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Analysis of Compradors in Coetzee's Waiting for the Barbarians and Kureishi's London and Karachi

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Abstract

This paper analyzes two texts: J. M. Coetzee's novel Waiting for the Barbarians and Hanif Kureishi's short story "London and Karachi" for their representation of comprador characters. The concept of the comprador, which represents intermediaries and tools of the empire, serves as the main theoretical lens. A close reading and thematic analysis of the texts compares how both texts portray such characters and their complicity with the imperial project of violence, domination, and control. The paper analyzes that Coetzee's text deals with an allegorical empire, whereas Hanif's short story presents post-independence Pakistan in a neo-colonial situation of subjugation. It concludes that Coetzee's comprador character acknowledges his complicity and tries to make amends, whereas the limited scope of the short story does not let Kureishi develop the comprador characters to the full extent. The analysis of these texts helps us identify and understand such characters in the history of post-colonial nations and the literary representation of such histories.

Keywords: Comprador, Postcolonial, Empire, Complicity, Neocolonial

Introduction

Waiting for the Barbarians by J.M. Coetzee, the first text my paper analyzes, tells the tale of an unnamed ageing magistrate approaching retirement, who oversees a town on the borders of the 'Empire'. The novel narrates what happens when Colonel Joll and his fellow officers, agents from the 'Third Bureau' of the Empire, arrive in the town to deal with the 'barbarians' and their imagined plans to attack the town and the Empire. In the course of the narrative, the magistrate

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befriends a 'barbarian girl' left behind by a group of barbarian prisoners that Joll and his colleagues interrogated and tortured. The story goes on to describe the strange relationship the magistrate develops with the barbarian girl, his growing anxiety and unrest at the violence committed by Joll and his colleagues, and the disruption of a once peaceful town that the magistrate had supervised for many years of his life. Towards the end of the novel, the magistrate decides to return the barbarian girl to her folks, thereby earning for himself the suspicion and later charges of rebellion from the Empire, and he is made to suffer the brutal consequences of his actions.

The other text that I intend to discuss with Coetzee's novel is London and Karachi by Hanif Kureishi. It is an autobiographical short narrative of Kureishi as a kid born in England, where he suffers extreme forms of racism, especially targeted towards Pakistani migrants, in his school life, from white teachers, fellows, friends, and in the neighborhood. The narrative tells us the resultant initial contempt he develops towards his Pakistani identity, and his attempts to assimilate, blend in, and hide by association with one of the skinhead boys. He soon disengages himself, studying and trying to chronicle a sort of history of racist political narratives. What is particularly of interest to my paper is his depiction and description of various elite groups in his essay, e.g., military officers, elite businessmen, ruling politicians, etc., and their role in their country, Pakistan.

Background and Framework

Waiting for the Barbarians and London and Karachi do not apparently seem to be similar, connected, or analogous in any way. Various researchers discuss Coetzee's novel with a focus on psychoanalysis, its allegorical nature, its portrayal of the Empire and the violence associated with it, the depiction of justice and law, and human conscience, etc. Moreover, London and Karachi by Kureishi does not enjoy many critical studies; in fact, no critical or analytical studies could be found on his essay. However, as I will argue and discuss in this paper, both of these texts not only portray but also revolve around characters who could be categorized under the term Comprador or Comprador-Class.

The term comprador has its origins in the earlier colonial periods, where certain individuals acted as middlemen, go-betweens, or agents that mediated between a local market and foreign produce, most often the colonizers' produce. The concept of these agents, what Ashcroft termed "Comprador", comes originally from the

Portuguese language, where the word means 'purchaser', which was "originally used to refer to a local merchant acting as a middleman between foreign producers and a local market" (Ashcroft et. al., p. 47). Gradually, the term came to refer to "those local bourgeoisie" who were loyal to "foreign monopolies" as they enjoyed "their privileged position" because of the same foreign monopolies, hence they "maintain[ed] a vested interest in colonial occupation" (p. 47). The concept carried on to postcolonial theory where it has adopted "a broader use, to include the intelligentsia—academics, creative writers and artists—whose independence may be compromised by reliance on, and identification with, colonial power" (p. 48), and "the word continues to" encompass all who are "relatively privileged, wealthy and educated elite", maintaining "a more highly developed capacity to engage in the international communicative practices introduced by colonial domination", and are thus either incapable or "less inclined to struggle for local cultural and political independence" (Ashcroft p. 48). The idea of the comprador or comprador-class has also been taken up and treated in detail by Franz Fanon in his The Wretched of the Earth, where he calls them "the national bourgeoisie" (Fanon p. 22). This national bourgeoisie is actually the comprador or comprador-class whose "unpreparedness..., the lack of practical ties between them and the masses, their apathy and, yes, their cowardice at the crucial moment in the struggle, are the cause of tragic trials and tribulations" (p. 128).

Discussion and Analysis

The unnamed magistrate in Coetzee's novel performs the role of a comprador in various ways. First, he is not a foreigner in the sense that Joll and other officers from the Third Bureau are, but he is also not a 'barbarian' as the barbarian girl is. Nowhere does Coetzee tell us what his actual origin is, but he most probably seems to belong to the town itself rather than someone who has come from abroad as a colonizer. He is someone in between the two, a person who is, if not a 'barbarian', at least native to the town. He enjoys the position of the magistrate from the empire, and has authority over the other 'natives' of the town as well as the barbarians that come into contact with the border town in various ways. He is a part of the governing machinery of the empire, a sort of elite, who functions as an agent of the empire, extending the will of the empire onto the natives and barbarians. Therefore, Dibavar et. al. calls him an "intermediary figure" who "stands between the two worlds" (Dibavar et. al. 88). The two worlds that the magistrate stands between are those of the Empire and the barbarians/indigenous people as "a member of the colonizer

part of the society" (Aytemiz 48) and "a member of the Empire" (Sayar 146), as does a comprador-class, which is always like a middleman or a go-between the colonizers and the colonized.

The fact that, though he is associated with the Empire, he is not violent like Joll or other agents of the Empire is because he is a man of justice and law, and that he is "a man of conscience" (Grafe 25). Coetzee establishes the magistrate's character as that of a man of conscience when he describes the magistrate feeling pity for the slaying of thousands of wild animals on the part of Colonel Joll, and later on various occasions when he feels disturbed and uneasy about the torture and violence on various prisoners and barbarians by Joll and his colleagues. His conscience and his struggle for law and justice are also evident in the guilt he feels towards the crimes of the Empire and its agents. However, this guilt becomes misplaced if we do not take into account his realization of his own complicity, as he is an agent, a comprador of the Empire. If he had not been complicit, he would have done nothing personally to feel the guilt and pangs of conscience he feels throughout the novel. His conscience is the only thing that keeps him apart from becoming like Joll, and his "conscience comes into conflict with the régime which governs him (and of which he is a part)" (Grafe 26).

His initial reaction to the crimes that Joll and his colleagues commit is one of turning a deaf ear. When Joll is torturing prisoners (an old man and a boy) in the granary of the town, the magistrate says that "Of the screaming which people afterwards claim to have heard from the granary, I hear nothing" (Waiting for the Barbarians 4). The magistrate is trying to ease his conscience by pretending that nothing brutal is happening, as his conscience provokes feelings of guilt in him that he is a part of all this violence as an agent and collaborator of the Empire. His fear of being the same as Joll when he meditates that "I must assert my distance from Colonel Joll! I will not suffer for his crimes!" (Waiting 32), and his attempts to undo the crimes and violence of the empire clearly manifest his earlier role as a comprador or an agent of the empire. The magistrate's realization of his association with the Empire continues when he visits the boy tortured by Joll during interrogation. The boy seems fearful of the magistrate, too, and pulls back from him, although the magistrate only wanted to reassure him and comfort him. The magistrate realizes that the boy does not see him as different than Colonel Joll, considering him one of the two masks an interrogator wears, "one harsh, one seductive" (Waiting 6), i.e., the soft face of the same brutal interrogator. Grafe draws further parallels between Joll and the

magistrate, stating that "There are other unsettling parallels between the magistrate and Joll. Joll's face is "masked by two black glassy insect eyes from which there comes no reciprocal gaze" (44). When the Magistrate tries to look Joll in the eye, he only sees himself reflected back" (Grafe 26-27). Thus, the magistrate continuously realizes that he is a party to the violence committed by the Empire, and that he is not very different than the cruel agents of the Empire like Joll.

His relationship with the barbarian girl, who was left behind by a group of barbarian prisoners after being brutally tortured and later released, and the washing ritual that he performs almost regularly where he washes and anoints the feet, legs and later her whole body, is also a manifestation of his guilt for him being an agent of the empire and a party to the violence and crimes committed by the empire. As Grafe points out that "The massage ritual is an attempt on the magistrate's part both at healing the girl from the wounds the Empire has inflicted on her…" (Grafe 29) when the magistrate tries to "to clear the violence marked in her body and heal her soul, he is obsessed with washing her feet and legs and massaging her with oils" and "[read] the girl's tortured body" (Aytemiz 48) but even these attempts have been analyzed by critics as another form of violence i.e., epistemic violence that the magistrate unwittingly commits. As Qassas points out, "The native girl suffers this dual violence: first in Joll's torture room and subsequently in the Magistrate's bedchamber. Possessing the colonized land and the body of colonized women, the colonizer equates torture with sex; the two become identical in a colonial setting" (Qassas 4). Qassas calls the magistrate's efforts at deciphering the scars on the girl's body as epistemic violence, akin to the physical violence that Joll has committed, because he considers that the magistrate tries to impose his own reading of the scars on the body of the girl, without trying to listen to what her voice is as Qassas further contends that "deciphering the native girl as a human being requires listening to her voice with all its pain; it cannot be accomplished by only physically reading her scars" (Qassas 3-4). The fact that the girl remains mostly silent about the scars and the questions of the magistrate is considered by critics as "a form of resistance at the epistemic level" (Qassas 3-4). Thus, the magistrate comes out to be a comprador and perpetrator of violence even in his attempts to undo the violence the Empire has committed. He has not yet disassociated himself from the role of a comprador, a role he has played for so long in his life.

Moreover, his attempts at undoing or at least abating the crimes the empire committed by his 'pleas' that he makes before Joll further consolidate his realization

of his role as a comprador and his attempts to undo what he and the empire did. As we find that in the beginning of the novel, an old man and a boy are taken captive by Joll and his colleagues, the magistrate tries to make a case for their innocence, and at the same time, "[growing] conscious that [he is] pleading for them" (Waiting 4). But this was the beginning of the magistrate's realization of himself as a comprador; he tries to ignore the torture committed on the two prisoners by Joll, and later he even states how the old prisoner died exactly as Joll had narrated, although he knew that Joll was lying. Thus, we see him battling with himself and his conscience from the very beginning of the novel as he grows more and more conscious of his role as a comprador of the Empire.

With the growing realization of his being a comprador, the magistrate finally decides to return the barbarian girl to her people, an attempt to break his ties with the Empire as well as to abandon his position as a comprador of the Empire. He takes the girl to her folk, and in doing so he is consciously elated that "[his] alliance with the guardians of the Empire is over" and he broods that "I have set myself in opposition, the bond is broken, I am a free man. Who would not smile? But what a dangerous joy!" (Waiting 55). We clearly see the magistrate setting himself in opposition to the Empire, breaking his association with being a comprador, and feeling himself free and joyful in doing so. As Aytemiz refers to his act of returning the girl as the culmination of his transformation from an agent of Empire to a 'person', a person with agency and will, unlike a comprador who acts as a mere puppet, as she states that "After his return, his transformation process is completed. He is now regarded as a traitor and perceived as guilty as the barbarians without any doubts, since the other is always the guilty one. Magistrate is actually comfortable with his arrest, while his otherness separates his bound and responsibility to the Empire, and as the other and as the subject of torture and humiliation, the purification of his soul starts, which he longed for" (Aytemiz 48). Aytemiz's analysis brings out some other important meanings of the magistrate's act to return the girl. It not only sets him free, breaks his bond with the Empire, but also relegates him to the status of 'other' just like the barbarians and the barbarian girl. She further states that "By the journey in the desert, his bonds to the Empire loosens and when he enters the realm of the other, he and his mind start to change. Parallel to this physically hard journey, he also completes a complicated mental journey of separating himself from the Empire and from its moral understanding" (Aytemiz 48). Also, she points out the fact that the magistrate feels joy, though he is later arrested, as his 'otherness' breaks his association with the empire, and the

'purification' begins from the debilitating effects of the bondage of his comprador-ship, the realization of which had continuously pinged and plagued his conscience. Sayar also contends that the magistrate "wants to deny his colonizer side and he desires to get purified" (Sayar 148).

Although the magistrate succeeds in at least one attempt to break his bond with the Empire, which makes him the subject of severe torture and humiliation from the Empire, he fails at almost all other attempts to either break his relation with the Empire or abate the damage done by the Empire. We see the magistrate having a keen interest in excavating the plates from the ruins; we find him trying to decipher the scars of the barbarian girl; we find him endeavoring to build a meaningful relationship with the girl; and we see him attempting to write a memoir, a confession or a history of the town, and utterly failing in all of these endeavors. His failed attempts at excavating the history of the town, as well as history of the barbarian girl, along with his failed attempts at writing a memoir, or a history of the people are once again his attempts to undo what he and the empire had done, or if he has not done it, he was associated with the empire who had orchestrated all of this physical and epistemic violence. The magistrate, towards the very end of the novel, decides to "set down a record" of the imperial outpost "to be left for posterity," but he finds himself unable to scribe what he desired to. Lehman analyzes that the magistrate's attempt at writing a history "displays the impotence of alternatives to histories bound within imperial frameworks" (Lehman 154). The magistrate wanted to "abandon the locutions of a civil servant with literary ambitions and begin to tell the truth" (Waiting 109), but he fails in doing so. We see that he clearly wanted to shed his role of a comprador and begin telling the truth, i.e., the true face, violence, and crimes of the Empire, and the reality of the Empire and the so-called barbarians, but he fails himself bitterly. The magistrate had failed in his earlier attempts at writing a memoir, a testament, confession, or history as well as had failed himself earlier in his relationship with the barbarian girl, where he thought "It seems appropriate that a man who does not know what to do with the woman in his bed should not know what to write" (Waiting 41). Thus, as the magistrate himself is conscious of his impotence, Lehman also points out the failures and impotence of the magistrate towards undoing or abating the violence committed by the Empire and by the magistrate himself as a comprador of the Empire.

Juxtaposing this allegorical narrative of a comprador magistrate, which is 'outside history' as some critics contend, with an autobiographical realist essay by Kureishi

and drawing out analogies between them seems a far cry. However, Kureishi's text, probably unintentionally, points out various comprador characters in the history of Pakistan, who are very similar to the magistrate in their status as compradors. There are obvious differences, no doubt, in the compradors, the roles they perform and their depiction in both of the texts under discussion, these differences tend to be because of the different nature and length of the genres that these two texts belong to, as well as the different times in their national histories that these two instances of compradors happen to be: in Coetzee's text the magistrate during the colonial sway, and in Kureishi's the comprador elite during post-colonial period in their national history.

In London and Karachi, Kureishi explicitly voices his desire to write about "landowners, diplomats, businessmen, and politicians" (London and Karachi 275), probably because they are an interesting class of people who are, as Lord Macaulay had long ago described, Indian/Pakistani in skin but British in sentiments, ideals, and morals. This elite class is actually the comprador class who wittingly or unwittingly identify and associate themselves with the colonizers (similar to the Empire in Coetzee's novel) and are therefore witting or unwitting agents of the colonizers, as their interests and the interests of the colonizer fall in the same plane, they being the compradors. Kureishi presents these elite classes as indulging in profuse drinking, enjoying luxurious lifestyles, magnanimous mansions and houses, "aspiring to be like the [colonizer]" (London 279), "still clung to British ideals" (London 281). Thus, we see that this elite class possesses the characteristics of a comprador-class as they aspire to be like the colonizer, hold the colonizer's ideals as their model, and do not care about their own country and people, which Kureishi presents by juxtaposing the slums of Karachi to the description of the flamboyant life style of this elite class, as well as the description of servants of such wealthy families living in quarters adjacent to those of animals and brutes.

Describing this elite class of people, Kureishi tells us further that these people held the same spite of racism towards the poor of their own country that the colonizers (British people) held towards people from Pakistan, as he says that these bourgeoisie "shared the same disdain of the British for the émigré working class and peasantry of Pakistan" (London 281). Not only that but they held British racism justified as these elite considered the poor of their country "illiterate… who didn't know how to use toilets, how to eat with knives and forks", and "used the same vocabulary of contempt about Pakistanis—the charge of ignorance, laziness, fecklessness,

uncleanliness" that British middle classes used for their peasantry (London 281). Thus, we see this elite class identified itself more with the colonizer than their own folk, making themselves unwitting agents of the interests, morals, and sentiments of the colonizers; hence, compradors.

Apart from the general characteristics of this elite class, Kureishi explicitly mentions some political elites like Zia-ul-Haq and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. Though he does not dwell much on these political elite, he does so about Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto who was as Kureishi says, "urbane, Oxford-educated, considering himself to be a poet and revolutionary" with political claims that "he would fight obscurantism and illiteracy, ensure the equality of men and women and increase access to education and medical care" (London 277). It appears that Bhutto wanted to establish himself as a true national political leader through such claims, but Kureishi immediately exposes Bhutto's claims to be 'self-serving' as he tells us that "in an attempt to save himself," he introduces Islamization as "he introduced various Koranic injunctions into the constitution" (London 277). Thus, Bhutto also comes out to be a comprador, someone who is more interested in his own interests rather than those of the public and who could even exploit the religion and the constitution of his country for his personal benefits. This Islamization had long-lasting effects on the country, as various Jihadi groups were created soon after that and have plagued the country since their inception.

It is also interesting that the same tool of Islamization was used by Zia-ul-Haq, who executed Bhutto to rise to power. Kureishi mentions the execution of Bhutto and the effects of Islamization that both Bhutto and Zia-ul-Haq used as tools to come to and stay in power. Referring to the uselessness of the project of Islamization brought about by these two compradors, Kureishi vividly mentions that "Islamization built no hospitals, no schools, no houses; it cleaned no water and installed no electricity" (London 277). Hence, we see that these political elite averted their attention from anything that really mattered for the welfare and betterment of the country, especially its poor population, and used tactics that served only their individual interests, which were unaligned with the interests of the country and its people. Kureishi further unveils the selfish tactics of these comprador elite revealing that they drove the country into an Islamic fundamentalism, using the state authorities to present their version of Islam as a "direction" and "identity" for the whole country, themselves becoming the authority "who elected themselves to interpret the single divine purpose"; the consequences of which would be long-lasting (London 277-

278). Thus, we see the strategic employment of religion and constitution by the self-serving comprador elite for consolidating their own interests and governments, thwarting the direction of the whole country and its people.

The case of Zia-ul-Haq has been dealt with in detail by another novelist, Muhammad Hanif, in his novel A Case of Exploding Mangoes. Hanif's novel has been discussed by two studies that have analyzed the novel for the portrayal of Zia-ul-Haq as a comprador. The first article "An Analysis of the Role of Comprador Class: A Neo-Colonial Study of A Case of Exploding Mangoes by Hanif" says that Hanif's novel is a story of such a ruler who unconstitutionally occupied the throne of the state and derailed the democratic path of the country" (Iqbal, A. J. p. 7). The article further elaborates that this comprador-class is "hungry for power" and in such a neo-colonial underdeveloped state "people carry no place" as they are "marginalized and rendered voiceless by suppressive" forces by the elements and institutions controlled by the ruling comprador-class (p. 9). In such "neo-colonial set up" the general public lacks or is purposefully left unaware by the ruling comprador-class in "national identity and purposefulness" (p. 9) as the article further elucidates analyzing A Case of Exploding Mangoes that "during Zia regime no stone was left unturned to suppress and oppress the mediums that were spreading awareness among the country people" (Iqbal, A. J. 11).

Another article on the same novel by Ghulam Murtaza and Asifa Yasmin discusses that "in a neo-colonial society, the comprador class refers to the mercantile class that plays its role in transferring the nation's wealth and resources to the ex-colonizers. They function as representatives of multi-national corporations and foreign investors" (Murtaza, G., & Yasmin, A. 92). The article discusses the economic and political role of a comprador class in detail. First it refers to the "Self-Serving Policies" that are crafted by such an elite class, "for their political and economic ends." As the novel talks about the plane crash of General Zia, and the subsequent events, where "the sons of the deceased general file case against the conspiracy but their purpose is to get 'lucrative cabinet posts' (Hanif, 2009) as political underhanded bargain, not justice" (Murtaza, G., & Yasmin, A. 95) the discussion clearly manifests that the comprador class is ready to sacrifice anything to serve themselves, even the death of their fathers.

Another issue that the article highlights with the comprador class is its "unmindfulness to public problems", as it is completely "indifferent to social,

economic, and even military affairs of the regime." It further states that "Zia is busy in treatment of his private parts and his pseudo religious pursuits which actually conceal his selfish personalized motives and all the official paraphernalia of his presidential endeavors which have nothing to do with people" (Murtaza, G., & Yasmin, A. 96). The article goes on to discuss various other roles of the comprador class including their "deceptive concern for the people and the country", the "consciously sustained confusion", their "indifference to their people's ideology", the "sham democracy" where "masses carry no position" and "they are marginalized almost to the point of non-existence", the "discomfiture" of the comprador class "with the masses"; and the "exploitation of religion to befool the masses" (Murtaza, G., & Yasmin, A. 96-99).

Thus, Hanif's novel and both the articles that study the novel delineate, in very minute details, the political and economic role of the comprador class, especially that of Zia-ul-Haq, which Kureishi could not deal with in detail, probably because the scope and focus of his essay hindered him. We observe that Hanif's novel and the studies on it reveal the same issues that the comprador elite create as well as their characteristic features of self-service, unmindfulness to public matters, and exploitation of religion that Kureishi briefly mentions in his essay. We also find one of the things that Kureishi's essay focuses on is the question of identity, and he is very clear in his depiction that these comprador elite identified themselves with the colonizers and practiced similar views towards the poor people of their country as the colonizers did, as Hanif's novel and the studies on it depict and discuss Zia-ul-Haq as a manifest comprador with vested interests and identity. Kureishi also mentions the nexus of politics and army in Pakistan in the self-serving Islamization of the constitution and the country, stating "Under the tyranny of priesthood, with the cooperation of the army, Pakistan would embody Islam in itself" (London 278). This also refers to the Islamization that Bhutto, as a political leader, has brought about, and it was Bhutto who appointed Zia-ul-Haq as the army chief of Pakistan, who later dethroned Bhutto and executed him, but continued the exploitation of religion and the Islamization. Hence, we see Kureishi making subtle but important remarks about the nexus of compradors for their own benefit, and also the same compradors staging coups and killing other compradors for the sake of power and the interests that this power fulfilled, a matter portrayed as well by Hanif's novel and the two studies mentioned above.

Conclusion

To conclude, both Coetzee's novel and Kureishi's essay portray characters who fit the role of comprador in their own ways. The magistrate in Coetzee's allegory keeps on performing the role of a comprador in the form of a native civil servant in the service of the Empire, until Joll and other agents from the Third Bureau come and disrupt the life of authority and pleasure along with "peace [the magistrate has maintained] with the natives for years" (Sayar 146). The magistrate, after growing too anxious and conscious of the violence of the Empire and his own complicity, tries to break the bond of comprador-ship, but even these efforts of his seem to be self-serving as he wishes for the generations "in some remote future" to know that "in this farthest outpost of the Empire…there existed one man who in his heart was not a barbarian" (Waiting 73). Thus, he seems more interested in presenting himself as just, lawful, and a man of conscience in the eyes of future generations than in doing anything against the crimes of the empire. Even the actions of the magistrate, in which he seems to rebel against the empire, e.g., excavating the ruins for plates, trying to decipher the scars of the barbarian girl, and trying to reassure and comfort the tortured prisoner boy, have been analyzed by critics as failing in really opposing the Empire, and as more selfish than selfless attempts. In such attempts, the magistrate comes out to be "more of a type than a person" (Grafe 25), a type which has been termed the comprador or comprador class. The comprador elite businessmen, politicians and army elite described by Kureishi, one of whom is discussed in detail by Hanif's novel and the critical studies on the novel, are very analogous to the magistrate as they are also presented as self-serving, exploiting anything and everything they could to satisfy their own interests, thwarting the interests of the masses they either governed or had control over being elite.

However, there are many planes of difference between the two compradors in Coetzee's and Kureishi's texts, which seem to be so because of various reasons. One reason could be that Coetzee's text is an allegory that has been referred to by critics as the story of an Empire outside history, whereas Kureishi's text is autobiographical, thus more realistic and factual. Secondly, Coetzee's novel could discuss the character and actions of the magistrate in detail, being a novel, which is much longer in length and scope, whereas Kureishi's essay is much shorter in length and scope, being an essay. Thirdly, both of the texts deal with different times in the history of two different colonies; Coetzee deals with an allegorical Empire and one of its outposts, which is still under physical colonial subjugation of an unnamed

Empire, whereas Kureishi talks about Pakistan after its independence from physical colonial subjugation of Britain. Hence, Coetzee's comprador has been associated with the Empire in different times, thus performing service to the Empire in different ways than the compradors Kureishi presents, who act somewhat differently as their association with the former colonizer, Britain, was of a different nature. Also, the magistrate grows conscious of his ties, association, and similarity with the Empire and its agents; the compradors in Kureishi's text do not, or we do not know if they did, as the limited scope and different nature of the genre he was writing in did not let him develop the comprador characters much. However, despite all these differences, we see both of the texts revolving around characters who are associated with imperial powers and identified with those powers more than they identified with the masses they governed; compradors who were keener on self-serving actions, either consciously or unconsciously, wittingly or unwittingly. Thus, the analysis of such characters as compradors enriches and heightens our understanding not only of these texts but also of such characters in the histories of post-colonial nations and peoples.

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