 4). The real initiative of violence is the Third Bureau, specifically Colonel Joll. In Chapter One, Joll tortures an innocent child and his grandfather from the tribe. The grandfather is bringing the boy to see the doctor because he is injured. When questioned after capture, the old man says, "nothing will heal it. I was bringing him to the doctor when the soldiers stopped us. That is all" (4). The Magistrate says to Colonel Joll that "No one would have brought an old man and a sick boy along on a raiding party," however, Joll questions and tortures them (4). Although the child and old man are completely innocent of accusations, Joll uses them to initiate violence and further confound the truth about the Barbarians' clan.

Joll makes the boy confess that his "clan are arming themselves, that in the spring you are all going to join in a great war on the Empire" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 11). Joll takes the boy on a journey to show him his clan then he brings them to the inn and tortures them. By commencing the violence, Colonel Joll opens the gates "to horror." This initiation of violence by the empire would push the barbarians to retaliate and take part in this violence. In the last chapter, the terrified soldier says to the Magistrate, "'they–the barbarians! They lured us on and on, we could never catch them. They picked off the stragglers, they cut our horses loose in the night, they would not stand up to us!'" (161). The two sides enter a vicious cycle

that only the empire can break by exerting even more violence until they subdue the opposing barbarians.

In her article titled "Acts without Agents: The Language of Torture in J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians,*" Kelly Adams argues that

> The novel is determined by two overlapping linguistic structures: the Magistrate's narration and Coetzee's narration. The Magistrate narrates the novel in the first person and the present tense, which scholars have argued engenders an immediate, affective response to the text so that readers undergo the "complex unfolding of feelings and associations" that the Magistrate experiences. (167-168)

This doubling of narration paves the way for a complex involvement with the issue of torture to emerge, which is in the case of the passive voice. These two overlapping linguistic structures evoke an emotional response from readers, allowing them to undergo the same emotional journey and associations as the Magistrate. Coetzee's narrative technique of using the first-person perspective and the present tense allowed the reader to be involved in the subjective experience of the Magistrate.

In his essay "Into the Dark Chamber," Coetzee famously discusses the complexity of demonstrating torture that the passive voice highlights (Adams 168). As he states in allusion to a beating scene in Nadine Gordimer's *Burger's Daughter*, "It is important not to read the episode in a narrowly symbolic way. The driver and the donkey do not stand respectively for torturer and tortured. 'Torture without the torturer' is the key phrase" (Coetzee 367). Adams comments, "What Coetzee articulates here is the problematic of power within acts of torture. The torturer does not exist outside of the dehumanizing power relations that constitute the torturer as torturer" (168). The agentless sentence offers an ironic means to involve with the

obscenity of torture without eroding its seriousness or reproducing the logic that enables its existence by avoiding the representation of the subject. Thus, Coetzee forms a linguistic opening that permits him to deconstruct the power relations in the torture chamber and represent acts without agents, or 'torture without the torturer' (Adams 168). Using agentless sentences, he tortures the reader and the researcher who tries to decode the meaning or interpret the novel, even though he refers to the present literary theory of analysing, he likes torturing the reader without torturer.

Adams explains that In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, Coetzee deliberately places short passives in scenes that involve torture and its physical effects (168). In Chapter One, the Magistrate brings up the topic of torture with Colonel Joll in the conversation:

> When I see Colonel Joll again, when he has the leisure, I bring the conversation around to torture. "What if your prisoner is telling the truth," I ask, "yet *finds he is not believed*? Is that not a terrible position? Imagine: *to be prepared to yield*, to yield, to have nothing more to yield, *to be broken*, yet *to be pressed to yield* more! And what a responsibility for the interrogator! How do you ever know when a man has told you the truth?" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 5; emphasis added)

To explain the passage, italics have been added to illustrate the number of short passives that the Magistrate uses while discussing with Colonel Joll. Remarkably, the first question asked to Joll is divided into two sections, and it is wrecked by the phrase 'I ask.' The Magistrate gives ownership of the prisoner to Joll in the first clause of this question by using the possessive pronoun "your" before "prisoner." On the other hand, the Magistrate uses the short passive to end his question in the second clause: 'yet finds he is not believed?' The by-phrase ("yet finds he is not believed [by you]") seems to be missing in the clause, however, we

decipher how to read the short passive by the context in which Coetzee (not the Magistrate) frames the question.

To explain further, the Magistrate is speaking to Colonel Joll in the first part of the clause; the word "your" in the first clause informs how we read the second clause which is Coetzee's (Adams 169). "On one level, we can read the passage as the Magistrate asking Joll what happens when he does not believe the prisoner, with the short passive indicating an omission of agency even as agency is implied," explains Adams (169). In this regard, while escaping the ascription of agency, the Magistrate uses the short passive to question torture. Therefore, the short passive permits the Magistrate to take a middle approach between openly condemning Joll of torture, a word which the Magistrate does not use in his conversation with Joll, and completely paying no attention to the question of torture (Adams 169).

In 1986, J. M. Coetzee published an essay titled "Into the Dark Chamber: The Writer and the South African State." In the essay, Coetzee argues that South African writers' "approaches to the torture chamber are thus riddled with pitfalls, and more than one writer has fallen into them" (364). For Coetzee, there are two reasons why "torture has exerted a dark fascination" on South African writers (363). The first reason is that "relations in the torture room provide a metaphor, bare and extreme, for relations between authoritarianism and its victims" (363). The second reason is "the fact that the torture room is a site of extreme human experience, accessible to no one save the participants" (363). Thus, Coetzee argues that the writers face two dilemmas. The first dilemma, he reasons, is the writers have a deeper problem of whether to permit themselves to be speared on the dilemma proposed by the state, that is, either to overlook its obscenities or to produce depictions of them; moreover, he writes, "The true challenge is: how not to play the game by the rules of the state, how to establish one's own authority, how to imagine torture and death on one's own terms" (364). In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, to overcome this dilemma Coetzee creates the setting of the

novel geographically vague and he does not name the empire to escape any state authority or represent it. The uncertain world he creates helps him institute his authority on how to fancy torture and death. Also, the novel shows interest in 'relations between authoritarianism and its victims,' for example, the Magistrate and Mandel and the girl and the Magistrate.

The second dilemma writers face is "concerning the person of the torturer," explains Coetzee (364). He writes, "How is the writer to represent the torturer? If he intends to avoid the clichés of spy fiction, to make the torturer neither a figure of Satanic evil, nor an actor in a black comedy, nor a faceless functionary, nor a tragically divided man doing a job he does not believe in, what openings are left?" (364). He gives *A Ride on the Whirlwind* novel by Sipho Sepamla as an example of facing this dilemma of depicting the person of the torturer. Additionally, he reasons that Sepamla makes his torturers both all too Satanic and too easily human (365). In *Waiting for the Barbarians*, there are three torturers, namely, the Magistrate, Colonel Joll, and Mandel. Coetzee's style of ambiguity and agentless sentences help him in portraying the person of the torturer as neither too evil nor too human. Colonel Joll and Mandel are portrayed as any other officer of the 'Unnamed' Empire, like a regular guard in the garrison. Even the Magistrate, the narrator, speaks about himself as another employee of the empire.

When the narrator describes Colonel Joll and Mandel, they have no clichés descriptions of the torturers, like the big, fat scared men. The narrator describes Mandel as "a good-looking man, with regular white teeth and lovely blue eyes" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 84). He is a handsome man, not a hideous man. On one hand, Colonel Joll's description makes him mysterious and neither evil nor too human due to "two little discs of glass," which are the sunglasses that characterize the Colonel (1). On the other hand, the Magistrate describes himself as an 'old man,' he does not portray himself as too evil or too good, he is just commenting on the events that are taking place at the outpost.

In the same essay, Coetzee writes, “In 1980 I published a novel (*Waiting for the Barbarians*) about the impact of the torture chamber on the life of a man of conscience” (363). When Mandel tortures the Magistrate, he says,

> But my torturers were not interested in degrees of pain. 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, which very soon forgets them ... They did not come to force the story out of me of what I had said to the barbarians and what the barbarians had said to me. So I had no chance to throw the high-sounding words I had ready in their faces. They came to my cell to show me the meaning of humanity, and in the space of an hour they showed me a great deal. (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 126)

The conscience of the Magistrate changes after the torture, and he becomes confused about the meaning of the words torture and torturer: he says, “[Mandel] looks back at me. I have no idea what he sees. Thinking of him, I have said the words torture. . . torturer to myself, but they are strange words, and the more I repeat them the more strange they grow, till they lie like stones on my tongue” (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 129). Moreover, he understands the purpose of torture; he reflects,

> I too, if I live long enough in this cell with its ghosts not only of the father and the daughter but of the man who even by lamplight did not remove the black discs from his eyes and the subordinate whose work it was to keep the brazier fed, will be touched with the contagion and *turned into a creature that believes in nothing*. (89; emphasis added)

In regards to this, Coetzee himself argues, “In the torture room unlimited force is exerted upon the physical being of an individual in a twilight of legal illegality, with the purpose, if not of destroying him, then at least of destroying the kernel of resistance within him” (363). In the same token, the Magistrate says, “The truth is that I am not myself … I walked into that cell a sane man sure of the rightness of my cause… but after two months among … I am much less sure of myself” (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 104-105). At the end of the novel, the Magistrate approves the story of the empire and the resistance within him is destroyed when he tries to record what might be the last year of the settlement. His consciousness that was awakening to the manipulation of the truth of the empire was crashed down by the torture of the repressive “devotees of truth” who are devoted to the act of weaving a truth that is not true (9).

In his essay entitled “Waiting for the Barbarians after September 11,” Patrick Lenta draws an analogy of post-September 11 context and J.M. Coetzee’s *Waiting for the Barbarians* to understand the relationship between torture, law and power. In the essay, he argues that the acts of torture are similar to those used by colonial and imperial powers. Lenta argues that the torture imposed on the Magistrate is similar to those practised at Abu Ghraib (78). After the invasion of Iraq, the USA used Abu Ghraib prison as a military prison where they tortured and executed Iraqis. Members of the United States Army used many ways to torture prisoners at Abu Ghraib which are “being forced to wear women’s clothing, being hooded and made to assume stress postures to avoid electrocution or similar threats, and being forced to perform tricks such as walking on hands and knees and barking like a dog. One prisoner, Shalan Alsharoni, recalls witnessing a sham execution like the Magistrate’s” (Lenta 78). The US administration uses the violence committed against the United States to justify an authorisation of a more or less permanent war against those it considers its enemies. The aggression that may appear limitless is the same vision behind Joll’s tracking of the

barbarians that aim to take over the Empire (80). Lenta writes, "The US administration justifies the use of torture (or "torture lite" as it is often euphemistically referred to) as necessary to extract information about potential threats to national security" (81). The Unnamed Empire's Third Bureau and Joll, also, justify the use of torture as obligatory to look for the truth.

In addition, Lenta draws on Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* theory to analyse the novel. He argues, "The spectacle of torture directed by Joll enacts the triumph of the Empire's authority" (76). Marking the barbarians' bodies with the negative sign 'ENEMY' achieves a recharging ritual. At first, the crowd hesitates to join the beating after being requested since the purpose of demonstrating the uncontrolled presence of the Empire is to impose fear in the audience. Nonetheless, the ritual invites the crowd to participate in the punishment, which they do until the soldiers regain control of the ritual (76). "The spectacle forces the crowd to experience the potency of the Empire's power so that its members will experience themselves as subject to the Empire," explains Lenta (76). The Empire makes the barbarian threat real for them and its ability to defeat it. By marking those who live beyond its boundaries whom it has the power to subjugate, the Empire reconstructs itself (76). The 'Unnamed' Empire uses those tricks to ensure its existence, by deceitful reconstruction of the truth and violence against the Barbarians.

6. Foucault's Power-Knowledge: Versions of Truth and Re-writing the Truth of the "Unnamed" Empire

The Magistrate and Colonel Joll search for the truth, and they re-write the truth that suits the existence of the 'Unnamed' Empire. They are two sides of the same coin because they are both establishing some kind of truth about the empire and exercising power in different ways. They are each other's shadow. One represents soft power, and the other

represents hard power, respectively. The poem entitled “The Man with the Blue Guitar” by Wallace Stevens forms an analogy to the way both Colonel Joll and the Magistrate write their own version of the truth. Stevens writes “And things are as I think they are / And say they are on the blue guitar” (Stevens lines 103-103). ‘The blue guitar’ can be seen as the instrument that allows the perceiver to customize the truth based on their own subjective and personal tunes. Both the Colonel and the Magistrate attempt to change the tunes of the ‘Unnamed’ Empire based on different ideologies that serve the same purpose.

Colonel Joll writes the truth on ‘the blue guitar’ by torturing the other. In Chapter One, the Magistrate asks Colonel Joll how to know if the prisoner is telling the truth. Joll says, “There is a certain tone … A certain tone enters the voice of a man who is telling the truth. Training and experience teach us to recognize that tone” (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 5). He explains further, “I am speaking only of a special situation now, I am speaking of a situation in which I am probing for the truth, in which I have to exert pressure to find it. First I get lies, you see—this is what happens— first lies, then pressure, then more lies, then more pressure, then the break, then more pressure, then the truth. That is how you get the truth” (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 5). The Magistrate comments, “Pain is truth; all else is subject to doubt. That is what I bear away from my conversation with Colonel Joll” (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 5). The ability to cause human pain to others shows that one has power over them.

Foucault argues that power produces knowledge and truth. Both the unnamed protagonist and Joll have power that enables them to alter the truth. In “Truth and Power,” Foucault writes, “‘Truth’ is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it” (133). The unnamed protagonist, like Colonel, uses his power to alter the truth. He alters the truth in three occurrences using his power and authority: first with the barbarian girl, the second with

wooden slips of ancient civilisation, and last with the history of the settlement. The relationship between the Magistrate and the girl is an interesting one because through it we understand the protagonist's character and we can view it as a slave/master relationship. The Magistrate says, "It has been growing more and more clear to me that until the marks on this girl's body are deciphered and understood I cannot let go of her" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 33). He wants to decipher her body in the same way he wants to decipher the wooden slips from a site of barbarian ruins, to tell his version of the truth.

The girl, like Joll's prisoners, is held and tortured psychologically, as later the unnamed girl reveals that she was unhappy, as even the Magistrate admits. He says "But like a fool, instead of giving her a good time I oppressed her with gloom" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 68). Further down the line, he questions his own interest in the girl: "is it she I want or the traces of a history her body bears? (70). He uses scars on her body to tell his story that he is innocent and had nothing to do with torture because during the torture he looks the other way. He says, "I sit in my rooms with the windows shut, in the stifling warmth of a windless evening, trying to read, straining my ears to hear or not to hear sounds of violence" (23). However, when the girl tells him how she was tortured, he loses interest in her because he is robbed of the pleasure to decipher her scars and of telling his version of the truth of what happened to her; a version where he is innocent. To illustrate, the Magistrate says,

> I search for secrets and answers, no matter how bizarre, like an old woman reading tea-leaves. There is nothing to link me with torturers, people who sit waiting like beetles in dark cellars. How can I believe that a bed is anything but a bed, a woman's body anything but a site of joy? I must assert my distance from Colonel Joll! I will not suffer for his crimes!" (47-48)

He wants to read her body as ‘tea leaves’ and to distance himself from Colonel Joll and torture. Furthermore, he calls his own “soft, ideological” imposition of truth as reading tea leaves, and Colonel Joll’s forceful and repressive pushing for a truth that does not exist as “torture.” The Magistrate’s interest in the girl’s body could have been oppressive to the girl herself.

Another occasion where the Magistrate imposes his own the version of the truth is when he tries to decipher the wooden slips and to write the history of the outpost. He becomes obsessed to collect the slips that he finds occasionally near a site of old ruins. He says, “Now, in the hope of deciphering the script, I have set about collecting all the slips I can, and have let the children who play here know that if they find one it is always worth a penny” (16). He attempts to translate them:

> thinking that what I had hitherto taken to be characters in a syllabary might in fact be elements of a picture whose outline would leap at me if I struck on the right arrangement: a map of the land of the barbarians in olden times, or a representation of a lost pantheon. I have even found myself reading the slips in a mirror, or tracing one on top of another, or conflating half of one with half of another. (17)

Even though, he knew that they “are open to many interpretations,” he tries to give those symbols meaning (123). While the magistrate tries to read these slips in multiple ways to reach some truth about the previous empire, Colonel Joll believes that they are secret messages from the barbarians. During the questioning by Joll, the Magistrate translates them as the situation fit to show Joll that they are not a message from the barbarians and that they held many interpretations.

In many ways than one, the magistrate's fascination with the possible history of the 'Unnamed' Empire's outpost pushes him to record accounts different from the annals he was supposed to write. Although his intentions deviate from the agenda of the officers of the empire, his attempts of rewriting or reimagining the truth of that imperial outpost are still testimony to the power he holds over the imposition of truth. He says,

> But when I sit down at my writing-table, wrapped against the cold in my great old bearskin, with a single candle (for tallow too is rationed) and a pile of yellowed documents at my elbow, what I find myself beginning to write is not the annals of an imperial outpost or an account of how the people of that outpost spent their last year composing their souls as they waited for the barbarians. (168)

Moreover, he writes in the documents, "No one who paid a visit to this oasis … failed to be struck by the charm of life here. We lived in the time of the seasons, of the harvests, of the migrations of the waterbirds. We lived with nothing between us and the stars. We would have made any concession, had we only known what, to go on living here. This was paradise on earth" (168-169). If we imagine that this is the end of the 'Unnamed' Empire, we would not describe it as a "paradise on earth," but it was filled with horror. The protagonist has the power as a magistrate to tell the truth but he chose to tell his version of the truth that suits the existence of the empire just like Colonel Joll.

Both the Magistrate and Colonel Joll have different ways of rewriting the truth. When Colonel Joll tortures the Magistrate and presses on the truth that the magistrate is conspiring against the empire, even though the torture episode is not described, the Magistrate reflects once again on how Joll probes for the truth: he says, "No matter if I told my interrogators the truth, recounted every word I uttered on my visit to the barbarians, no matter even if they

were tempted to believe me, they would press on with their grim business, for it is an article of faith with them that the last truth is told only in the last extremity" (*Waiting for the Barbarians* 105). Joll only finds the truth in "the last extremity" when he is fully present and pressing on with his power and torturing, unlike the Magistrate who rewrites the truth in a passive away using his authority as the officer of the 'Unnamed' Empire.

7. Conclusion

J. M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* represents the history of imperialism and consciousness of Western civilisation. Also, the novel depicts the way the oppressive state used to change the truth, like the Ministry of Truth and Thought Police in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. Winston works at the Records Department in the Ministry of Truth, where his job is to rewrite history and destroy documents. He prevents the truth from recirculating again and produces what the Party needs in the same way the magistrate has power over what versions to include in the annals, which has been dictated by the empire. The 'Wooden Slips' the Magistrate finds in the ruins give many reading and they are indicative that histories and truths of empires are but attempts to reading fragments and remains of the past. These readings are often altered to fit different agendas and to suppress undesired narratives. Eventually, the ones who hold power have the right to impose their own reading of the slips.

General Conclusion

Many scholars and men of letters tire to understand the human phenomena that is the 'empire.' Its system, its policy, and its natural way of exciting have been operated on like a patient upon the table. Coetzee in *Waiting for the Barbarians* operated on the heart of the empire, to give us a look into the heart of darkness. In the style of Joseph Conrad, the Magistrate serves as a commenter and the judge on the events of the story, he speaks of reason to himself and the reader.

The first part of this dissertation gives a dive into the empire and the theories that try to explain this social phenomenon. This was achieved by exploring five theories. Firstly, the study used Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* as a theoretical reference to better understand empire and imperialism. Then, it explores Foucault's theory on Power/Knowledge and Louis Althusser's 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,' which explains how power and knowledge work that the empire uses. Moreover, it investigates the oppressor consciousness using Paulo Freire's seminal text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and Tzvetan Todorov's *Fear of Barbarians: Beyond the Clash of Civilizations*.

Furthermore, Edward Said's *Culture and Imperialism* discussion offered some insights into the relationship between the culture of the West and imperialism and how imperial ideology is embodied in culture. The coloniser uses culture, namely literature, to justify imperialism. Also to justify the ideology, the oppressor's consciousness decreases everything surrounding it into objects to easily colonise without empathy. To explore more about the oppressor consciousness, the first chapter discusses Freire's seminal text, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Freire's ideas provide a guide for understanding the consequences of the oppression on both sides of the war, the empire and the barbarians, which results in the dehumanisation of society. Thus, the oppression paves the way for the fear of the other.

Moreover, Foucault's Theory on Power/Knowledge gives insights into the relationship between power truth, and knowledge, they intertwine in the power relations. Further, Althusser's explanation of State Apparatuses enlightened the discussion on the methods a state maintains power: Repressive State Apparatuses (through violence and force), and the Ideological State Apparatuses that operate mainly through ideology and propaganda to manipulate the minds. The two apparatuses work hand in hand in a complementary fashion. This also explained how power is used to impose ideology.

The second chapter, entitled "The Mark of the Empire: History, Versions of Truth & Violence," gives an overview of the author and the novel. Then, it provides a look at the cycle of the empire's history, oppressor consciousness and culture that helps in justifying and redeeming the idea of empire and imperialism. And, it gives an analysis of the fear of barbarians in the novel. Moreover, it provided how violence and torture are present in the novel. Also, it explained how Coetzee depicts torturer and torture using language. The last part analyses the novel using Foucault's theory of Power/Knowledge to understand how the Magistrate, Colonel Joll, and the 'Unnamed' Empire use their power to change the truth.

The 'Unnamed' Empire subdues the narrative of other people and changes the truth to validate its existence using power. To justify the torture and the invasion of the barbarians, the 'Unnamed' Empire paints a usual life cycle to appear as a threat. The empire offices, Colonel Joll and the Magistrate are two sides of the same coin. The latter represents the soft power and Joll represents the hard power of the empire. Both exercise power, and inflict oppression and dehumanisation in two different ways. However, The Magistrate's consciousness was conflicted throughout the novel, and towards the end, torture made him give up on any awakening in his conscience and consciousness. Furthermore, the empire fears the barbarians which makes it act the same way it deems the barbarians would act without moral judgment.

In addition, the chapter discussed how the Magistrate and Colonel Joll are the embodiment of the two types of state apparatuses, Repressive State Apparatus and Ideological State Apparatus, respectively. The Third Bureau of the Civil Guard represents the Repressive State Apparatus that functions through violence first then ideology. Likewise, Ideological State Apparatuses, which function by ideological discourse, can be seen in the story about the Barbarians who are the enemy and who allegedly are about to attack the empire. Both search for the truth, and they re-write the truth that suits the existence of the 'Unnamed' Empire. They are creating some kind of truth about the empire and exercising power in different ways. They are each other's shadow. And, both use their power given by the 'Unnamed' Empire to alter the truth. Both the Magistrate and Colonel Joll have a different ways of rewriting the truth. Joll only finds the truth when he is fully present and pressing on with his power and torturing, unlike the Magistrate who passively rewrites the truth using his authority as the officer of the 'Unnamed' Empire.

The Magistrate alters the truth in three incidences using his power and authority. The relationship between the Magistrate and the girl is a slave/master relationship. He wants to decipher her body to tell his version of the truth that he is innocent and had nothing to do with torture because he looks away. Also, he tries to alter the truth when he tries to decipher the wooden slips of an ancient civilisation, even though he knows that they are open to many readings. When he recorded the history of the outpost, he tell his version of the truth that suits the existence of the empire.

There are two dilemmas, Coetzee argues, in his essay, that face South African writers. Coetzee overcomes the first dilemma of avoiding any state authority by setting his novel in an ambiguous unnamed area. The second dilemma is that most writers fall into clichés when creating torturers, the Magistrate, Colonel Joll and Mandel have no clichés descriptions of the torturers, like the big, fat scared men. The conscience of the Magistrate changes after the

torture, he supports the story of the empire and the resistance within him is destroyed by the end of the novel. The interplay between power, knowledge, and truth shows us how empires, and thus states, can create the necessary power to produce and control knowledge, and therefore manipulate truth. Just as in Orwell's 1984, the 'Unnamed' Empire is a totalitarian regime in disguise, and so are most other real-life empires.

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الملخص

تسعى هذه الأطروحة إلى تسليط الضوء على الطبيعة السياسية للإمبراطورية في توسيع نفوذها على الصحراء، حيث تعيش القبائل البربرية والبدو الرحل، باستخدام حقيقة مفتعلة من أجل استعادة فكرة الإمبراطورية في رواية جي إم كوتزي "في انتظار البرابرة" (1980). بالإضافة إلى ذلك، يدقق هذا البحث في دور التعذيب والعنف في بناء حقيقة «الإمبراطورية غير المسماة» في الرواية. وبالمثل، فإنه يحقق في تأثير التعذيب على رجل الضمير. تحاول الدراسة أيضًا استكشاف نتائج الاضطهاد الذي يؤدي إلى الخوف من البرابرة وتجريد المجتمع من إنسانيته. كهدف نهائي، يتفقد تمثيل القوة الناعمة والقوة الصلبة وكيف تتوافق الشخصيتان الرئيسيتان مع هذه الأنواع من القوة على التوالي. في النهاية، تم استنتاج أن هذين الرجلين وجهان لعملة واحدة، وكلاهما «عملاء للإمبراطورية» يسمح وعيهما الظالم بإعادة بناء حقيقة الإمبراطورية من خلال القوة العنيفة والأيديولوجية. لتحقيق أهداف البحث، تعتمد الأطروحة على خمسة نظريات: ثقافة وإمبرياليته لإدوارد سعيد، ونظرية فوكو حول القوة/المعرفة، و «أيديولوجية وأجهزة الدولة الأيديولوجية» للويس ألتوسر، تربية المظلومين لباولو فريري، والخوف من البرابرة: ما وراء صراع الحضارات لتسفيتان تودوروف.

الكلمات المفتاحية :الحقيقة، القوة، التاريخ، العنف، التعذيب، الثقافة، الإمبريالية، الإمبراطورية، الخوف من البرابرة.