

August 12, 2014

Dear Dr. Clarke:

Thank you for reviewing my essay, "Acts without Agents: The Language of Torture in J.M. Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians*," and allowing me to resubmit it for potential publication in *ARIEL*'s "Perspectives" section. I have carefully reviewed the two readers' reports you sent me and have revised my article to address their concerns. The following summarizes the changes I have made to my original submission:

1. In response to both readers' comments about the abrupt ending to my article, I have expanded my conclusion to explain how the short passive enables Coetzee to deconstruct grammatical fictions and why this argument is important to the ethics of representing torture. A key question that I feel the first version of my article missed, and which both readers sensed, is why my argument was important beyond an analysis of Coetzee's use of linguistic theory in his novel *Waiting for the Barbarians*. In the attached revision, I explain how this deconstructive strategy is not only critical for Coetzee's ethical representation of torture (which he discusses in "Into the Dark Chamber"), but also for subverting the logic of torture that enables its existence. In particular, I suggest that Coetzee's complex use of the passive enables him to trouble the relationship between language and "truth," the latter being a primary objective of torture. In suggesting that language is not a reliable communicator of truth and challenging the notion of "truth" itself, Coetzee presents not only an ethical depiction of torture but also a convincing argument against the act.
2. In addition to expanding my conclusion, I have also added a paragraph that explains more fully how "the passive voice acts as a counter to the Magistrate's desire." This paragraph starts on page 8 and ends on the beginning of page 9. In this paragraph, I discuss the ambiguity the passive voice engenders and why this ambiguity is important to the notion of linguistic "truth" that Coetzee is attempting to destabilize.
3. Both readers mentioned my reference to Nietzsche, with the second reader stating (quite correctly) that if Nietzsche "is to be employed, it shouldn't be a drop and run." I reviewed the context in which I mentioned Nietzsche and decided that this reference was not vital for my overall argument. Moreover, I thought that incorporating Nietzsche more fully into my theoretical framework might introduce a tangent that would detract from my focused synthesis of Coetzee's linguistic work and his novel.

4. The first reader identified some important typos that I have corrected, specifically the spelling error of Attwell's name and a footnote citing an incorrect author's first name (Sam Durrant). In addition, based on the first reader's observation, I have excised some notes to reduce their number and have changed my footnotes to endnotes, with the aim of making them less distracting for the reader. The first reader also suggested that I read Carrol Clarkson's *J.M. Coetzee's: Countervoices*, a helpful recommendation that I have incorporated in my article.

Along with this cover letter, I have attached a revised version of my article for your review. Thank you again for providing me with this opportunity to improve my article. S

Sincerely,