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War on Terror: On Re-reading Dracula and Waiting for the Barbarians

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Abstract

Framed by the emerging emphasis in postcolonial studies on terror and narratives of terror, this paper argues that *Waiting for Barbarians* (1980; hereafter *Barbarians*) can be read as a counter-discourse of resistance to *Dracula's* (1898) representation of "war on terror" which revolves around the relationship between empire and its embattled subjects. To demonstrate this the paper examines how *Barbarians* deconstructs *Dracula's* trope of barbarian invasion, resists the techniques of liquidating *Dracula*, and reimagines *Dracula's* the notion of the end of history and the last man. The paper concludes that *Dracula* and *Barbarians* offer us radically different conceptualisations of the war on terror and contending visions of the future that cunningly reflect contemporary attitudes since the 9/11 attacks.

[**Keywords:** Stoker, Coetzee, *Dracula*, war on terror, empire, monsters, barbarians, history]

Introduction

As the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks demonstrate, terror attacks beget counter-terror or war on terror. However, while the military option may yield immediate strategic successes, it does not address the challenge that acts of terror and wars on terror pose to values such as community, justice, good and evil. Derrida pointed to the urgency of this challenge when he argued that the 9/11 attacks called for a philosophical response that will "call into question the most deep-seated conceptual presuppositions in philosophical discourse [...] from which only a new philosophical reflection can awaken us, a reflection on philosophy, most notably on political philosophy and its heritage" (100). Derrida went on to assert that this philosophical mobilisation will interrogate the "official rhetoric" and "received concepts like "war" or "terrorism" (ibid). The publications of Alex Houen's *Terrorism and Modern Literature: From Joseph Conrad to Ciaran Carson* (2002); Jeffrey R. Di Leo and Uppinder Mehan's, eds. *Terror, Theory and the Humanities*, (2012); and, more significantly for the postcolonial context, Elleke Boehmer and Stephen Morton's, eds. *Terror and the Postcolonial* (2010), and Stephen Morton's *States of Emergency: Colonialism, Law and Literature* (2013) show that the project of re-examining or rethinking the received concepts of "terror," "war," "community" and "justice" has been taken up in the humanities too.

For postcolonial studies and colonised people, in particular, acts of terror and war on terror have a historical dimension traceable to colonial violence and traumatism, and the emergence of local resistance (Fanon 26-84; Mbembe 24, 102, 174; Baker 61-62; Boehmer 141-145). The question for postcolonial literary criticism then is whether

postcolonial fiction can help us understand colonial acts of terror and the precariousness of our contemporary world in which terror is no longer “the state of emergency” but a diabolical figure of everyday life. One way by which we can investigate how fiction explores the subject of terror can be gleaned from Robert Young’s insightful paper “*Terror Effects*.” Young argues that literary critics must move beyond how fiction represents, mediates and produces terror to how it “effect(s) a counter-discourse of resistance” to terror (310). In this new space of inquiry, the critical question, for Young, becomes: “can fiction also show us how to move out of terror, how to refuse its effects?” (310). Young’s conclusion is that fiction is replete with individuals who resist the “effects” of terror through “radically reimagined voyage into the ethical, psychic, and political space of androgyny, non-violence, and the post-human” (326).

Rather than focus on the intratextual dynamics of resistance to the ‘effects’ of terror as Young does, I propose in this paper to set up a radical dialogue between Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897) and Coetzee’s *Barbarians* (1980) in to order to show how postcolonial fiction stages a counter-discourse of resistance to the protocols of representation of war on terror, the techniques of containment of terror and the imagined community that is invoked following the liquidation of the terrorist. Although the two novels are set in different historical temporalities, this paper is grounded on the premise that *Dracula* and *Barbarians* can be read, in a specifically postcolonial sense, as narratives of “war on terror” structured around binaries such as self/Other, centre/frontier and civilised/barbarian. Within this intertextual framework, it is pertinent to examine, as a supplement to Young’s questions, how postcolonial fiction brings into question the structurality of colonial war on terror in order articulate an alternate vision. The emphasis in this paper, therefore, is not so much on resistance to the “effects” of terror as on how *Barbarians* can be read as a counterpoint to *Dracula*, revealing, to borrow from Arundhati Roy, not only “the nugget of sorrow... [and] the hidden fish of shame in the sea of glory” (230) on which *Dracula*’s war on terror ends but, more importantly, interrogating the notions of war, justice, scared violence and torture which the vampire slayers’ take as self-evident.

Deconstructing the Structurality of *Dracula*’s War on Terror

Dracula’s major protocol of structuring the war on terror that Coetzee’s *Barbarians* resists is the trope of barbarian invasion of the heartland of civilisation. Before we pursue this argument, it is significant to examine how this trope functions as the organising armature around which a Manichean rhetoric and vision is constructed in *Dracula*. The figuration of a barbarian invasion of empire in *Dracula* revolves around Count Dracula’s audacious ‘terror’ attack on England, an event which brings into sharp focus the relationship between Empire and its embattled subjects at the margins. In deploying this trope Stoker invokes a powerful imperial motif for the constitution of the Other: *the frontier*. One of the dominant images of the frontier is that it is a barbarian territory (Salter 86; Todorov 14-15; Eco 28). Inhabited by *homo barbarus* the frontier is viewed as being in opposition and threat to *homo humanus* (Heidegger 224). As Heidegger argues it is impossible to understand the emergence of *humanitas* and *humanism* in the Roman

Republic without reference to the process of categorisations which distinguished Roman *paideia* (education) from others who were considered as *barbarians* (ibid). Perhaps nowhere has the frontier trope been so intimately linked with the ideas of threat, progress, individualism, masculinity and exceptionalism than in America (Turner 60; Slotkin 33-36; Wright 1-6). As Frederick Turner put it, “*the frontier is the outer edge -- the meeting point between savagery and civilization*” (60). Indeed, Fanon argues that underlying colonial ideology and practice was the compartmentalisation of space wherein the native in the frontier was regarded as backward (27-29).

Stoker’s *Dracula* thus draws on this archive of Manichean spatialisation to explore the relationship between empire and its subjects at the margins. The terror attack on England comes from the frontier represented by Transylvania. Transylvania represents pre-modernity and anarchist tendencies, and the habitat of radical evil, terrorist or the monstrous Other embodied by Count Dracula. Not only is Dracula’s Castle in “one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe [and] every known superstition in the world is gathered into the horseshoe of the Carpathians” (Stoker 19); Transylvania is also a place of “many strange things” (32). Jonathan Harker’s journey to the Carpathians is thus marked not only by a progressive negation of normality but, crucially, it sets up the props for an encounter with a diabolical frontier from which the figure that emerges is, as Fanon argues in another context, the “quintessence of evil, insensible to ethics [...] the corrosive element destroying all that comes near him [...]” (32). Harker’s immediate reaction on discovering Count Dracula in “the great box” is that, in London, Count Dracula will not only “sate his lust for blood among the teeming millions” but more horrifyingly will “create a new and ever-widening circle of semi-demons” (Stoker, 63).

Of greater significance about *Dracula*’s war on terror therefore is the source of the terror: the “terrorist” in the novel is located at the margins of Empire. To sustain this structuration requires the mobilisation of discourses and metanarratives that construct the Other as radically monstrous, and in the process presents counterterror, war, revenge, and torture as humanitarian and sacred duties. For example, to eliminate Count Dracula, the terrorist, the vampire slayers led by Van Helsing draw on two important discourses: scientific and Judeo-Christian constructions of monstrosity. These provide the epistemological and ideological rationalisation for framing the war on terror and ethical responsibility. First, Van Helsing draws on an array of scientific discourses on crime, insanity, and authorities like Nordau, Lombroso, and Arminius of Buda-Pesth University in order to classify Count Dracula both as “a criminal and criminal type [...] of imperfectly formed mind” and the Un-Dead (Stoker 406). This reframes the vampire slayers’ war on terror as a benevolent and ethical act directed at liberating Count Dracula’s trapped soul from the tragic condition of the un-Dead. Re-presented in this manner the vampire slayers’ violence and torture becomes permissible. This accounts for Mina’s joy at the final dissolution of Dracula. For as Mina writes “there was in the face a *look of peace, such as I never could have imagined might have rested there*” (447 emphasis mine).

However, the dominant justificatory metanarrative for the “war on terror” is the Judeo-Christian cosmic battle between Good and Evil. Judeo-Christian theology provides Van Helsing the context to redefine Dracula as the Devil: “he is *brute*, and more than

brute; he is devil in callous [...] without heart or conscience, preying on the bodies and the souls of those we love best (283; emphasis mine). These discourses function as processes of normalisation, legitimation or domestication which Derrida argues constitutes a crucial aspect of the reaction to the appearance of the monstrous figure (385-87). Contrary to Derrida's formulation however, *Dracula* shows that the process of normalisation is not necessarily geared toward "acculturation" (86) but to the violent elimination of the monstrous figure. More importantly, in *Dracula* the Judeo-Christian metanarrative radically transforms the vampire slayers into guardians of civilisation, crusaders engaged in an apocalyptic war to rid the world of extreme evil in the form of monsters or vampires from the margins of empire. As Van Helsing argues, their war on Dracula's terror is not only "for the sake of humanity," they are also "ministers of God's own wish: that the world, and the men for whom His Son die, will not be given over to monsters, whose very existence would defame Him...we go as knights of the Cross to redeem more" (381). But this redemptive mission and the concomitant valorisation of divine violence raises the question of responsibility. What is minimised or occulted in this elevation of the war on terror to a transcendental or cosmic battle is the material or corporeal repercussions on Dracula, the Other. Responsibility is now owed to only the victims and abstractions. We might here note how President George Bush Jr. framed the issue of responsibility as America prepared to wage its war on terror after the 9/11 attacks;

Just three days removed from these events, Americans do not yet have the distance of history. *But our responsibility to history is already clear: to answer these attacks and rid the world of evil...Civilized people around the world denounce the evildoers who devised and executed these terrible attacks. Justice demands that those who helped or harbored the terrorists be punished – and punished severely. The enormity of their evil demands it. We will use all the resources of the United States and our cooperating friends and allies to pursue those responsible for this evil, until justice is done. This is not a war between our world and their world. It is a war to save the world. And people now understand that* (Bush, qtd in Jarvis 1, 135; emphasis mine).

What we see here is not just the juxtaposition of civilised/evildoers; justice/evildoers/punishment but like Van Helsing, the war on terror assumes a global salvific dimension. But more problematic is that the justness of this war and the mantic knowledge of victory at one's determination are taken as given. In *Dracula* the question of justice and the voice of the "terrorist" are lost under the myth-ideological construction of the war on terror. In fact it is Mina who hints at this problematic aspect of the vampire slayers project: "I know that you must fight— that you must destroy... but it is not a work of hate. That poor soul who has wrought all this misery is the saddest case of all. Just think what will be his joy when he too is destroyed in his worser part that his better part may have spiritual immortality. You must be pitiful to him (368). But even this intervention must be situated in its proper context. For Mina Dracula is a poor soul trapped in his un-dead condition and only the war on terror, functioning as kind of exorcism, will grant him immortality. Mina's concern then, it could be argued, is another way of framing the "war on terror" as a civilising and humanitarian act, saving the native from malevolent forces that threaten to overwhelm him. However, *Dracula* suggests that

his attack may have a historical connection: “whilst they (the vampire slayers) played wits against me who commanded nations, *and intrigued for them, and fought for them, hundreds of years before they were born*” (Stoker 343; emphasis mine). This is one of the most intriguing statements in *Dracula* and the closest Stoker comes to raising the issue of justice and the relationship between imperialist and colonial actions and their residual consequences.

Hence in *Dracula* the motif of the barbarian invasion takes on the civilised/monstrous/barbarian dichotomy and functions as the grid for mapping space on moral categories of Good and Evil. In this Manichean universe not only is terror from the margins, it places a historical and cosmic responsibility on the ‘civilised’ to act as instruments of God on a mission to discipline, convert, and if necessary exterminate the brutes who threaten to destabilise the borders of normality. Perhaps we need to pause here and ask of *Dracula* the following essential questions: Is this Manichean vision the farthest imagination under pressure can go? Does this moral universe not take too much for granted in its assumption that there are barbarians at the fringes of empire who want to jiggle the system? In other words, what if there were no “vampire” or “barbarians” at the frontier? Or what if Empire is itself barbarian? What if the concept of war on terror is unjust? To pose these questions is to go to the heart of what *Dracula’s* rhetorical and performative strategies conceal.

So how does *Barbarians* resist this framing of the war on terror in *Dracula*? If in *Dracula* the colonial dimension is subsumed under the rhetoric of a cosmic war between good and evil, *Barbarians* makes the coloniser/colonised or centre/frontier dichotomy central. If *Dracula* makes the reality of the barbarian invasion the condition of possibility of narration, *Barbarians* invokes this trope but radically undermines its conventional rhetorical and ideological force. In other words, whilst Coetzee’s title activates the trope of barbarian invasion, the trajectory of the narrative itself undermines or deconstructs the trope’s ideological or normative ground in a significant number of ways. First, the emphasis on *waiting* invokes a hiatus. The hiatus simultaneously suspends the barbarian slayers’ and the reader’s expectations of a barbarian invasion. Coetzee *Barbarians* seems to ask us to ponder what might happen if Jonathan Harker is relocated as a colonial administrator and the source of terror comes not from the monstrous Other but from Van Helsing and the vampire slayers. As *Barbarians* shows Empire becomes the vampire or barbarian. Hence unlike *Dracula* which frames Count Dracula’s terror attack as the military version of what postcolonial theorists will later come to call “the Empire writes back” (Ashcroft, Tiffin and Griffiths 1989), *Barbarians* focuses on Empire’s monopoly of violence, the ghettoisation of colonised territory, and, more importantly, reframes the cause of the war on terror in terms of what Derrida has aptly described as “suicidal autoimmunity”. By suicidal autoimmunity Derrida refers to “that strange behavior where a living being, in *quasi-suicidal* fashion, “itself” works to destroy its own protection, to immunise itself *against* its “own” immunity” (94). The significance of Derrida’s concept which he deploys in his analysis of the 9/11 terror attacks is that it enables us to see the aggression or violence of terror as coming “*from the inside*” (ibid, emphasis included) thus interrogating the dominant attitude of looking *outside* for acts of terror which politically

plays into absolving agents and proponents of war on terror of responsibility. Autoimmunity as it applies to Empire in *Barbarians* relates to how colonial violence exposes the rhetoric of the civilising mission as fraudulent.

In order to emphasise the dynamics of how Empire self-destructs, Coetzee's *Barbarians* radically reconfigures the narrative and discursive events in *Dracula*. Jonathan Harker becomes Magistrate, the colonial administrator of the frontier town and also the narrator in Coetzee's novel; Dracula's Castle, the symbol of pre-modernity and barbarism, which exercises a reign of terror over the Carpathians becomes, in Coetzee's novel, the colonial outpost and fortress of modernity that exercises a Panopticon control over the barbarian landscape; Van Helsing and his vampire slayers or hunters are re-written as Col. Joll of the Third Bureau and his military force who appear at the frontier to crush a purported barbarian attack or invasion. Like Dracula who invades England, Col. Joll and his men "invade" the frontier and terrorise the barbarians. Unlike Stoker's vampire slayers whose triumph makes England safe and therefore remains a bastion of "civilisation", Coetzee's *Barbarians* emphasises how the brutalities of Col. Joll and his force expose Empire as barbaric and vampiric. Col. Joll and the barbarian hunters, like *Dracula's* vampire slayers, appear on the frontier as "guardians of the State, specialists in the obscure motions of sedition, devotees of truth, and doctors of interrogation" (Coetzee 9). Read in this light we can see that *Barbarians* shifts *Dracula's* emphasis on war on terror as a quest for and disciplining of "barbarians" or "vampires" to issues of violence and justice. One of the things that Magistrate grapples with has to do with *barbarism* and *justice*. *Barbarians* in Coetzee's *Barbarians* no longer refer to the Other who threatens Empire but to "cruelty and evil", and those who "deny the humanity of others" (Kristeva 51; Todorov 16). Herein lies *Barbarians* crucial resistance to *Dracula's* representation of terror and counterterror. In other words, while *Dracula* presents the subject at the margins as an agent of terror and the subjects of Empire as victims, *Barbarians* poignantly stages the impact of terror on both the colonised and the coloniser. Like Count Dracula's Castle, the colonial outpost in Coetzee's text functions as a prison where both Magistrate and the barbarians are tortured. So that unlike Jonathan Harker who is taken prisoner by Dracula and simply witnesses Dracula's violence on the female vampires and the natives, Magistrate is taken prisoner and tortured by the barbarian slayers.

Furthermore, *Barbarians* transforms Harker's indifference into Magistrates' acceptance of the barbarian girl. Jonathan Harker reports of a gruesome incident he witnessed while held captive by Dracula. A "the woman with disheveled hair" had stormed Dracula's Castle to demand the release of her daughter who had apparently been kidnapped by Dracula. On the orders of Dracula, both the woman and her daughter were killed by Dracula's wolves. While Harker's reports this incident as part of his portrayal of the monstrosity of the creature that is preparing to invade England, I am interested in Harker's indifference or failure to act. As Harker records "there was no cry from the woman, and the howling of the wolves was but short. Before long they streamed away singly, licking their lips. *I could not pity her, for I knew now what had become of her child, and she was better dead. What shall I do? what can I do? How can I escape from this dreadful thrall of night and gloom and fear?*" (61; emphasis mine). In *Barbarians* Magistrate

is also initially indifferent to the plight of the barbarians. Unlike Harker, however, Magistrate cannot remain indifferent for long because he becomes a victim of Col. Joll and his technicians of Empire morality. He takes in and cares for the barbarian girl who has been tortured by Col. Joll and his men.

Resisting *Dracula's* Techniques of War on Terror

Beyond resisting *Dracula's* dominant trope of barbarian invasion, *Barbarians* also calls into question *Dracula's* techniques of containing terror. As we have argued the vampire slayers draw on metanarratives in order to construct an object called Dracula. This is not to suggest that Dracula is not individualised. The point is that the Dracula we first meet in the Carpathians and the identity of the Dracula that is eventually killed are vastly different. The Dracula who is killed is a discursive Dracula, a product of a complex concatenation of discourses of criminality, insanity, and demonology. In other words, the vampire slayers are not only latter day crusaders; they are also technicians of truth in a quest for the entity called Dracula. However, *Barbarians* undermines the discursive constitution of the so-called barbarians. In spite of Col. Joll's Van Helsingian claim as an expert, it is his "blindness" or shortsightedness that is first hinted at. If the vampire slayers in *Dracula* execute their war on terror with unchallenged brutal violence, Coetzee's text resists this posturing by exploring the costs of the war on terror. This is shown through the death of barbarian old man, the torture and partial blindness of the barbarian girl, the torture of the colonial Magistrate, the eventual hasty retreat of Col. Joll's men, the degeneration of the bastion of "civilisation" into chaos, the ethical and material impact of the war on terror. More than that, the text explicitly interrogates the concepts of justice, war, revenge and the notion of barbarian or vampires. This comes out forcefully in the contention over the interpretation of the "slips of white poplar-wood" (Coetzee 122) which Magistrate unearthed during his archaeological pastime. Forced by Empire's vampire slayers to read/translate the archaeological finds, Magistrate embarks on an interpretive exercise that is critical of Empire by casting the slips as the scripts/writings of a philosophically prescient old Empire that had wrestled with issues germane to the survival of community:

See, there is only a single character. It is the barbarian character *war*, but it has other senses too. It can stand for *vengeance*, and, if you turn it upside down like this, it can be made to read *justice*. There is no knowing which sense is intended. That is part of barbarian cunning. It is the same with the rest of the slips. They form an allegory. They can be read in many orders...each single slip can 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. Allegorical sets like this ... are open to many interpretations (122-123).

Magistrate's deconstructive "hermeneutics" establishes two things: 1. the ephemerality of all Empires, 2. the old Empire had reflected on the semantic, philosophical, and ethical complexities of war, vengeance, and justice. By framing the issues in this manner, Coetzee

goes to the heart of the problem not only of colonialism and imperialism but also post 9/11 rhetoric of war on terror and axis of evil. In a different context, Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* also shows, through the destruction of the village of Abame by Europeans, how colonial violence calls into question received concepts such as war, reprisal, revenge and justice. The ‘crime’ committed by Abame was that the elders of the village had killed a white man who had arrived in the village on an iron horse— a bicycle. Since the people had never seen a white man before, they mistook this colonial intruder for a spirit and therefore killed him. Later, three white men arrived in the village and seeing the bicycle tied to a sacred tree rightly concluded that their colleague had been murdered in Abame. Three weeks later, specifically on a market day, the white men returned, surrounded the village and massacred all the people. Obviously, Achebe’s concern is with the brutal collective punishment that totally disregarded individual responsibility, justice and fairness, and rather unleashed terror. The larger issue Achebe and Coetzee raise is how constructions of the Other undermine conceptions of justice as a humanistic value.

Also, unlike *Dracula* where the discursive frames subsume the violence of counterterror under a humanitarian venture, *Barbarians* highlights the torture and violence that accompany war on terror. Empire’s monopoly of terror is demonstrated in Joll’s dehumanisation of the twelve miserable barbarian captives who are brought from the desert, displayed at the public square and flogged in order to prove to the civilised people and their children in the garrison “that the barbarians are real” (113). On the bodies of these barbarians Joll inscribes “ENEMY... ENEMY... ENEMY... ENEMY...” (115). The barbarians are transformed into “ENEMY”. Interestingly, Van Helsing also describes Count Dracula as an enemy: “Our enemy” (Stoker 374). For the vampire hunters in *Dracula* and the hunters of the barbarians in *Barbarians*, the Other is a threat to Empire. The political valence of this formulation of the Other came into play in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. President George Bush Jr. repeatedly referred to the terrorists as barbarians: “There is a great divide in our time—not between religions or cultures, *but between civilization and barbarism...These barbarians have a dark vision of the world*” (qtd in Salter 83, 86). That there was a terror attack is indubitable. However, the difficulty is the invocation of radical dichotomy that not only portrays the Other as eternally backward and evil but provides the grounds for their extermination. It is precisely this formulation that Coetzee’s novel resists by focusing on brutalities of Empire. Magistrate is flogged and humiliated for “treasonously consorting” with barbarians (85). His salvation comes only after he begins “roaring and shouting” which is interpreted as the barbarian language (133). These incidents thus situate barbarism at the heart of civilisation. At the same time, and more significantly, they show the collapse of Empire’s discursive and representational strategies. What we witness in the inscription scene amply illustrates Deleuze and Guattari insight that language functions as order-words and does not necessarily “refer to prior significations or to a prior organisation of distinctive units” but “the emission, transmission, and observation of orders as commands” which effects “an instantaneous and incorporeal transformation of bodies” (76, 81). By inscribing “ENEMY” on the barbarians, Joll paradoxically acknowledges that

the “barbarians” do not exist as prior significations but that this word is an attribution that instantaneously transforms bodies.

Finally, *Barbarians* resists *Dracula*'s utopian conclusion to the war on terror. At the end of *Dracula* the England the vampire slayers bequeath to Jonathan Harker's son can only be described as a world without Others. Henceforth, they are heroes or saviours not only of England but of Transylvania since they have exorcised the Carpathians of the un-Dead figure or Oriental despot who terrorised his people; a humanitarian act has been accomplished liberating the Carpathians—the gypsies, even the wolves appear to be grateful. But this serenity is resisted by *Barbarians*. At the close of Coetzee's text Magistrate has made a clean break with Empire. He diagnoses the problem: “What has made it impossible for us to live in time like fish in water, like birds in air, like children? It is the fault of Empire! Empire has created the time of history...By day it pursues its enemies. It is cunning and ruthless, it sends its bloodhounds everywhere. By night it feeds on images of disaster: the sack of cities, the rape of populations, pyramids of bones, acres of desolation. *A mad vision yet a virulent one* (146). He looks forward to a future community; a community whose realisation is contingent on dismantling the structures of terror, domination and subordination, and of compartmentalisation that justify the existence of the Other as barbarians. Magistrate realises that what is at stake is the end of history and time as conceived by Empire. This will be a brave new world whose radicality is grounded in a qualitatively different conception of justice and togetherness. In *Dracula*, the end of history signifies the exorcism of the Other, Dracula, who represents an antiquated and bloodthirsty history of terror. With the end of that history, the new man that emerges is symbolised by Harker's son. On the other hand, *Barbarians* postpones the emergence of the new man of history and time.

Conclusion

This paper has argued that a re-reading of *Dracula* and *Barbarians* within the context of war on terror reveals that Coetzee's text can be read as a counter-discourse of resistance to *Dracula*'s protocols of representation of terror. In both novels the position of the subject at the margins of empire is an embattled one. However, while *Dracula* envisions an exclusivist community, *Barbarians* holds out the possibility of a community in which coloniser and colonised would share a common space under the banner of justice. Coetzee's interrogation of war on terror and the emphasis on justice and community are relevant to the post 9/11 rhetoric of war on terror and just war. *Dracula* and *Barbarians* thus confront the contemporary reader with radically different framing of war on terror and the relationship between Empire and Others. This reading has also shown that we must not only focus on how fiction resists the “effects” of terror but also, especially in the postcolonial context, how a postcolonial text resists the representation of war on terror in another text.

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