

Barbarians are People Too

The Discourse of Barbarism in Young Adult Fantasy Fiction

Olivia Catherine Hartley (BArts, MRes)

Macquarie University, Department of English

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Summary

Barbarism and the idea of the barbarian is an old and powerful concept. Initially developed by the Greeks as a method for delineating Greek and 'other', the idea was gradually appropriated into Roman literature and political rhetoric in order to both express a sense of exclusion of the barbarian and also reinforce a sense of their own cultural and intellectual superiority. In doing so, a discourse around the barbaric emerged and continued to adapt to the changing socio-cultural landscape of the Roman world.

This discourse has remained influential throughout the succeeding millennia. Contemporary political language is filled with divisive, tribalistic, and antagonistic language that presupposes the superiority of one social, cultural, or racial group over another, suggesting the continued presence of the barbaric paradigm within modern Western thought. This pattern of thought has filtered down and become inscribed within contemporary literature and mass media.

YA literature is a socialising medium, modelling to its young audience the societal ideologies that surround them and how they might construct their subjectivity against those ideologies. This thesis examines how the barbaric discourse is constructed, how it is engaged with in contemporary western YA fantasy literature, and how it affects the representation of subjectivity for YA audiences. It considers how barbarism was developed in selected ancient textual mediums, and how it could be used within ancient literary culture, before closely examining a selection of YA fantasy texts in order to understand how the discourse has been adapted for a modern Western literary context. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate how enculturating texts engage with and present barbarism to young adults, and subsequently the kind of world that fantasy literature seeks to create for young adult audiences. Central to this thesis are the questions: how and in what ways do we 'other', and what implications does this kind of othering have for the modern world when presented in young adult fiction?

Declaration of Originality

I, Olivia Catherine Hartley, certify that this thesis has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other institution or university. To the best of my knowledge, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

The material of Chapter 2, and the discussion of subjectivity construction in Chapter 5 (pg 155-158), is drawn from the research conducted for the completion of the Master of Research (MRes). The ideas and arguments throughout these sections of the current thesis have been substantially expanded, adapted, and extensively rewritten for the PhD topic in accordance with Macquarie University guidelines.

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Introduction

The Barbaric Narrative

The discourse of barbarism is a pervasive discursive system that has become deeply embedded in contemporary Western political language and rhetoric and is used to communicate ideas of cultural identity and exclusion or derision of the cultural other. This discourse is thus a discourse of power, its field of language use and other cultural representations creating a hierarchical relationship between the self and the cultural other, and has become naturalized in the perception and organization of reality.¹ It has a close relationship with colonialism and racism, both of which rely on establishing the underlying 'barbarism' of the people those ideologies and attitudes oppress; and its associated ideas of self and other are ancient, built throughout the Roman period and as such incorporated into the evolution of contemporary Western thought. This thesis examines the ancient literary culture through which this discourse was built and established, identifying some of the strategies and structures that were used to form the discourse of barbarism. These structures that serve to delineate self and other, and provide a framework for casting that other as inferior, still inform contemporary popular culture, media, and politics, and are manifested particularly in young adult fantasy texts. It is through these fantasy texts that this thesis will explore the contemporary manifestation and function of the discourse of barbarism, and the potential implications for the use of this discourse in our contemporary globalized world.

The first literary reference to Barbarians and the Barbaric was in the term *barbarophonon* in Homer's *Iliad*, translated as 'barbarous of speech' (Homer *Il* 2. 867, 124-5) or alternatively as 'babbling' (Gillett "Mirror of Jordanes" 397) or literally 'barbarspeakers/ing' (Garnsey 62, note 2). From its inception, the barbarian was a label not so much used to describe the reality of another people or society, but rather one that was used to denote a sense of exclusion: the *barbarophonon* were distinctly *not* Greek and thus their society and language largely resembled nonsense. While not carrying with it the level of degradation associated with the modern use of the term in the West, 'barbaric' was nevertheless a pejorative term, used to not only distinguish 'other' from Greek but to also ideologically insinuate that other's cultural inferiority, whether it applied to less

¹ See Foucault "Orders of Discourse" (1971), *Discipline and Punish* (1977), and *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972) for his extensive work on the relationship between discourse, knowledge, and power.

sophisticated tribes or equally ancient peer civilizations such as the Egyptians and Persians. By using the term *barbarophonon*, and thus likening other languages to nonsense and meaningless babble, the Greeks ideologically homogenised vastly different cultural groups for the purpose of symbolically elevating Greek culture and language as 'civilised' over other empires and people groups external to the Greek world. As the Mediterranean world was gradually dominated by the Roman Empire, the Romans adopted the use of the concept of *barbarophonon* and used it as a term against which to distinguish their own society from all those outside of the Greco-Roman world. Initially considered outsiders themselves, the adaptation and internalisation of this dichotomous concept allowed the Romans to establish both its membership within the Hellenistic cultural world and its own imperial status (Gillett "Mirror of Jordanes" 401). As such, throughout its usage in the Classical and Late Antique era, the idea of the barbarian was used to describe, generally, any person who was not a part of, or had not become naturalised to, Hellenistic or Roman culture.

This dichotomy between the Roman and the Other was representative of a broader cultural understanding, and became a basic tool of analysis in history, ethnography, and political rhetoric, contrasting the 'civilised' Roman and the 'uncivilised' outsider (Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 3; Gillett "Mirror of Jordanes" 401). This idea of the barbarian was thus utilised by the elite as a designator of exclusion from the dominant socio-political context of the Roman world and incorporated ideas of otherness alongside concepts of what constituted true 'civilisation' based on a cultural perception of *Romanitas* – or what it was to be Roman. In doing so, the discourse of barbarism became at its essence a discursive system of power. Those excluded by this paradigm were defined by ideas about what the Romans were distinctly 'not' (Heather 238). This had two primary implications for the literary representation and cultural construction of the barbarian figure and the evolution of the discourse of barbarism: first, that ancient authors were not interested in truth or the social reality of barbarian people groups, but rather in maintaining the stereotypes for the sake of rhetoric; second, that ideas of barbarism and conversely *Romanitas* were inherently linked with behaviour rather than ethnicity. This shift towards a focus on behaviour rather than more obvious differences in ethnicity and language resulted in the evolution of the discourse of barbarism: a discursive system that defined and structured barbarism through an assessment of cultural and societal behaviours, namely sexual and gendered behaviour, and the class systems and societal organisation of another culture or people group. Although the signification and assessments are different within a more modern context, the

structures themselves – that is, declaring an other as barbaric through assessing and attacking their culture's attitude towards sex, gender, and class as a result of perceived differences in cultural values – is still present within a contemporary context. This is the structure of *how* we other.

The dichotomous relationship between the Roman and the 'barbarian' that emerged in the literary, political, and philosophical spheres throughout Republican Rome was not necessarily representative of the political and social reality of the peoples living within the Roman sphere of influence. Throughout its history and continued contact with the tribes and empires beyond Roman borders, the social fabric of the Roman Empire, particularly that of frontier cities and towns, became increasingly diverse. As such, despite the lack of represented diversity, by the fifth century the Roman Empire had become a 'melting pot' of peoples and cultures, the relationship between Romans and barbarians having developed to a point of 'daily symbiosis punctuated by sporadic outbursts of open warfare' (Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 12). Indeed, throughout the 3rd century peoples of the barbarian tribes were becoming increasingly present within provincial life. The civil wars of this period necessitated the inclusion of barbarian soldiers within the Roman military, who were often settled permanently within the empire following service (Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 13). Furthermore, during this period Romans were 'notoriously tolerant of race and local religions' (Brown 16). This meant that for many Romans living in the empire, their experience of society was based in diversity and a constant presence of the barbarian 'other', which served to complicate the dichotomous relationship between Roman and barbarian espoused through Ancient Roman literature and politics.

Considering the constant presence of barbarian peoples within the Empire the dichotomy between 'barbarian' and Roman was not so clearly delineated. However, tolerance of the presence of the 'other' does not denote inclusion, but rather the possibility for inclusion. For with the increasing barbarian presence, it became apparent that anyone could become 'Roman' and a part of the elite on the condition that they assimilate to Roman customs and the Roman way of life. It was expected that to become truly Roman, it was necessary to adopt the Roman lifestyle, its traditions, education, and to speak and write in the two main languages of Roman society: Latin in the West and Greek in the East (Brown 16; Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 30). The possibility for inclusion within the Roman elite based upon the degree to which an individual assimilated to a specific set of traditions and education, meant that for the Romans inclusion was not dependent upon ethnicity. Rather,

the possibility to become 'Roman' and thus no longer barbarian was based in a code of behaviour that was not only connected with personal values but was also closely connected with class: it was the elite within society who had access to education and thus it was the provincial elite who were able to assimilate to the Roman 'way of life'. Conversely, those unable to assimilate through lack of access to education were considered barbarians or 'country bumpkins' (Brown 16). Thus the discourse of barbarism was also used as an indication of social class, where the barbarian was considered unsophisticated and therefore excluded from the consideration of true civility.

The Roman focus on behaviour and education rather than ethnicity resulted in a more fluid paradigm of barbarism that became far more ideological in nature and was more easily manipulated for political purposes. Indeed, lack of material clarity concerning who the barbarian was, that is to say a reimagining of the concept where ethnicity was less important than behaviour, meant that the use of the discourse of barbarism as an ideological rhetoric of cultural exclusion was all the more important within the social and political climate of the time. It was used as a way of denouncing political rivals and justifying the quelling of provincial revolts, while also ensuring a certain amount of compliance among the populace: they must avoid 'barbaric' behaviour at all costs if they wished to remain true Romans and included within civil Roman society. As is the case in modern Western political contexts, creating oppositional extremes and using dehumanizing language in the creation of an outcast and abject figure to be feared, which is epitomized in the barbaric discourse, is often the most effective method for manipulating and controlling public sentiment. Yet despite the changing reality of the Empire and the use of the discourse itself, the concept of the Roman and external barbarian 'other' was nevertheless a tenacious one.

The mythic barbarian figure, external to the Empire and its interests, remained influential in Roman thought and even appeared in the attempts to understand and explain its eventual collapse. So tenacious is this idea of the external barbarian infiltrating and bringing about the collapse of a civilization that a similar rhetoric was used in the political discussion following the 2015 Paris attacks. Gillett argues that 'the "Fall of Rome" has [...] always had presentist, political functions throughout the Modern period [...] and] Rome's fall was a constant potential *memento mori* that could be used as a historical lens with which to examine contemporary anxieties' (Gillett "The Fall of Rome" 6). Within a contemporary Western political context these anxieties are primarily concerned with

policies that promote multiculturalism, especially in the wake of 9/11 and fears of Islamic terrorism and immigration. As such, the rhetoric of the “Fall of Rome” has been adapted by conservative commentators, who invoke the image of a great empire destroyed by a failure to protect ‘its values and territory in the face of foreign migration’, as a tool for the promotion of anti-migration and anti-immigration policies (Gillett “The Fall of Rome” 10). The discourse of barbarism has thus been adapted within a modern Western context to structure a lack of assimilation as barbaric, much as it did during the Roman period. More than this, however: Gillett’s connection between modern anti-immigration rhetoric and ‘The Fall of Rome’ suggests that the discourse has evolved beyond its original function to imply that a lack of assimilation by foreigners is not only symptomatic of their inability to leave their barbarism behind, but that it is furthermore a danger to the progress of civilisation.

This effect and contemporary usage is pervasive within modern western politics, from the United Kingdom to the United States. Within Australia, the modern manifestation of the discourse is best demonstrated through the language of Senator Pauline Hanson. During her time in the Australian House of Representatives Hanson expressed a fear of being “swamped by Asians” and that, because of their failure to assimilate, multiculturalism should be abolished (Martino). Re-elected to the Senate in 2016, Hanson has since expressed similar fears surrounding Muslim immigration, calling for a ban on immigration from majority Muslim countries (Murphy) while frequently insinuating that refugees from these countries are directly contributing to terrorist activity in Australia (Kozioł). Furthermore in 2018 Hanson introduced a bill, which is still before the Senate as of this thesis’ submission, to increase the time required to qualify for permanent residency and citizenship, reasoning that migrants should ‘prove their worth to us’ by assimilating to and following a perceived Australian cultural identity. She argued that ‘[o]nce these people become Australian citizens, it becomes very difficult to get rid of them if they are a bad character, want to go and fight for ISIS or they are actually criminals’ (Kainth). This is the discourse of barbarism, and she uses it to create fear and distrust around those that fail to assimilate to her understanding of Australian culture. In doing so, she dehumanizes people from non-Anglophone cultures, structures these cultures as incompatible with ‘Australian values’, and further implies that a failure to assimilate is a danger to the cohesion and security of Australian society: she barbarises them.

While the discourse of barbarism was used politically in the Roman world, its primary mode of transmission into Roman thought was through literary tradition – particularly in the form of ethnographies. Ancient ethnographies were ideologically motivated (Garnsey 62; Gillett "Mirror of Jordanes" 401-02): although appearing to be for the purpose of studying alternate cultures, the depiction of barbarian tribes was characterised by ideological assumptions and expectations of behaviour rather than observation and an attempt to understand and describe their cultural practices, traditions, and ways of life. This reliance on cultural assumptions and the descriptions present within ethnography was typically used to emphasise the otherness of the subject. Classical ethnography was thus characterised by and focused on a rhetoric of 'otherness', often fabricated and ideologically motivated to alienate the subject from the culture and social reality of the audience (Gillett "Mirror of Jordanes" 400). These fabrications remained influential to the Roman understanding and characterisations of barbarian people groups for centuries, to the point that later authors tended to use the same names within literature for the same ideological purpose long after the ethnic group ceased to exist (Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 16; 24; Gillett "Mirror of Jordanes" 398). This was further exacerbated by the practice of quoting old sources and ethnographies in order to give a work authenticity and respectability. Rather than being a source of criticism, referencing and continuing to use traditional methods of representation within ethnography was an assertion of learning and credibility. Considering this expectation for Latin literature, it is unsurprising that the stereotypes of different people groups and ideological representation of barbarians as inferior to the culture of Rome changed very little throughout Roman history despite increased interaction with the barbarian peoples within and beyond Roman borders (Burns "Through Caesar's Eyes" 119). A fundamental assumption driving this lack of change in representation was the idea that nature was indelible until replaced by a superior culture, and that barbarian societies were essentially static until brought into contact with Rome (Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 5-8). Rome was therefore pictured as entirely central to the development of the world, while barbarians were passive antagonists to be conquered and absorbed into the Empire. This depiction did not depart from reality until the latter quarter of the 4th Century where, except in the case of the Persian front, Roman armies typically did defeat outsider groups (Heather 241). This ideology and expectation of victory passed into literary tradition and, in doing so, cemented Roman understanding of their place as both culturally central and culturally superior within the Mediterranean world.

In a similar way, one of the primary modes by which social and ideological discourses of the modern era are transmitted and culturally inscribed is through the use of popular media and literary texts, in particular children's literature and texts written for young adults. Literature written for children is an inherently ideological and socializing medium, inducting children into the broader socio-cultural discourses of their society (Stephens "A Page Just Waiting to Be Written On" 40; Stephens *Language and Ideology* 3). Due to the antiquity of the discourse and the centrality of Roman history of Western culture, the discourse itself has become ingrained in the way we think about the other. It is therefore important to understand how the discourse of barbarism operates within children's texts and how it is being socialised and inscribed within modern culture. As shown above, the discourse, that is its structures and purpose, has been adapted from the Roman period and is still present within modern Western societies: it is still and influential and important in *how* we structure and establish the barbaric other. Children's texts frequently and actively engage with the ideologies of the contemporary context of their production, whether with the intent to reinforce and transmit certain ways of thinking and attitudes towards the world to a new generation, or to alternatively question and challenge these ideologies. This is particularly true for fantasy fiction written for young adult audiences. Fantasy is a genre that is relatively free from the constraints of reality and 'realistic' representation, thus allowing it to more freely engage with and question the ideologies and assumptions that construct modern society. Combined with the added socializing nature of children's fiction, the result is a genre that has the potential to subvert and question the very foundation of modern societal assumptions. Indeed, fiction written for young adults is frequently preoccupied with representing the relationship between social institutions and discourses of power and the individual (Trites *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature* 20, 23). This makes the genre of young adult fantasy uniquely suited to the interrogation and representation of the operation of the barbaric discourse, as barbarism is at its core a discourse of power and denotes the level of inclusion and participation an individual might have within society. I argue in this thesis that, far from being an artefact of the past and a feature exclusive to ancient literary culture, the barbaric discourse is not only present within contemporary society; but pervasive and inescapable in how we each construct our world and the 'other'.

The modern texts examined in this thesis can be broadly defined as being part of the fantasy genre as it currently appears in contemporary publishing and reader consumption. Fantasy itself is a very broad genre, however, and much of early scholarship on this

literature was primarily concerned with its definition. While a definitional approach is useful for establishing the parameters of the genre, much of this scholarship has tended towards an overly exclusive definition, paring the genre down to specific language forms and structural features as representative of a singular definition of fantasy. Todorov and Jackson, for example, argue true 'fantastic' literature causes hesitation in the reader regarding the reality of the events being described (Todorov 41). For Jackson, this definition is extended further, stating that the fantastic typically invokes a narrative uncertainty through establishing a text as mimetic before introducing elements that are manifestly 'unreal' (Jackson 34). These definitions are, however, limiting. In each case, they construct their idea of the 'fantastic' based upon its relationship to consensus reality and the subversion of the text's mimetic function: the fantastic must involve the intrusion of the unreal upon the real. Given the ideological nature of fantasy, the genre is also subject to frequent change and evolution. Specific definitions are therefore not overly helpful in understanding how the genre can be used to create and communicate meaning, and fail to represent many types (or sub-genres) of fantasy currently in circulation. As such, a critical approach such as that taken by Irwin and Hume is more appropriate when discussing the definition of fantasy: that being any text that is characterised by a consistent break from the familiar and consensus reality (Hume 21), and which transforms the 'non-fact' or 'impossible' into fact itself, which consistently affects and informs every element of the text as a fundamental feature of the textual reality (Irwin 4; 9-10). Within this definition there are, of course, a number of subgenres such as the science fiction, the urban fantasy, magic realism, the fairy tale, and the 'high' or 'otherworld' fantasy. The point that must be remembered when discussing the genre, however, is that none of these subgenres can be considered a definitive representation of the nature of fantasy, as each has their own form and structures of meaning-making.

With the existence of these subgenres in mind, it is important to limit the scope of this thesis lest we find ourselves grappling with too many generic conventions and codes. Given the focus of the thesis is to examine the ways in which constructions and ideas of barbarism have been transmitted into the modern social and political imagination through literature, it is apt to limit the scope of the fantasy texts to 'otherworld' fantasy. This type of fantasy literature establishes a world that is separated and distinct from modern social and political realities, and it is often centered upon fantastical or fictionalised cultural groups of people. Texts that could be included in otherworld fantasy might involve a futuristic Earth that has become completely unrecognisable socially, politically, and in many cases

geographically, and is thus for all intents and purposes an 'other' world. Alternatively, 'otherworld' fantasy might also include texts that are in a completely separate world with no relationship or connection to Earth or consensus reality apart from inference and ideological and societal models – for example the fantasy worlds of Eddings or Tolkien. This distance allows for the use of exaggeration and extremes in order to invoke the barbaric discourse in the representation of the fictional world, and in many cases to engage in the effect that this discursive paradigm has from the perspective of multiple subjectivities.

The impact and relationship of the discourse of barbarism on the construction and development of subjectivity is the crux of this thesis. Considering the socializing nature of children's literature, it is particularly important to not only examine which ideological paradigms are present within texts, but also how the texts position their readers to engage with those ideologies. This is primarily achieved through the representation of the developing subjectivities of the protagonists. Within contemporary children's literature scholarship, considerations of the processes of subjectivity formation have been prominently featured. Indeed, a consideration of self and society has become a naturalized aspect of most discussions within the field (Stephens "Introduction" 1) and the processes of identity formation has come to underpin much of adolescent fiction (McCallum 3). A fundamental influence on the models of subjectivity used in the field of children's literature has been the work of Bakhtin in his *The Dialogic Imagination*, which insists upon the dialogic nature of the formation of subjectivity, and the work of Jacques Lacan and his theory on the mirror stage and the unconscious (see in particular "The mirror stage" and "The subversion of the subject"). While different in their focus and approach, Bakhtin and Lacan essentially argue that the formation of the subject is deeply affected by external discourses and social expectations coming into contact with the internal perceived self. This model of subjectivity formation was adapted in McCallum's seminal work *Ideologies of Identity*, which focuses particularly on the development of self within relation to society and how this relationship is fictionally represented in texts for children and young adults.² In this work subjectivity as a process is broadly defined as a 'sense of a personal identity an individual has of her/his self as distinct from other selves, as occupying a position within society and in relation to other selves, and as being capable of deliberate thought and

² Of course McCallum's work is not the only work that theorises the dialogic and social formation of self; however it is a seminal work particularly as it relates to subjectivity and children's fiction. For further discussion of the formation of self in relation to society, see in particular Gergen, "The Social Construction of Self" (2011) and Hermans "The Dialogical Self" (2011).

action' (McCallum 3). As such, the formation of subjectivity cannot occur in isolation but is rather a result of the social structures and discourses of a society coming into contact with and affecting the perception and identity of the self.

This is not to say that identity formation is a passive process. At the centre of a dialogic model of subjectivity construction is the recognition of a number of social discursive systems and ideologies within any given society. Subjectivity is the selective appropriation and assimilation of varying societal and ideological discourses each with their own language systems, linguistic codes, and culture (Bakhtin "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" 341-42; McCallum 102). These differing systems cohabit within the same society and are differentiated according to various stratifying factors such as level of education, country, generational group, and socio-economic level (Bakhtin "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" 290-91). The selective appropriation of these different systems of language and social ideologies requires that the subject is able to both develop and exercise a sense of agency within a given social context. As such, a consideration of agency is essential to any discussion of the representation and formation of subjectivity. Without this sense of agency, the process of subjectivity can be compromised and entirely dictated by what Bakhtin refers to as external authoritative discourses, which can lead to the fracturing of a subject's identity and sense of self. If understood in this way, social systems and ideologies have the potential to be active influences upon the development of selfhood with the ability to oppose, deny, or dictate the formation of subjectivity. The discourse of barbarism is a central one of these social ideologies. Given both the pervasiveness of this discourse and its close relationship to power, dictating the extent of social and cultural inclusion as well as estimating the social value of an individual or people group, the operation of the barbaric within young adult fantasy cannot be examined without considering its implications for the processes of subjectivity formation.

This thesis aims to examine the barbaric discourse, how it is constructed, and how it operates specifically within contemporary fantasy literature for young adults.³ In essence this thesis asks: how and in what ways do we 'other', and what are the implications of this othering for our ability to participate in a modern, globalised world. To this end, I have selected several young adult texts in which the discourse of barbarism is readily apparent,

³ The fantasy texts I will be using for this examination were all published between 2005-2015, i.e. post September 2001.

and which actively explore the effect this discourse has on the way in which individuals structure their own understanding of their world and their position within it. Additionally, the texts chosen represent examples of 'otherworld' fantasy, thus allowing for more freedom to speculate and figuratively exaggerate modern social realities. These texts are Melina Marchetta's second two novels of her *Chronicles of Lumatere* trilogy, *Froi of the Exiles* (2011) and *Quintana of Charyn* (2012); Kass Morgan's *The 100* (2013), *Day 21* (2014), and *Homecoming* (2015); Suzanne Collins' trilogy *The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), and *Mockingjay* (2010); Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* (first published 2005); and Tamora Pierce's *Battle Magic* (2013). Chapter One of this thesis will examine the barbaric discourse more closely from a historical perspective, demonstrating how it was developed and its structural features. In order to achieve this I will examine a selection of ancient texts, particularly focusing on Tacitus' *Germania* and Virgil's *The Aeneid*. This chapter will explain in more detail what the discourse of barbarism is, how it is structured, and how it can be used for various ideological purposes. Chapter Two will discuss the generic conventions of fantasy in more detail, and more specifically consider the connection between fantasy, historical fiction, and children's literature. What I hope to draw out through this chapter is how history can manifest through fantasy fiction and be used in order to more freely reflect on and examine social ideologies and societal structures within the modern world. Drawing from the structures discussed in Chapter One, Chapter Three will consider how class structures are figured in modern, contemporary young adult fantasy as a key structural feature of the barbaric discourse, how this affects the representation of society, and the impact this has on the ability for individuals to develop and exercise a sense of agency within those societies. This chapter will also consider how fantasy texts are infused with the barbaric discourse and how many of these texts attempt to actively interrogate and subvert the discourse's traditional structures and ideological uses. Chapter Four will similarly consider how the barbaric discourse operates within the representation of gendered power structures, focusing specifically on the centrality of masculinity within the barbaric paradigm. This chapter will consider how constructions of masculinity were an essential aspect of demonstrating the barbarity of a particular people group within the Roman period, and the converse degradation of femininity within the barbaric discourse. I will then demonstrate how similar constructions and representations of gender appear within modern, contemporary fantasy texts and how, in some cases, fantasy texts can subvert and question this structuring of gender and barbarism. Chapter Five analyses how contemporary fantasy texts represent the impact of the barbaric discourse on the process of subjectivity

formation. Through this chapter I demonstrate how many of these fantasy texts represent the discourse of barbarism as inherently damaging to the way subjectivity is formed, and how it functions to create and sustain divisions within society. In doing so, I also consider how fantasy texts explore the implications of the discourse of barbarism within wider society in order to problematize its continued usage and the structures that form it. As such I hope through this thesis to fill a gap in the conversation about subjectivity, fantasy, and children's texts, and in particular examine how history and tradition has created a pervasive and often unnoticed ideological paradigm that has inserted itself into multiple aspects of modern life and western thought. In doing so I will demonstrate not only how the structures of the discourse of barbarism still affect the way we communicate and construct the other as barbaric, although the signification itself may have changed from its ancient usage, but also the potential of fantasy written for children to draw attention to and disrupt dominant social and societal structures by positing the questions: how do we other and what kind of world do we want to create?

Chapter 1

The Discourse of Barbarism

Introduction

Subjectivity is, essentially, 'that sense of a personal identity an individual has of her/his self as distinct from other selves, as occupying a position within society and in relation to other selves, and as being capable of deliberate thought and action' (McCallum 3). Necessarily, the development of this subjectivity is inalienable from the influence of the societal pressures and social discourses of the individual's own social context and is 'formed in dialogue with others and with the discourses constituting the society and culture s/he inhabits [... thus Subjectivity] is always shaped by social ideologies' (McCallum 3). The barbaric discourse in the ancient era functioned primarily as a model through which this discursive development of subjectivity on a societal level might occur. It was a discourse that sought to separate the perceived civilised world of the Romans from that of the inferior barbarians surrounding the Mediterranean, and explore the cultural differences on which this separation and belief in Roman superiority was based. This discourse constitutes an integral facet of our modern Western cultural heritage and history, and as such has been filtered into multiple aspects of modern life. This is no less true of modern literary texts, where the ideas of civility, selfhood, and otherness typically ingrained in the barbaric discourse are commonly and persistently present. As such, it is important to understand the barbaric discourse and its associated ideas of otherness particularly considering the socialising, enculturating, and inherently ideological function of literature written for young adults. It is through this literature that authors are able to induct children into cultural modes of thinking and further familiarise them with their ideological cultural heritage (Stephens *Language and Ideology* 3). This extends to the devices and discourses that are encoded within our literature and that model ways through which an implied reader might understand and interpret their world (Stephens *Language and Ideology* 86-88). It is therefore important to understand the function of the barbaric discourse and what ideas of otherness and self-perception it conveys within a broader societal context.

Barbarism itself, as a paradigm of otherness, constitutes very old ideas concerning self and other. This discourse forms an interpretative and representative model for the world that

is still active in a contemporary context and is furthermore often utilised within constructions of subjectivity in young adult fantasy. As such, this chapter will focus on the historical development of the barbaric discourse and its function within ancient literature for two main reasons. The first, simply, is that the word 'barbaric' and its associated connotations are rooted in the Greco-Roman language and culture, and language is central to the construction of society and self (Bakhtin "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" 290-91; 341-42). Secondly, as I am focusing in this thesis on young adult fantasy literature from the Western world, it is important to understand the function of barbarism within the context of an inherited Western idea considering the enculturating function of young adult literature.

The construction of the barbaric discourse is dependent upon the existence of two oppositional components: the first is the 'barbaric' society being described and the second is an existing cultural consensus on the dominant culture ascribing barbarism. These very preconditions create the 'barbarian' as an ideological construction of power, based upon the possibility of inclusion or exclusion from the dominant or 'preferred' culture. While the opposition between 'civility' and 'barbarism' is a condition for the invocation of the barbaric, the 'barbarian' himself is not a static figure. Many modern connotations of the 'barbaric' are connected with ideas of absolute moral or cultural inferiority, however this was not always the case. The idea of the barbaric within its original Greco-Roman was more fluid and complex in its manifestation, and used as an ideological tool in order to both explore the perceived otherness (Gillett "Mirror of Jordanes" 396-97) or inferiority of one people group against the more dominant Greco-Roman culture (Heather 234; 42-43; Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 3), as well as reveal commonly held ideas of self and *Romanitas* or 'Romanness'. Thus, the cultural identity of the Romans was intrinsically connected to their conception of the 'other': what was inherently *not* Roman (Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 14). As such, the barbaric discourse cannot operate as a mere descriptor of an external society. Rather it requires comparison, whether implicit or explicit, with the alternate 'civilised' culture and its concurrent societal and political developments. Importantly, however, while the barbarian was not always cast as the absolute, inferior, and despicable 'other', he was nevertheless decidedly *not* Roman and therefore excluded from the position of cultural privilege and power. As a result of this close ideological relationship, literary manifestations of 'barbarism' shift alongside the social and political developments of the Roman world in order to reflect ideas of otherness when cast against a shifting consensus of societal identity.

Despite this characterisation depending upon a cultural consensus of the nature of *Romanitas*, the barbarian figure could not be a culturally homogenous entity given the number of different barbarian groups living around the Mediterranean and the Roman borders throughout the Roman era. As such, the construction of the nature of the barbarian required flexibility in order to express the cultural and societal differences of those people groups outside of Roman control. This flexibility was found and developed through the characterisation of barbarian people in relation to more specific cultural variations of a more general barbarian idea (Burns "Sometimes Bitter Friends" 22), which allowed the Romans to highlight and acknowledge the cultural and political differences between these peoples, while still enabling the use of 'barbarian' to collectively categorise these peoples as *not* Roman. This is the basis of the barbaric discourse. As a result, descriptions of barbarian groups within Roman literature evolved into a discourse that figured barbaric behaviour as a scale, on which one end was "good" barbarian behaviour, generally embodied by the Germanic peoples to the north of the Italian peninsula, and at the other end of the scale was "bad" barbaric behaviour, exhibited by the Persian/Parthian Empire to the east. On this scale were gradients of barbarian behaviour, for example the Gauls who were less "honourable" than the Germans but nevertheless figured as "good" barbarians, with Roman society situated between the two as the definition of 'civility'. The production of this 'scale' was achieved through the categorisation of perceived barbaric behaviour, including but not limited to: types of gendered behaviour and performance typical within a barbaric group, including sexual behaviour and morality within barbaric societies; the societal structure of barbaric societies, particularly as it related to class stratification, discipline, education, and material wealth and greed; and the attitude towards violence, oftentimes closely connected with ideas of class and gender. As such, the discourse of barbarism evolved beyond a simple designator of difference in language into a complex set of structured ideological assertions regarding the true nature of civility. In identifying these thematic categories in ancient writings on barbarian peoples, we are better able to understand how the barbaric discourse is constructed and, more importantly, what it seeks to communicate about the 'other' within a literary context.

In order to understand the construction and operation of the barbaric discourse, this chapter will examine influential writings from the Roman period dealing with the various barbarian peoples surrounding the Roman World. To this end, I will focus on Tacitus' *Germania*, Caesar's *The Gallic War* and Ammianus Marcellinus' *History* in order to

understand Roman ideas of different 'kinds' of barbarians surrounding their world. This chapter will then consider how these different barbarisms affected the development and representation of Roman subjectivity, best demonstrated through Virgil's *Aeneid*. This approach will reveal the parameters by which ideas of civility were explored and with which barbarians might be assessed, as well as the ideological function of barbarism as a model of subjectivity through which Roman selfhood was expressed in direct relation to other barbaric selves. In doing so, this chapter will demonstrate how the barbaric discourse constructs 'otherness', as well as how it operates as a model of interpretation through which subjectivity is formed and negotiated.

Historical Ethnography and Ideologies of Other

Ancient ethnographical writings were highly ideological in nature and rarely reflected the reality of the people groups they were describing. This was primarily used to emphasise the level of 'otherness' or barbarity practised by those people, and was generally assessed based on the group's level of similarity to Roman ways of life. This is seen particularly through writings about the peoples of Northern Europe, who were a constant antagonistic presence to the Roman Empire throughout its existence. As such, there was a long tradition for their representations within literature. This theme was initially introduced and refined in Caesar's *Gallic War*, which in turn affected subsequent representations, such as that found in Tacitus' *Germania*.

The Gallic War is a highly ideological text written by Caesar to both justify and celebrate his own campaigning during the years of the Late Republic. On the surface, the text is a report of military activity undertaken to the north of the Italian peninsula interspersed with ethnographic observations. The embellishment of reality within ancient ethnography is a well-documented phenomenon, and Caesar's ethnographic information appears to follow this tradition, functioning more as a rhetorical interlude than a representation of reality (Schadee 158). As such, Caesar's ethnographic digressions are politically and ideologically motivated, based in stereotypical representations of the barbarian tribes of Europe, and written with the purpose of self-aggrandisement while providing a justification for Caesar's military activity (Schadee 159). This is widely accepted; what is of interest to this study is the precedent of the Germanic 'character' created by Caesar and its implied relationship to Rome and to the Gallic tribes.

Previous to, and even during Caesar's time, the barbarians of Northern Europe were generally conceived of as having a mostly homogenous culture. While ancient writers such as Strabo, Posidonius, and Diodorus separated groups of people by name, in practice the terms "Galatae" and "Celtae" were often used interchangeably and the German tribes viewed more as a broader subset of one homogenous culture than a separate ethnic group (Riggsby 51; Rives xvii). Caesar diverges from this traditional ethnographic approach, however, carefully distinguishing between the different tribal groups inhabiting 'Gaul' to the north and north-west of the Italian peninsula (Schadee 160). This distinction is further extended in order to separate the Germanic tribes in the north-east from the collection of tribes in Gaul as two functionally separate nations. He uses the Rhine as a geographical and political demarcation between the two and seems to argue that for all intents and purposes, the Gauls and the Germans are completely different people. Caesar begins his text by explaining the layout of Gaul, introducing and foregrounding his division of Northern Europe.

The whole of Gaul is divided into three parts, one of which the Belgae inhabit, the Aquitani another, and the third a people who in their own language are called 'Celts', but in ours, Gauls (Caesar *Gallic War* 1.1).

He claims that these three distinct people groups 'all differ among themselves in respect of language, way of life, and laws' (Caes. *BGall.* 1.1) and are separated by rivers. In doing so, Caesar differentiates the people groups inhabiting 'all of Gaul' in every cultural aspect that might otherwise identify them as similar. In this construction Caesar privileges one particular people as 'true Gauls' and their territory as 'Gaul proper' (Schadee 160), deliberately creating ambiguity as to the precise nature and extent of Caesar's conquest. He might simultaneously claim victory over 'all of Gaul' by gaining control of 'Gaul proper' while also creating a justification for continuing his campaign to subdue 'all of Gaul'. As such, these two inconsistent definitions of Gaul are primarily ideological and his description of the social 'fact' of the area largely imaginary. This ambiguity in turn exaggerates the success and importance of his campaign. Schadee argues that '[a]t the end of Book 1, a reader would believe Caesar to be in control of the whole of Gaul, instead of the Gallic area of the tripartite division' (Schadee 160-61).

It is important to understand this as a contextual background for the ideological and political nature of Caesar's work, particularly when considering his conception of the

Germani. Caesar's distinction between the 'Gallic' and 'Germanic' groups largely ignores the social reality of life along the Rhine. In fact, the Rhine served more to connect the people living on either side rather than to separate them (Rives xvii) and archaeological evidence suggests far more cultural similarity between the 'Gauls' and 'Germani' than difference (Schadee 162). Using the Rhine as a demarcation, however, enabled Caesar to establish an 'apparently objective limit' (Schadee 163) to his campaign in Gaul, allowing him to claim successful conquest of 'the whole of Gaul' once Roman control extended to the river. The rhetorical success of this separation is demonstrated in Book 8 of *The Gallic War*, which was added by Aulus Hirtius in 51 BCE after Caesar's death and claims Caesar to have successfully conquered all of Gaul (Caes. *BGall.* 8.1). More importantly, however, the use of the Rhine as a hard territorial boundary between two apparently unrelated groups of people served to further isolate and other the Germanic people. Where the Gauls are consistently portrayed as simple barbarians, soft in nature and susceptible to Roman cultural influences and colonisation despite their simplicity, the Germani are constructed as fiercely resistant to any foreign 'civilising' influence or control. As such, Caesar uses the Rhine itself to signify the Germani as entirely 'other' to the Roman cultural norm. Despite the use of the Rhine as a physical symbol of cultural difference, he does not completely overwrite the cultural similarity between the Gallic and Germanic people. Rather Caesar adapted it to his own ends and ideological purposes: while creating the distinction between the Gallic and Germanic tribes, he still implies a shared ancestral nature. Caesar suggests that they are of the same 'kind' of warlike barbarian people (Rives xvii), but the two became fundamentally different over time due to the introduction into Gaul of a 'civilising' Roman influence through the Province (Caes. *BGall.* 6.24).

This ideological separation between the Gauls and the Germani enabled the conscious and deliberate comparison between the two societies, establishing barbarity as a spectrum rather than an absolute and exploring concepts of civility as well as the perceived place of Roman society within the world. Notably, the primary factor determining the level of barbarism within a given society is that society's proximity and familiarity with Rome and Roman custom. For Caesar, the Germani, untouched by Roman intervention, trade, or cultural practices, seem far beyond the reach of incorporation into the Empire. The Gauls on the other hand, softened and dependent on the Roman state at different points throughout the text, are perfect candidates to become either allies or participants in the Roman Empire. This construction assumes a 'Hippocratic' ethnographic tradition, which argues that the character of a people is determined by the topography of the area in which

they live (Riggsby 52). Hence, people in harsh and wild environments are consequently harsh, wild, and hard in nature. Alternatively, people to the south in warmer and more fertile areas are similarly softer, more fertile, and more given to luxury and 'civilising' influences. Conveniently, this construction of the world places the Mediterranean at the centre of 'civility' and cultural sophistication. The Germanic tribes, further from the Roman world, are less exposed to their goods, trade, and culture. As a result, they are characterised as far fiercer and more resistant to Roman (civilising) influence than their Gallic neighbours. Within each image constructed of the barbarian, the group's relationship and proximity to Rome is the key to understanding the representation of their nature within Roman texts.

Similar to the writings on the people groups of Northern Europe, writing about the people to the East of the Empire also failed to account for the reality of life in the Middle East in favour of continuing ethnographic traditions. Throughout the period of Greco-Roman encounters with the Persian and Parthian empires, the name ascribed to the people of the East shifted from Persian to Parthian and back. This was primarily due to the various dynastic changes throughout the period. The Achaemenid Persians of Greek writings were defeated by Alexander the Great, at which point the Greek Seleucids took control until the first century BCE when they were overthrown by the 'Parthian' Arsacids. Thus, Rome's first encounter with the East was with the Parthians. By the time of Ammianus Marcellinus' writing they were again 'Persians' in name as the result of an attempt by the Sassanids, who had overthrown the Arsacids by 224 CE, to legitimise their reign through a connection with the Achaemenid 'Persian' dynasty, and create a sense of cultural continuity (Drijvers 195-97). This historical context is important to understand, as Roman authors rarely acknowledged the long and complex cultural changes within Persian history. Rather, with the exception of the interlude of the Seleucid period, the Persians and Parthians were conceived of as one continuous regime. Indeed, Ammianus Marcellinus appears to mostly omit mention or acknowledgement of the dynastic and cultural changes in Persia and Parthia during his digression on the history of the Parthian Empire. Marcellinus does not even mention the Sassanian dynasty, which was in control of Persia at the time of his writing, and only nominally distinguishes between the Achaemenids and the Arsacids. Rather, instead of treating each dynastic change as a unique period of Persian history, he presents the Arsacids as the continuation of a former Persian dynasty, re-established after

a brief interval of Seleucid control (Ammianus Marcellinus *History*, Vol. II 23.6.2-9).⁴ It would appear from this historical digression that despite coming into frequent contact with the Eastern frontier throughout his life and to a certain extent writing from personal experience,⁵ Ammianus Marcellinus' image of Persia is one of a singular ethnicity, identity, and history (Drijvers 195). This approach seems to be consistent with Roman historiographical tradition, which held that all 'peoples east of the Euphrates were considered as one entity with the same habits and ethnographical characteristics' (Drijvers 200) regardless of more accurate ethnographical and topographical information that became available throughout late antiquity through trade and diplomatic relations (Drijvers 200).

This approach to representing Persia is revealing of the power of literary tradition and the ideological nature of ethnography – rarely representing the reality of the areas they were describing in favour of older and more entrenched images of the land and people groups that had become increasingly outdated. Literary accounts of Persia existed as early as the fifth century BCE with the writings of Herodotus, and the image he creates of a society with a rigid class structure, high military discipline, rampant polygamy and insatiable sexual desire, a keen sense of modesty regarding bodily functions, and which is easily influenced by foreign customs (Herodotus *Histories* 1.131-140) was still heavily influential within later accounts of the Persian Empire.

Barbaric Societies and Social Orders

A fundamental feature that constitutes the construction of the barbaric discourse is through the examination of the social and political structures of an other society. Throughout the Roman period, this examination was particularly concerned with social order, class structure, and level of freedom both in terms of the social mobility and general sense of agency afforded to its people. Oftentimes, this assessment was made in comparison with other people groups, with the result always being an implicit comparison with and commentary on Roman society and way of life. In doing so, Roman authors were able to comment on their own ideas of what constituted ideal social and political organisation, and conversely create a discourse of inferiority around social and political

⁴ It was necessary to use this translation for the history as in many translations this digression is omitted.

⁵ There is some discussion as to what extent Ammianus relied on his own experience when characterising the Persians as opposed to literary tradition. The point here, however, is that he had ample opportunity for encounters with the Parthian Empire through his military career. See Teitler 1999.

structures that were different from that of their own. This in turn would shape what would be regarded as barbaric societal organisation in the future and become integral to the operation of the barbaric discourse.

For Caesar, Gallic society was defined by dysfunction and division, and therefore desperately in need of Roman intervention. The first comment Caesar makes regarding Gallic society is that 'In Gaul there are factions, not only in every state and every village and district but practically in each individual household as well' (Caes. *BGall.* 6.11). From the outset Caesar represents the Gallic people as deeply divided and inherently indecisive, argumentative, and fickle. He reiterates this in his explanation of Gallic statecraft, stating that, due to the impetuous and inexperienced nature of the Gallic people, rumours and discussions of state are prohibited outside of an assembly for the sake of social order (Caes. *BGall.* 6.20). The implied assumption in this statement is that Gauls are naturally easier to lead astray and are given to rash action on the basis of unsubstantiated rumour rather than a reliance on logic and reason. This is an indictment on the people themselves as well as Gallic society as a whole; it is only in the most judicious states that this law exists, implying that most of the Gallic states exist in perpetual disorder, lacking in judiciousness. Even where order does exist, however, it is predicated on the exclusion of the majority of the population from state affairs. As such, Gallic society is represented as one that not only denies agency to its people on a large scale, but also one in which this agency is undesired: the common people have no courage or ability to make their own decisions, have no input into state decisions, and have no regard for their freedom, simply selling 'themselves into slavery to the aristocracy' (Caes. *BGall.* 6.13) should they become too indebted. They are also fanatic to the point of sacrificing even innocent civilians for the sake of their religion (Caes. *BGall.* 6.16), and the men have the 'power of life and death over their wives as over their children' (Caes. *BGall.* 6.18) creating a sense of arbitrary tyranny.

Much of Caesar's preoccupation in his representation and criticism of the Gallic states is based on his perception of their dysfunction and social order, or lack thereof. The resulting characterisation of Gaul is a state that is in perpetual political turmoil, while the people are impulsive and illogical; unappreciative and dismissive of their own freedom; and almost tyrannical, cruel, and arbitrary in their approach to execution and death. This characterisation performs two ideological functions within the context of Caesar's text. The first is that this characterisation appears to insist on the necessity for Roman intervention and conquest. The Gauls are represented as an unstable people, much diminished in the

prestige and strength they once enjoyed and thus unable to repel the Germani should the need arise. Furthermore, Caesar represents the Gauls as a volatile and unpredictable force in close proximity to the Roman border, implying their lack of strength and order constitutes a direct danger to Roman life.⁶ The second ideological function of this representation of the Gallic people is its comparative purpose with the subsequent portrayal of the Germani. As previously stated, the Rhine demarcation operated as an objective limit to Caesar's campaign, and the Germani are represented as resistant to Roman enculturation. There was therefore no impetus in the text to extend the campaign into German territory, and this is further emphasised by Caesar's representation of their societal structure.

In stark contrast to Caesar's Gauls, the Germani are savage and uncivilised, brave and strong, and staunchly egalitarian. Their society is oriented around the pursuit of military strength and success, to the point that sexual intercourse is discouraged before the age of twenty (Caes. *BGall.* 6.20); and land is distributed to every family on a yearly basis in order to avoid their people becoming too attached to their land and therefore 'softened' by domesticity, property, and wealth. This practice ensures a military focus in its people while also creating an egalitarian society (Caes. *BGall.* 6.22). No family is able to accumulate property, regardless of their social position, and it consciously avoids the creation of disproportionate distributions of wealth through estate inheritance. This is a rejection of material wealth in favour of community and social cohesion and resolute socio-economic equality. While initially a source of praise, Caesar does suggest their devotion to equality is occasionally excessive, bordering on disorder, as they have no absolute rulers or leaders unless in a time of war (Caes. *BGall.* 6.23; Riggsby 61). The Germani are also heavily dedicated to the laws of *hospitium*, regarding their duty as host and observation of guest-friendship a sacred matter of honour, and believe that to break one's word to be a source of public shame (Caes. *BGall.* 6.23), emphasising the importance of honour and integrity

⁶ This idea of the value and necessity of Roman intervention is a recurring theme throughout the text, from Caesar's promise to 'take care' of the matter concerning Ariovistus in 1.33 to his 'reminding' the Aedui that he had 'found' them in a subservient position and through his own efforts had brought them to a position of good fortune and prosperity in 7.54. It must be pointed out that this interpretation is not in accordance with Gruen's, who argues that the point of Caesar's ethnographic excursions on the Gauls is to represent them not as 'alien creatures [...] antithetical to Roman practices and character, and averse to the principles of their antagonists' but rather as having 'remarkably' similar moral and religious values to Rome. He also argues that their consistent resistance to and war with Rome, even after a string of defeats, denotes a commitment to liberty and 'a collective purpose'. I am inclined to agree with the notion of presenting the Gauls as not entirely alien, however, I suggest the implication of Caesar's text is an argument for intervention and conquest based on Gallic inability for complex and sophisticated statecraft and logical reasoning. Thus, while they are a nation given to war, there is a stronger argument for strength of character, valour, and wisdom being an exception to Gallic character, restricted to the aristocracy, rather than the rule. See (Gruen "Caesar on the Gauls" 152-58)

within their society. Despite this favourable characterisation, Caesar offsets this nobility of character by portraying them as savage and uncivilised, bordering on animalistic particularly with regards to their dress, diet, and bathing customs (Caes. *BGall.* 6.22-6.23).

Caesar thus directly contrasts the Gallic people with the Germani and implies throughout his text that, while adversarial to the Roman state, the conquering of the Germani is beyond the scope of his campaign. The Gallic people are evidently in need of Roman civilisation while the Germani are self-sufficient, entirely 'other', and unable to be conquered. To Caesar, the Germani are enemies to defeat in battle, but not people to incorporate into the Roman world, as is the case with the Gauls: as long as they remain across the Rhine, the Germani are of no concern to the Roman state. The image of the German people is therefore highly ideological, used for the sake of directly comparing barbarian people against each other and implicitly in relation to Roman conceptions of 'civility'. The Germani are unconquerable: able to be repelled but uncompromising in their rejection of Roman civilisation in the form of wealth, luxury, and long-term agricultural settlement. Indeed, Rives argues that '[Caesar's] whole treatment of the Germani is meant to emphasize their wildness and ferocity; he presents them not as potential subjects of Rome, like the Gauls [...] but rather as a threat that must be kept back on their side of the Rhine'. Conquering the Germani was never a consideration in Caesar's mind, and the image he creates of them reflects as much (Rives xvii). Germanic society is fierce and brave, egalitarian, and honourable, but painted as essentially savage and opposed to civilising influences lest they lose their ferocity or 'hardness'. They are characterised as inherently antithetical to the Roman culture and way of life. This epitomises how that barbaric discourse might be used within a broader socio-cultural context: Roman identity was formed against the societies of the barbarian other, and they conceived of their role as a civilising influence on the inferior societies of the ancient European world.

Unlike in Caesar's work, the comparison between Roman and Germanic society is far more evident in Tacitus' *Germania*. Indeed, the purpose of *Germania* seems not so much to emphasise the Germans' 'otherness' in order to alienate them from Tacitus' Roman audience (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 178) as it is to use perceptions and stereotypes of Germanic 'otherness' in order to explore, interrogate, and subvert Roman conceptions of self. He utilises culturally relatable ideas to frame his discussion and analysis of the Germanic tribes in an attempt to increase understanding of the character he is constructing and contextualises the discussion of the Germani within Roman society. This

contextualisation of the Germani within the framework of Roman experience creates the space for clearer parallels, comparisons, and contrasts between Germanic society and the socio-political structures of the Roman world. Similar to Caesar, one important way he interrogates the barbarism of Germania, which contributed to the formation of the barbaric discourse, is through a consideration of its social order and societal structure.

For Tacitus, Germanic liberty constituted the Germani people's greatest strength as well as their greatest weakness. While he argues that it is the source of their military strength and success, it is also the cause of great social disorder. He claims that Germanic liberty is one of the most dangerous aspects of Germanic character to the Roman Empire, responsible for a number of devastating military defeats, and states that '[d]riven back once more, [the Germani] have in recent times supplied us more with triumphs than with victories' (Tacitus, *Germania* 37). The implications of this wry observation is that the German people are largely indomitable; their adherence to freedom and liberty means they defy attempts at subjection, despite many Roman emperors' attempts to claim otherwise. Tacitus ironically reflects that recent campaigns have been more concerned with repelling the Germans back across the Rhine than actually claiming a true victory over them, indirectly criticising the victorious claims of recent emperors (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 170; Rives xxxix). Such claims and efforts to subjugate the German people are subsequently represented as at best ridiculous, at worst foolish (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 170). More importantly, however, he also claims that the liberty of the Germans presents a greater threat than the 'despotism of Arsaces' (Tac. *Ger.* 37) – the Persian Empire being Rome's main political and cultural rival in the ancient world. Tacitus therefore draws two systems of barbaric government into direct contrast: the egalitarian Germanic liberty against the absolute rule of Persian despotism. Eastern despotism, he argues, has only led to minor embarrassments to the Roman forces while Germanic liberty has been the cause of far more devastating losses. Freedom, he implies, allows those living in Germania to be fiercer and thus stronger than any Eastern barbarian subjected to 'the despotism of a Parthian' king (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 170). While the explicit contrast is between two systems of barbaric government, the implicit connotations of ascribing Germanic success to their adherence to freedom when compared to 'despotism' holds a potential rebuke for the Roman imperial system: absolute government is a source of weakness (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 171). As such, his discussion on and comparison between two barbaric societies carries with it an implied consideration of the nature of true civility. While their liberty is a source of strength for the Germans, Tacitus is

also careful to highlight its weakness as a form of societal organisation. He therefore utilises the barbarism of German society in order to reflect upon the nature of his own Roman context.

Like Caesar, Tacitus represents German society as particularly collective in its organisation: major community decisions are debated and made in consultation with 'the whole community', while the 'leading men' deal with minor affairs (Tac. *Ger.* 11). The community is able to affect decisions that will directly impact them, thus representing the Germanic people as an essentially egalitarian and democratic society. This is not to say that Germanic society lacks structure or a sense of 'natural hierarchy', however. There is still a slave class, although Tacitus states that slaves are not given specific jobs within the household and are rather treated more as 'tenants' on the land. Each slave has 'control of his own house and home' while the master takes 'a fixed amount of grain, cattle or clothing [...] and up to this point the slave obeys' (Tac. *Ger.* 25). They are not responsible for direct service of the Germanic master, and domestic tasks are completed primarily by the master's wife and children. Furthermore, children, both slave and German, are raised alongside each other in the same living conditions: the children of the masters are not set apart to be pampered or indulged, but rather brought up in the ways of Germanic 'hardness' or 'virtue', 'naked and dirty, to that strength of limb and size of body that excites [Roman] admiration' (Tac. *Ger.* 20).

Despite this societal structure in which slaves and Germans are not separated, nor is Germanic slavery represented as particularly onerous, Tacitus makes clear there is still the presence of an ordered hierarchy of esteem within Germanic society, even if not immediately apparent. Freedmen (as opposed to citizens) do not hold much influence in the household and 'never in the state, excepting only in nations that are ruled by kings: there they rise higher than free men and nobles' (Tac. *Ger.* 25). He claims that the denial of influence to freedmen in state affairs is the 'hallmark of liberty'. This is revealing of Tacitus' ideology, as he implicitly connects the institution of kingship with a violation of freedom and liberty as it is only in states with kings that freedmen have power. Kingship, to Tacitus, inverts the natural order, relying on outsiders for input into political decisions and subjecting free people to the whims of socially inferior former slaves. It is only in the Germanic states without kings or an absolute authority where true freedom prospers and a 'correct' social order exists. States with true liberty do not subject their citizens to the rule and ideas of an 'inferior' people, but rather uphold a 'natural' order and hierarchy of

esteem within society. Similarly, slaves, while generally treated as freedmen, are nevertheless owned and thus at the bottom of the societal ladder. While in practice the slave class of Germania is treated as freedmen, they are not protected as such and are still largely subject to their masters' whim. Thus Tacitus' construction of German liberty 'denotes a society lacking a king but possessing an ordered social structure in which each class has its appropriate station' (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 171). The connection between freedom and the exclusion of freedmen from politics – combined with the idea that Germanic freedom is the source of their martial strength and ability – implies that the exclusion of freedmen from political processes is necessary for the preservation of cultural strength and purity. This results in an implicit contrast between Germanic society and the Roman imperial system, the latter in which freedmen were commonly involved in the politics of the imperial court. As such, Tacitus implies that Roman emperors violate the fundamental tenets of liberty and further shame themselves and weaken their nation by allowing inferior outsiders to directly influence state affairs.

While Tacitus is clearly in favour of Germanic liberty and societal structure when compared with that of despotism in other barbarian cultures, he also sees it as being the cause of a weakness in morality and social order when exercised to excess. While Germans are rarely harsh with the slaves in terms of either labour or imprisonment, it is common for German masters to kill their slaves 'not in a spirit of stern discipline, but in a fit of passion, as they might an enemy – except that the deed is unpunished' (Tac. *Ger.* 25). While their devotion to liberty is a source of social cohesion and military strength, it is also impulsive, bordering on chaotic. Rather than using physical violence judiciously in the interest of disciplining their slaves, the Germani are instead encouraged by a lack of accountability to act arbitrarily and impulsively. German society therefore treads a fine line between order and disorder, and exists upon a string of contradictions. He comments that during times of peace they 'sink into idleness', and that this behaviour 'is a remarkable inconsistency in their nature that they love indolence as much as they hate peace' (Tac. *Ger.* 15). During this time the German people have no love or patience for hard work or industry, and sleep in late (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 165). Upon waking they are more likely to proceed to drinking and banquets than to work (Tac. *Ger.* 22), and their love of drinking causes Tacitus to sardonically remark that one only need 'to indulge their intemperance by supplying all that they crave [in alcohol] and you will gain as easy a victory through their vices as through your own arms' (Tac. *Ger.* 23). When called to council, their honour demands they attend, however, they often take days to arrive (Tac. *Ger.* 11) resulting in a drastic delay in

making decisions that are dependent upon community consensus. Despite being the source of their strength and community, an over-emphasis on liberty is represented as the beginnings of social disorder and consequently the Germanic people's greatest weakness. His value judgment of this 'weakness' reveals a belief in the otherness of Germanic liberty, in conflict with Roman custom and society. Where the Germans fail, Romans excel in discipline, but occasionally violate liberty and freedom as a result. Germans on the other hand excel in ensuring freedom for its citizens but exercise it to excess, resulting in widespread disorderly behaviour, which is not restricted or tempered by the presence of law, and a lack of self-control. Here we find an evolution of the barbaric discourse towards how it frequently operates within a modern literary context, particularly with regards to fantasy. Where Caesar simply used it to establish the cultural inferiority of those outside the Roman Empire and thus justify military campaigns against them, Tacitus uses the barbarism and otherness of the Germani for the purposes of implicitly comparing to and critiquing his own societal structure and the systems of Roman governance.

Unlike Tacitus' treatment of the Germans, Ammianus Marcellinus has very few positive observations to make of Persian culture. This attitude is representative of a shift from earlier accounts in which Persian difference was not so much cause for hatred, but rather a curiosity in cultural difference. Around the reign of Augustus, however, the East was beginning to represent an '*alter orbis*' to Rome – an 'other world' that embodied 'everything which was not Roman' (Drijvers 199). Ammianus described the Eastern barbarians as, among other things, wealthy and luxurious to the point of excess, effeminate, sexually licentious, excessively cruel, and ruled by despots (Drijvers 199), all characteristics that the Romans traditionally despised. As such, even where he appears to be complimentary of Persian practices, this is ultimately lukewarm in nature and functions more as a sneer at comparative Roman customs than genuine admiration. This is best seen in his comments regarding the Persian judiciary system. He explains that Persian judges are chosen based on their learning and experience, rather than following the Roman custom of placing 'eloquent men, highly skilled in public law, behind the backs of judges without learning' (23.6.82). This is an elitist sneer at Roman custom rather than a reflection on Persian legal custom and presented as a source for cultural embarrassment: even the Persians, with their despotism and cruelty, find the Roman judiciary a cause for ridicule (23.6.82). Ammianus also comments upon contemporary rumours regarding the Persian legal system, however, this seems to be more for the purpose of undermining any reason he may have for

their praise. In doing so, any positive observations he makes are begrudging and immediately undermined through the introduction of aspersions of cruelty and wrongdoing.

Indeed, cruelty, despotism, and wrongdoing feature prominently in Ammianus Marcellinus' characterisation of the Persian Empire, particularly as it relates to its class and societal structure. He constructs an image of a society that is, by its nature, rigid in its class stratification, overly legalistic in its dispensation of punishment, and excessive in its cruelty, particularly with regards to its treatment of its 'free' citizens. He suggests that the Persians are such that even free citizens are considered no better than slaves, nobles frequently 'claiming the power of life and death over slaves and commons' and subsequently flaying them alive, 'either bit by bit or all at once' (23.6.80). Servants are not allowed to speak when waiting on a table for any circumstance, 'to such a degree that [...] the mouths of all are fettered' (23.6.80), and soldiers are treated as gladiators⁷ (slaves), 'follow[ing] in the rear [of an army], as if doomed to perpetual slavery, without ever being supported by pay or gifts' (23.6.83). Persia, by Ammianus' estimation, is a nation that enslaves even its free citizens. It is in violation of any concept of freedom or liberty and thus ruled by tyranny. Furthermore, he suggests that the nobles of Persia take pleasure in abusing the power of life and death over those lower in society. Their laws reflect this attitude, being severe with 'ingrates' and deserters, with some laws being utterly 'detestable' in Ammianus' opinion and 'provid[ing] that because of the guilt of a single person all his relatives are put to death' (23.6.81). Persian society is cast as utterly despotic and completely devoid of liberty and freedom.

This societal structure completely opposes the previously discussed German model of egalitarianism and liberty, and as such produces a 'scale' by which the barbarism of certain societies outside the Roman world might be assessed. What is clear when considering both Tacitus' and Ammianus Marcellinus' texts is that neither extreme was considered desirable by the Romans, although Germanic liberty was more acceptable than Persian despotism. Rather, it is implied, that the true mark of civility was a society able to balance both freedom and social order. By associating the level of barbarity of a people with their relative social structures throughout the Roman period, the discourse of barbarism similarly developed to have a close association with questions of social order and class, and in particular questions of the level of freedom and self-actualisation available to a society's participants. In order to characterise an other as barbaric and therefore inherently inferior, one could, and in many

⁷ Translation of *murmillones* in Hamilton's version. See *The Later Roman Empire (Ad 354-378)* p. 265.

cases, must, first represent that other's socio-political class structures as different and alien from one's own.

Barbaric Morality and Virtue

Virtus, or virtue, was also a complex Roman idea through which the barbarian other was understood within a Roman context. *Virtus*, unlike modern conceptions of virtue, was not merely limited to the performance of moral actions. Rather '*virtus*' was a set of ideas about a moral lifestyle, incorporating notions of honour, gender performance, and behaviour and attitudes in warfare. This focus on morality in the construction of the barbarian added an associated moral judgement implicit within the use of the barbaric discourse.

Caesar was careful to impress upon his readers the isolation of Germanic society from the influences of Roman wealth and luxury goods – and thus civilisation. This became an integral trait of Tacitus' *Germani* and his emphasis on their cultural purity. He comments toward the beginning of his text that the Germans are 'little affected by immigration or friendly interaction with other nations' (Tac. *Ger.* 2) and, furthermore, that he 'accept[s] the view of those who think that the peoples of Germania have never been tainted by intermarriage with other nations, and stand out as a race distinctive, pure and unique of its kind' (Tac. *Ger.* 4). Early in his text Tacitus establishes the Germanic people as ethnically 'pure' and uniquely resistant to foreign cultural influences. Indeed, even when foreign cultural practices and religions are adopted in Germania, such as the cult of Isis, worship remains distinctly German in style (Tac. *Ger.* 9; Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 175-76). That he indicates this is in agreement with a current view of their racial purity reveals both Roman social perception of the Germanic people as well as the pervasiveness of earlier writings about Germania. Though clearly an aspect of German culture of which he approves, the result of the emphasis on their cultural purity and lack of foreign influence is a concurrent emphasis on their isolation. The German people, though honourable, are nevertheless simple in their lack of statecraft and international diplomacy, and isolated from more sophisticated civilisation.

The Germanic adherence to cultural purity as a matter of virtue is also indicated in Tacitus' discussion on child-rearing. As previously stated, German children are not set apart from slave children with favourable treatment, but rather they grow up together that German children might avoid becoming spoiled and softened by their status. It is only in adulthood

that the German and slave become distinct from each other, when 'maturity sets apart the free and the spirit of valour claims them as their own' (Tac. *Ger.* 20). Children in Germanic society must earn their worth and distinction rather than inheriting it as a matter of birthright, although it is clear Tacitus believes this eventual distinction is inevitable and essential to the Germanic character, developing almost in spite of their egalitarian upbringing. This is most likely connected in Tacitus' mind to the parenting of children. While German children are raised alongside slave children, they are nevertheless nursed and parented by their own mothers (Tac. *Ger.* 20). This role is not deputed to maids and nurses – that is to say slaves and servants – and as such, German strength and virtue might be passed on to German children undiluted by 'inferior' members of society. This connects Tacitus' idea of Germanic purity with his belief in their freedom being the source of their strength and power against the Roman Empire. Implicitly, Germanic freedom preserves their cultural 'purity'. Furthermore, however, Tacitus' discussion on German childrearing in connection with their purity implicitly criticises his own Roman context. Germanic practices of childrearing are represented as alien to Roman practices, as well as a source of strength for the 'barbarians'. The logical conclusion of the foreign nature of this childrearing practice and the association of it with the development of good character then, is that Romans are failing to produce children that grow up to exhibit the valour, strength of character, and hardiness that German children do. Rather than bringing Roman children up in an inherited culture of virtue and strength of character, their rearing is outsourced to slaves, and the children themselves are indulged, spoiled, and softened to the detriment of Roman society.

A key component of Germanic purity and virtue is their rejection of wealth and luxury as a general rule. The connection between their lack of desire for material goods and wealth and their cultural purity is suggested through Tacitus' assertion that the desire for material wealth all but disappears in the interior of Germania, notably where Roman influence is least prevalent. He states that the Germani see little value in trinkets or valuable metals, esteeming rich gifts 'as lightly [...] as earthenware' (Tac. *Ger.* 5), and where they do value silver and gold, it is for their use in trade with the Roman Empire, and even then only for the sake of 'buying cheap and common goods' (Tac. *Ger.* 5) rather than valuables. This lack of esteem for material wealth is also reflected in their burial customs. Tacitus states that

[t]here is no pomp about their funeral [...] when they have heaped up the pyre they do not throw robes or spices on top; only a man's arms, and sometimes his horse as

well, are cast into the flames [...] They disdain to show honour by laboriously raising monuments of stone; these, they think, lie heavy on the dead (Tac. *Ger.* 27).

This statement is revealing of Tacitus' understanding of Germanic character in the face of decadence: he finds their burial customs to be humble, honest, and intentional. It is not because of ignorance or barbaric simplicity that they do not overstate the importance of the dead or spend a great deal of money or resources on the honouring of the dead. Rather this decision is intentional and reasoned, not just avoiding but 'disdaining' more elaborate practices. The dead are rather buried with their most valuable possessions – weapons and occasionally their horses – denoting their contribution to Germanic society, their valour, and their ability. Consequently, Germans are represented as a people who value items based on practicality and usefulness rather than aesthetic value or greed for wealth – a 'pure' culture and race that above all value personal honour and practicality. In exalting the simple customs of the Germans and their disdain for pomp and material goods, Tacitus is subtly critiquing his own culture: these simple barbarians put the sophisticated Romans to shame, demonstrating again the way in which the barbaric discourse can be repurposed for the sake of critiquing one's own culture.

Antithetical to this humble modesty is the characterisation of the Persians and their love for material wealth and finery. They wear elaborate and rich clothing and adorn themselves with gold and precious jewels, particularly pearls (Amm. Marc. 23.6.84). This extravagance extends to their speech, where they are 'given to empty words [...] talk[ing] madly and extravagantly' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.80), quick to threaten others regardless of their situation, they are proud, cruel, boastful,⁸ and 'harsh and offensive' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.80). Persian barbarism is thus a stark contrast to the humble and modest Germanic barbarism: freedom and equality are seemingly alien concepts to Persian society, and they are ostentatious (disgustingly so) in their dress, their desire for wealth, and even their speech. As such, Ammianus Marcellinus portrays the Persians as utterly offensive by nature, reflecting the more insidious value judgement of other cultures that is often associated with the barbaric discourse.

Yet another pertinent aspect to the representation of barbaric 'virtue' in the discourse of barbarism was the perception of a people group's sexual morality and familial loyalty. The

⁸ Hamilton's translation uses the more colourful 'tiresomely and disgustingly boastful', creating a stronger value judgement on the Persians from a Roman perspective. *Later Roman Empire (AD 354-378)*, p. 264.

conception of the Germans as sexually moral and reserved is found as early as in Caesar's writing, claiming that among the Germani 'even sexual intercourse before the age of 20 is discouraged, lest it distract from military duty' (Caes. *BGall.* 6.20). This notion of sexual purity among the Germans is similarly praised within Tacitus' text in connection with German monogamy. He comments that 'marriage there is strict, and no feature of their culture deserves higher praise. They are almost unique among barbarians in being satisfied with one wife each'; the only exception being political unions (Tac. *Ger.* 18). Germans, in Tacitus' estimation, are exceptional among barbarians in choosing only one wife and even in the rare cases that a German has more than one wife it is for purely political reasons and little to do with sexual desire. Such an attitude suggests that, at least in matters of sexual morality, the Germans demonstrate exceptional restraint, a fact of which Tacitus obviously approves. Indeed, sexual motivations are rarely the cause of marriage: marriages are rare between young Germani. They are instead encouraged to practice chastity until the time comes to marry so 'their virility [...] is not exhausted. Nor are maidens rushed into marriage. As old and full-grown men, [Germani] match their mates in age and strength, and their children reflect the might of their parents' (Tac. *Ger.* 20). This comment explicitly connects the Germanic approach to sexuality with their strength as a society and culture worthy of Roman respect. Furthermore, this introduces an interesting reflection upon Germanic marriage. It was believed necessary for the parents to be equal in maturity and might, and the children inherit the valour of each parent as a result. It must be remembered, however, that this virtue is framed as the Germans being exceptional "among barbarians". Though worthy of praise, they are barbarians nonetheless.

Tacitus utilises this characterisation of Germanic sexual morality in order to reflect upon and critique Roman society. According to Tacitus' representation, lust was so insignificant a factor in German society that relationships based on lust are almost unheard of and despised among the Germanic people. He comments that among the Germani '[c]landestine love-letters are unknown to men and women alike [...] adultery is rare in the extreme [...] No one there finds vice amusing, or calls it 'up-to-date' to debauch and be debauched' (Tac. *Ger.* 19). This comment drips with sarcasm and implicitly reflects upon Roman marriage in contrast to a superior Germanic morality. It is implied that within Roman society, adultery, and excessive sexual indulgence was both rife, and further justified as 'progressive'. The implication of this is that Roman society was systemically characterised by a lack of familial loyalty and an over-emphasis on personal satisfaction and indulgence. As such, his comment on the German state of sexual morality is an indirect but obvious comment on a

perceived moral decline in Roman society. He further emphasises this barely concealed connection by drawing attention to the Germanic family. He argues that the size of a man's family both by descent and marriage directly correlates to the strength of his influence in old age. Tacitus states that within Germanic society, 'childlessness ha[s] no reward' (Tac. *Ger.* 20) and connects this idea to the overall picture of morality he is constructing as inherent in the Germanic character. He states that in Germania, '[t]o restrict the number of children or to put to death any born after the first is considered criminal. *Good morality is more effective there than good laws are elsewhere*' (Tac. *Ger.* 19).⁹ Again Tacitus barely conceals his critique of Roman society, suggesting that what Roman laws legislate to produce a moral society the Germans are able to do with an innate sense of virtue.¹⁰ Here again we find the dual function of the barbaric discourse: while it could be used to dismiss and denounce other cultures as inferior, it can also be appropriated for the sake of comparison and critique of one's own society.

Within this commentary upon sexual morality is the admiration for Germanic familial loyalty. It is considered despicable for Germani to betray their marriage through adultery, and their concept of marriage itself is a radical one for the ancient world. Tacitus states that marriage ceremonies remind a Germanic bride, in the very rites that bless her marriage, that she is 'coming to share a man's toils and dangers, that in peace and war alike she is to be his partner in all his sufferings and achievements' (Tac. *Ger.* 18). This model of marriage demands the woman be a partner and participant rather than a passive spectator in the life of her husband. This interconnection of the traditionally masculine and feminine social spheres, as well as the radical nature of this model of marriage is further demonstrated by Tacitus' description of men's behaviour on the battlefield:

[a] particularly powerful incitement to valour is the fact that not chance nor the accident of mustering makes the troop or wedge, but family and friendship. A man's dearest possessions are close at hand; he can hear nearby the laments of his women and the wails of his children. These are the witnesses that a man reverences most, to them he looks for his highest praise (Tac. *Ger.* 7).

⁹ My emphasis.

¹⁰ During the reign of Augustus, laws were introduced legislating against adultery, stipulating the need to marry as a civic duty to the Roman state, and to also encourage childbirth, 'which were honoured more in the breach than in the observance' (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 161). See Suetonius *Divus Augustus* 34 and Dio Cassius *Roman History* 54.16 for the laws and Richard Frank's "Augustus' Legislation on Marriage and Children" for a short explanation of them.

Women were expected to attend to the battlefield, while not necessarily being called to fight. Rather, they are there to participate and inspire courage. Meanwhile, it is the esteem of his family, rather than society, that a man should seek above all else. Furthermore, a German's familial bond is shown to extend beyond the immediate family unit to include uncles and nephews, between whom there is as much fondness and pride as if it were between parent and child (Tac. *Ger.* 20). Tacitus intimates a high regard for the strong familial bonds within Germanic society and represents the adherence to these bonds as a matter of honour. The Germanic approach to marital and familial loyalty is only to be praised according to Tacitus, and further provides a sense of stability and civilised order to Germanic society.

Once again, at the opposite end of the spectrum, Persian sexual morality stands in stark contrast to that of the Germani. Ammianus Marcellinus comments that '[m]ost [Persians] are extravagantly given to venery, and are hardly contented with a multitude of concubines [... e]ach man according to his means contracts many or few marriages, whence their affection, divided as it is among various objects, grows cold' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.76). This licentiousness, as well as cold detachment from sexual conquests, reflects earlier Greco-Roman literary representations of the Persian people, however within his discussion of their sexual practices, Ammianus directly refutes Herodotus' claim that they adopted the practice of pederasty from the Greeks (Amm. Marc. 23.6.76). The resulting impression of this comment is of a society in which familial loyalty is far from encouraged, nor is sexual morality or faithfulness to marriage. Where the Persians lack sexual morality, however, they appear almost zealous in their observation of modesty. Herodotus had previously claimed the Persians to be frequently drunk: that any decision they make must be reconsidered when sober and, conversely, any decision made when sober must be reconsidered when drunk (Hdt. 1.133). Ammianus Marcellinus, however, refutes this claim, stating that they avoid excessive drinking 'like the plague' alongside excessive banquets and 'superfluous food'. Rather the Persians eat to their satisfaction whenever hungry, and apart from the king do not have a set time for meals (Amm. Marc. 23.6.76-77). Similarly, they demonstrate great restraint, caution, and modesty with regards to their dress and bodily functions. He states that 'one seldom sees a Persian stop to pass water or step aside in response to a call of nature' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.79)¹¹ and that their clothes, while incredibly luxurious, cover their bodies 'from their head to their shoes' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.84). This is again the polar opposite of the

¹¹ The Penguin translation uses the wording, 'They are also most careful to avoid any violation of modesty'. See *The Later Roman Empire (Ad 354-378)* p. 264.

traditional characterisation of German modesty regarding bodily functions. Caesar comments that they 'wear hides and skins which offer little protection, leaving most of the body naked', while both men and women bathe together in the rivers (Caes. *BGall.* 6.21). There is no separation of men and women from each other for the sake of modesty, which is represented as somewhat animalistic in nature. Tacitus similarly states that their clothing is simple, consisting primarily of short cloaks fastened with brooches or thorns, and occasionally including animal pelts as adornment (Tac. *Ger.* 17).

When considered together and in dialogue with each other, both Ammianus' and Tacitus' texts reveal ideas of how barbarism is established, thus demonstrating the development of the barbaric discourse as well as its usage as a way of navigating 'Romanness'. Moral codes and behaviour that were apparently dissident from Roman values were an important part in the development of the barbaric discourse. More than this, however, is how this demonstrates the various forms the barbaric discourse could take. Barbarity could be on a spectrum: though the Germans were absolutely barbarians to the Roman people, they were generally an honourable and strong people: "good" barbarians. The Persians on the other hand were diametrically opposite to the Germans in almost every way and, therefore, "bad" barbarians. Depending on the desired outcome, authors used this barbaric discourse for their own ideological purposes whether to denounce an other as entirely reprehensible or, in Tacitus' case, to turn the barbaric discourse inward and critique and engage with his own society's customs through comparison with the "good" barbarians. Tacitus' remarks and reflections on Germanic sexual morality suggest that Roman morality is closer to Persian morality, as Ammianus describes it, than to that of the Germans, although not completely 'barbaric' to the Persian extent. Similarly the commentary on Persian modesty, portrayed as extreme adherence, in comparison with a more shocked tone when discussing Germanic modesty and their comfort with (relative) exposure, where women leave their forearms and upper arms bare and 'even the breast, where it comes nearest the shoulder, is also exposed' (Tac. *Ger.* 17, my emphasis), suggests that Roman modesty was more centrally situated in 'civility' in the barbaric scale.

The final aspect of virtue intrinsic to the Roman experience was the performance of an army in warfare. This discussion of martial ability was similarly ingrained in the characterisation of barbarian peoples and had close connections with the representation of gendered behaviour within 'barbaric' societies. Warfare and behaviour on the battlefield

was central to Germanic way of life. It affected social and societal standing, as well as the judicial system and the gender constructions of Germanic society.

Tacitus claims that in Germanic society 'to throw away one's shield [in surrender or defeat] is the supreme disgrace' (Tac. *Ger.* 6). Indeed, if a warrior does surrender he is barred from religious rites as well as the ability to speak in council. He is effectively ostracised and Tacitus comments that it was not uncommon for 'disgraced' warriors to end 'their shame with a noose' (Tac. *Ger.* 6). Germanic leadership is similarly affected by distinction on the battlefield: Germanic kings are chosen for their noble birth, while their leaders were selected for their valour and example. Tacitus states that 'for the leaders it is their example rather than their authority that wins them special admiration – their energy, their distinction, or their presence in the front of the line' (Tac. *Ger.* 7). As such, ability in battle is directly related to the quality of leadership for the Germanic people, and it is considered a deep disgrace for a leader to be surpassed in valour on the battlefield, as is the failure of his unit to protect him and withdraw (Tac. *Ger.* 14). Tacitus makes very clear that the social position and esteem of a person in Germanic society is inalienable from his behaviour on in war. This explanation has a deeper implication: Tacitus emphasises the active involvement of the Germanic leaders among their people, behaving as he would have them behave and earning, rather than demanding, respect and obedience. Germanic leadership lacks hypocrisy and is based in honour and virtue. The implication is a subsequent question as to the kind of leadership characteristic of the current Roman establishment. Tacitus thus connects martial virtue to the barbaric discourse he is establishing in order to encourage his audience to contrast Germanic leadership with that of their own.

Warfare is influential in both the organisation of Germanic social structure as well as the judicial system. Tacitus states that acts of betrayal and desertion are publicly executed by hanging from a tree, while acts of cowardice and those who are 'unwarlike' are similarly executed in a way that denotes the 'shamefulness' of their actions, being 'drowned in miry swamps under a cover of wicker' (Tac. *Ger.* 12). Tacitus interprets this punishment as directly linked to concepts of honour and shame. The most shameful action is hidden away and covered; the cowardly and the unwarlike are an embarrassment to the society and treated as such in their execution. This is not to say that he represents the Germani as incapable of peace, or that Tacitus' idea of their virtue is exclusive to military ability. Indeed he claims one of the tribes, the Chauci, are the 'noblest peoples of Germania' for their ability to maintain peace through justice, preferring 'seclusion, never provoking a

war, never robbing or plundering their neighbours' and not relying on aggression to assert their superiority (Tac. *Ger.* 35). Even in this peace-preferring tribe however, they are kept in a constant state of preparedness for war and are able to defend themselves should the need arise (Tac. *Ger.* 35), cementing their identity as militarily strong and capable. As such, even where there is an exception to the stereotypical Germanic aggression and love for war, their society still emphasises the cultivation of martial strength. In this he represents the alien Germans with a concept of virtue – *virtus* – 'readily recognizable to Romans', undercutting their 'otherness' and connecting the two cultures (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 173).

Martial ability is similarly a feature of the construction of Persian barbarism, and constitutes one of the few aspects in which Roman authors are somewhat complimentary of their practices. Typical of Ammianus' style, however, he tends to undercut his praise. As already demonstrated, Persian society was highly disciplined and regimented, and this discipline extended to the armed forces. Ammianus Marcellinus comments that the Persians 'cause dread even to great armies' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.83), and that they are 'most gallant warriors, though rather crafty than courageous, and to be feared only at long range' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.80). This comment undermines the perception of Persian martial prowess and brings into contrast two forms of barbaric military style and ability. Where the Germans are admired for their bravery and strength, the Persians, although martially able, are sneered at due to their use of cunning and trickery. Indeed, when brought into comparison it would appear as though the Persians shun traditional military ability such as that demonstrated by the Germani in favour of their own, marked by (according to Roman standards) a distinct lack of courage. Thus, while the Persians do have a love and talent for war, their fighting style is apparently underhanded and based in trickery rather than courage or martial skill. Persian armies are highly skilled and disciplined, however this discipline is taken to extremes, causing the violation of the liberty of free soldiers.

Barbaric Gender Performance

Finally, an integral component of barbaric constructions is the representation of gendered behaviour and distinctions within different 'barbaric' societies. This representation of gender through the barbaric discourse is closely connected with the centrality and attitudes exhibited through war as well as Roman conceptions of 'virtue', and assumes

masculinity – that is, the Roman definition of masculinity – to be the natural standard of being (B. E. Wilson 40).

For Tacitus, the Germanic people are hardy and strong by nature, developed by their environment¹² and honed through war, which ‘tests the mettle of their manhood’ (Gruen "Tacitus on the Germans" 167). To be truly masculine, and therefore virtuous, one must have the stomach for war and great skill and courage in fighting – all aspects that for Tacitus are embodied by the Germanic people. Indeed, this warlike and hardy nature permeates all levels of society to even affect the women of Germania, a fact of which Tacitus clearly approves. In marriage ceremonies women are gifted with oxen, horses, or ‘a shield with spear and sword’ (Tac. *Ger.* 18) by their husbands, and they in turn present their husbands with weaponry. Germanic women do not receive trinkets and gifts ‘chosen to please a woman’s whim or gaily deck a young bride’ (Tac. *Ger.* 18), but rather receive gifts that initiate them into the reality of Germanic society. Tacitus argues that these marriage gifts are for the purposes of reminding Germanic brides that they ‘must not imagine [themselves] exempt from thoughts of manly virtues or immune from the hazards of war’ (Tac. *Ger.* 18). Rather, they were expected to brave the effects of warfare and clean and tend to their sons’ and husbands’ wounds, as well as ‘bring food and encouragement to those fighting’ (Tac. *Ger.* 7). Tacitus emphasises this expectation of participation by outlining a tradition in which Germanic women were credited with bringing armies back from the brink of collapse, ‘bar[ing] their breasts and describ[ing] how close they were to enslavement’ (Tac. *Ger.* 8). Given Germanic emphasis on familial loyalty, Tacitus comments that the enslavement of their women is an outcome of war the German men fear more than their own and it was this encouragement that rallied the men to victory. In this way, Germanic femininity is contrasted against Roman conceptions of gendered behaviour and resultantly characterised as masculine (and thus virtuous). German women are unafraid of confronting the reality of war, and regularly bear witness to the fighting of their warriors. They are strong, virtuous, and most importantly, active participants within a Germanic culture that is centred on war. Tacitus presses this point further in his mention of their rejection of trinkets during marriage customs. He implicitly connects the desire for material wealth with ‘traditional’ femininity, which in turn connects ‘masculinity’ with ‘virtue’ given his previous assertions that the rejection of wealth is a source of Germanic

¹² Here we find again shadows of the Hippocratic approach to ethnography. Tacitus claims that ‘their climate and soil have taught them to bear cold and hunger’, but they do not possess the innate capability to ‘endure hard work and exertion’ or ‘thirst and heat’. Tac. *Ger.* 4

morality. As such, Tacitus suggests that Germanic society as a whole rejects all traditionally feminine – or soft – qualities in favour of a more hegemonic masculinity. The result is a construction of femininity that is, it is implied, far more virtuous than the femininity demonstrated by the women within Tacitus' own Roman society by the simple fact it is, by Roman standards, masculine.¹³

Considering this understanding of masculinity as 'virtuous' during the Roman period and the converse implication of traditional femininity becoming necessarily unvirtuous, it is little wonder that the traditional 'effeminacy' of Persians is a cause for ridicule and disgust for the Roman people. Considering the connection between material luxury and effeminacy in the Roman mind, Persian society is already considered as inherently less masculine by virtue of its people's love of adornment and 'shimmering clothes' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.84). Ammianus Marcellinus furthers this association of effeminacy by commenting that they are 'so free and easy, and stroll about with such a loose and unsteady gait, that one might think them effeminate' (Amm. Marc. 23.6.80). He makes clear that it is in spite of this effeminacy, rather than because of it, that the Persian army possesses any martial capability. That this martial capability is characterised by trickery rather than 'real' courage, however, unlike that exhibited by the Germans, further implicates a connection between masculinity and virtue. The result of this implicit connection is a reinforcement of the cultural ideal of masculinity as the norm and femininity as an inferior 'anti-type', associated with a distinct lack of virtue. Within this construction, non-traditional performances of masculinity are represented as particularly abhorrent.

This distinction between Germanic and Persian gender performance indicates another parameter through which the barbaric discourse was developed. By calling into question the presentation of masculinity exhibited by particular barbaric groups, the Romans were able to navigate notions of Roman gender expectations and performance through inference and construct their own ideal for 'civil' gendered behaviour. As this process became inextricable from the assessment of the barbaric people groups surrounding the Roman Empire, it was incorporated into the discourse. As a result, the discourse of barbarism

¹³ It is important to note here that while German women are cast as 'masculine' in nature, they are nevertheless ascribing to a particular cultural femininity. They do not behave in the exact way their men do, but rather "know their place" within Germanic society and act accordingly. It just so happens that in Tacitus' construction, this feminine place is more masculine in presentation than the expected performance of femininity in Roman society. This allows Tacitus to extol their virtue without also having to represent them as aberrations, the latter of which was common in ancient Roman writing when describing a woman perceived to be 'acting like a man' (B. E. Wilson 44; McInerney 326).

similarly evolved to encompass a patriarchal worldview that presupposed the primacy of masculine behaviour, as determined by the speaking culture, and derided feminine characteristics.

The Discourse of Barbarism

Examining the 'barbarism' applied to the Persian and Germanic barbarians surrounding the Roman Empire is important for understanding how the barbaric discourse was developed, and how it can and often is used within literature. This discourse developed as Roman authors attempted to understand the specific nature of a particular society's barbarism, using the study to navigate their own perception of how to separate the barbaric from the Roman, according to Roman values and parameters. First among these parameters was an examination of the social order and class structure. Where the East was represented as having a rigid social order, the Western barbarians appeared to Roman eyes to have only a nominal social order or class system. Each system had obvious flaws, with the rise of despots resulting from the East and the presence of disorder, inefficiency, and license in the West. As such Roman authors represented the social orders of different barbaric societies as inherently oppositional. The result of this oppositional structuring is an insistence that optimal and 'civil' societal structure was located in the middle ground, where neither freedom nor discipline and order were compromised.

The second of these parameters, and closely connected to the previous, was the behaviour and ability of barbarians in war and their relationship with violence. Both the East and West are regarded as formidable opponents within ancient writing, and the centrality of war to each culture is a characteristic most authors appear to approve of, particularly in the case of the Germanic people. However, the respectability of their societal attitude to war is also closely related to their discipline as well as the presence and nature of societal violence. While Germans value martial ability and war, they are also impulsive and quick to violence, lacking self-discipline or the will to discipline others for the sake of order or efficiency. On the other hand, Eastern societies are excessively disciplined and their societal violence similarly more disciplined and intentional than it is within Germanic society. By Late Antiquity, violence in the East was reputed to be excessively harsh and cruel, doled out by more esteemed men to their lowers as a 'right' of their class. Once again, the implication for these two opposed constructions of violence and discipline is that civility is found in the middle ground. Civilised armies must be disciplined, organised, and

unafraid of violence and warfare, however this discipline should not completely overshadow personal liberty and freedom, nor should their love of warfare and violence be impulsively exacted. Rather, violence against another citizen must be for the sake of discipline, and even then not excessive or cruel. Whether or not Romans themselves would fit into this civil middle ground is for historians to decide; the point here is the implication of civility presented through the textual representation of 'barbaric' violence.

The third parameter of the barbaric discourse in the ancient world is the expectations for gendered behaviour within particular societies. Similar to the other categories, Eastern and Western barbarians appear at opposite ends of a spectrum. Where Western barbarism, exemplified by the Germanic people, exhibits a hyper-masculinity that permeates their entire society, Eastern barbaric people are represented as resolutely effeminate from their dress and appearance to their behaviour and gait. While other aspects of barbarism place civility between the East and West, in this aspect it is clear that hyper-masculinity is the much-preferred state of gender performance, as even the women of Germanic society are praised for exhibiting more traditionally masculine qualities. The effeminacy of Eastern men on the other hand is clearly treated with derision. This being said, however, there is still space for compromise between the two, as the hyper-masculinity of the Germans is heavily associated with a lack of discipline, violence, and a lack of self-control, none of which constitute an ideal 'Roman' masculinity.

This construction of gender performance overlaps with the final aspect of the discourse of barbarism: the representation of morality. In this aspect the Germanic paradigm is held to be unquestionably superior. The Germans are represented as loyal to their own people and their family relationships. Their word is their bond, and the most shameful punishments in Germanic law are reserved for traitors and deserters. Furthermore, they demonstrate great restraint in their sexual activity and avoid early unions, preserving their cultural purity and strength – a fact with which Tacitus clearly agrees. The Germans are also free from greed and have no desire for trinkets or what the Romans would have considered valuable items. They are presented as minimalistic, with no advanced economy, however this 'purity' is presented as a source of their strength of character. German morality is consistently portrayed as an honourable one. The Eastern paradigm, however, is presented far more negatively. The Persians are represented as sexually licentious and led by desire, as well as having a great love for wealth and luxury. This love is excessive, and is often portrayed as leading Eastern barbarians into impious and morally reprehensible actions such as

breaking the sacred bonds of guest friendships, family, and national loyalty. In this regard the morality of the barbarians, whether negative or positive, was used as a subtle indictment on Roman society and decadence.

In each case, these parameters were used as a way in which authors might encourage reflection and comparison with their own society. The result was the development of a set of discursive patterns through which the Romans could navigate ideas of their own identity while exploring and often reinforcing the otherness and inferiority of cultures and societies external to their own. This is the barbaric discourse. The Romans contrasted different people groups against each other based upon a perception of the social order, gendered performance, violence, and moral virtue of those people groups in order to both elevate their own Roman culture while inferring an inherent inferiority of the 'barbarians' they were describing. On the one hand, Germans were seen as 'good barbarians' given their moral virtue and gender performance, but were also too impulsive and undisciplined in both their military structure and social order. The Persians, by contrast, were too disciplined and rigid in their class structure and military, while also having no sense of familial loyalty and or 'virtue' their performance of gender. Although the values attributed to particular behaviours have changed across time and culture, the structural framework established through the Roman period by which otherness is constructed is still operational within the modern world. As such the discourse of barbarism, that is its structures and framework for the way in which we construct and interpret otherness, has remained a constant and has become deeply embedded within Western thought as a result of its Roman heritage. It is particularly important to understand both how the discourse operates, that is its structural framework, and how deeply it is embedded within Western thought particularly as it relates to fiction, as it is through fiction and stories that we construct ourselves (Coats 4). If indeed this discourse is embedded within fiction, as this thesis argues, it has significant implications for how audiences (particularly young adult audiences) are being encouraged to structure their own sense of self and their understanding of the world around them.

The Aeneid: A case study of the Discourse of Barbarism

The clearest example of how the barbaric discourse could be used in ancient literature, and thus in literature more generally, is found in Virgil's *Aeneid*. This text explores ideas of *Romanitas* through the character of Aeneas and his interactions with the people of the

Mediterranean world as he endeavours to escape the ruins of Troy and found a new city. *The Aeneid* was written under the patronage of Augustus following a century of civil war and public unrest, ending with Augustus' victory over Marc Antony at Actium. The timing of its production is important, as it placed the writing of *The Aeneid* at a time of hope and optimism for a return to peace and prosperity for the Roman state (West ix). More importantly, however, is that the time of its writing positions *The Aeneid* at the conclusion of a tense clash with the East, which had directly resulted in widespread civil war. As such, the East was increasingly being viewed as an adverse influence on Roman domestic affairs, and a threat to the stability and peace of the Roman state. It is unsurprising then that around this period the cultural ideology of the Eastern barbarian world as an '*alter orbis*' began to form (Drijvers 199). As a result of this cultural attitude towards the East, *The Aeneid* is, while on the surface a panegyric epic implicitly praising the deeds of Augustus, essentially an exploration of the relationship between Roman values and barbarism. This relationship is navigated through the characterisation of the Trojans and their leader Aeneas, who embodies both elements of Eastern barbarism and of 'true' *Romanitas*, and their encounters with Dido and Turnus, both of whom are barbarians that serve as obstacles to the divine destiny and eventual founding of Rome.

The Aeneid introduces the character of Dido by first providing her origin story, which serves to reinforce Roman stereotypes about Eastern barbarians. Dido had been married to the 'wealthiest of the Phoenicians' Sychaeus, however was forced to escape her homeland when her brother Pygmalion, driven by 'blind lust for his gold', killed her husband 'with no thought for his sister's love'. Not only did Pygmalion violate a tenet of familial loyalty by murdering his brother-in-law for gold, but he did so by 'ambushing him at the altar' – an act of extreme impiety and further violating religious rite and custom. Further increasing his impiety, Pygmalion did not even bury Sychaeus properly and deceived Dido about the whereabouts of her husband. Dido, upon discovering her husband's fate, 'gather[ed] followers, men driven by savage hatred or lively fear of the tyrant' and escaped Tyre along with her husband's riches to found the city of Carthage on the Libyan coast (Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.340-370). This episode is significant for a number of reasons in understanding Roman perceptions of the East around the time of Virgil, the first and most obvious being Oriental greed. This greed is so intense that it violates and is placed above values of decency, piety, and familial loyalty. It is portrayed as utterly savage, cruel and tyrannical in its manifestation, leading to deceit and treachery. Secondly, Dido's escape with those who hated Pygmalion's tyranny implies that those remaining in Tyre either love or are happy to

be subjected to tyrannical rule, an idea consistent with representations of Persia and Parthia. The lack of religiosity displayed in this episode is starkly contrasted with Aeneas' demonstrated devotion to religious custom, as shown through the repeated use of epithets related to his piety throughout the text, and evokes a visceral reaction. The image created is of a king who attacked his brother as he was in the middle of a religious observance and then dumped his body unceremoniously in an undisclosed and forgotten location. Eastern kingship then, as defined by Pygmalion, is utterly godless and a religious aberration. Similarly, their followers, willing to endure and support such leadership, are also irreligious and tyrannical in nature. From the outset, the discourse of barbarism is being employed for the sake of contextualising Dido's barbaric background as an opposition to Aeneas' and therefore Rome.

This 'barbaric' irreligious tyranny in connection with the love of gold is by no means an isolated incident in *The Aeneid*. It is demonstrated again through the Trojans' interaction with the ghost of Polydorus in Book 3. Aeneas comments that when Priam began to 'los[e] faith in the arms of Troy', he sent Polydorus to the king of Thrace to be his ward along with a 'great mass of gold'. Instead of fulfilling his obligation as guardian and raising Polydorus, however, the king of Thrace murdered him and 'seized the gold' for himself. Aeneas comments that 'greed for gold is a curse. There is nothing to which it does not drive the minds of men' (Verg. *Aen.* 3.50-65). This digression is used to illustrate a barbaric love for gold as well as emphasise a lack of morality and piety, exemplified by a disregard for *hospitium* or hospitality. The concept of *hospitium* was based in reciprocity, an idea central to Roman social intercourse (R. K. Gibson 184-85), and thus highly honoured in Roman society. Fulfilling one's obligation of *hospitium* was closely connected with ideas of piety and moral character: ancient tradition held that all travelling strangers were under the protection of Zeus and it was considered a 'sacred duty' to both welcome and protect any stranger should they apply for hospitality (Nybakken 248-49). Conversely, to bring harm to a guest was in violation of *hospitium* and was thus the utmost example of impiety and 'godlessness'. For the Thracian king to violate his duty to Polydorus as protector and host, in addition to breaking an apparently longstanding tradition of guest-friendship between Thrace and Troy (Verg. *Aen.* 3.10-3.20; C. A. Gibson 361-62), signifies a complete rejection of any concept of civility, decency, morality, and piety. This digression, in collaboration with the Pygmalion episode, thus suggests Eastern barbarism is characterised by an all-consuming greed, which acts as the determining factor of their actions rather than any 'higher' moral or civil law, and one which Aeneas resolutely rejects. This is not to say Dido

and the Trojans completely reject this Eastern love of luxury. At various stages of the text they are lavishly adorned and in possession of rich furnishings and decorations such as embroidered couches, golden clasps and brooches, and purple fabrics. The Trojans' armour and weapons are similarly often made of gold and their battle clothes richly coloured (Verg. *Aen.* 1.698-730; 4.130-40; 11.768-80; 12.430-35). The appearance of Dido and the Trojans is exotic, ostentatious and specifically designed for aesthetic appeal rather than functionality. Embroidery and brightly coloured clothing, gold ornamentation, and purple and saffron dye signify the exoticism of the East as well as Eastern affinity for fashion and wealth. The Trojans do not, however, allow this love of luxury to dictate their actions.

Eastern luxury is, however, implicitly connected with notions of Eastern gender performance, particularly its characterisation as inherently effeminate. Aeneas' various opponents attack his masculinity on multiple occasions throughout *The Aeneid*. Upon learning of Dido's infatuation with Aeneas, the Moorish king angrily exclaims that the Trojan is a 'second Paris, with eunuchs in attendance and hair dripping with perfume and [a] Maeonian bonnet tied under his chin' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.210-20). Similarly, Turnus denounces the Trojan effort to enter Italy on the grounds of their masculinity, claiming that they have

clothes dyed with yellow saffron and the bright juice of the purple fish. [Their] delight is in dancing and idleness. [They] have sleeves on [their] tunics and ribbons to keep [their] bonnets on. [They] are Phrygian women, not Phrygian men (Verg. *Aen.* 9.610-20).

He dismisses the Trojans as frivolous and soft, stating that their tambourines and double-pipes are calling them back to the East and that they should '[l]eave weapons to the men' (Verg. *Aen.* 9.615-620). In contrast, he claims that his own people are hardened at birth in icy rivers, are taught to endure hard work, and enjoy war and hunting games for sport. Even in old age they 'crush [their] grey hair into the helmet', never allowing age to be an excuse for inactivity or a loss of conditioning (Verg. *Aen.* 9.600-614). Similarly Turnus' later prayer for aid in battle is framed as an attack on Aeneas' masculinity. He asks for the 'power to bring down that effeminate Phrygian, [...] to foul in the dust the hair he has curled with hot steel and steeped in myrrh' (Verg. *Aen.* 12.95-103). In doing so, Turnus directly attacks the masculinity, and by extension the virtue of the Trojans. The result is an assumption of Eastern association with frivolity, luxury, and the feminine while the Italians

conform to a more traditional and hardy masculinity. Consequently, the text constructs masculinity as the precondition of virtue while femininity is represented as a state of weakness. This construction is representative of the operation of the barbaric discourse. The episode with Turnus contrasts different social and societal models, emphasising contemporary Roman beliefs about an Eastern inferior otherness typified by an apparent moral degradation inextricably connected with effeminate behavior.

The Aeneid expands on this conflation of Eastern effeminacy with weakness and a lack of morality throughout the Dido episode, in which barbaric lack of sexual restraint becomes a pivotal point of contention between the 'Roman' and 'barbaric' aspects of Aeneas' two natures. This tension is emphasised through Dido's sexuality in direct comparison with that of Aeneas.

For both Aeneas and Dido, their lust leads them to betray their own reputations as well as their moral duty to the people they lead. Dido, having previously been married to Sychaeus, had pledged to allow her love to die with him. She laments her feelings for Aeneas, and swears at the beginning of Book 4 that '[t]he man who first joined himself to [her] has carried away all [her] love. He shall keep it for himself, safe in his grave' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.25-30). This statement is presented as an oath and is therefore closely associated with her reputation, honour as a leader, and her chastity. As such, when she submits to her infatuation with Aeneas, her desire is presented as both immoral and the betrayal of a solemn and sacred oath. The text claims that 'passion was sweeping away all thought for her reputation' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.90-95), and that once her desire was consummated she 'gave no thought to appearance or her good name and no longer kept her love as a secret in her own heart, but called it marriage, using the word to cover her guilt' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.170-75). Upon discovering Aeneas' plan to leave her, she recognises that because of him she has 'lost all conscience and self-respect and [has] thrown away the good name [she] once had, [her] only hope of reaching the stars' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.320-30). In addition to this loss of reputation, Dido also realises she has betrayed her marriage vows, commenting that she had 'not kept faith with the ashes of Sychaeus' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.550-55). The textual description of Dido's desire presents Eastern sexuality as insatiable, with little regard for morality, honour, or rationality. *The Aeneid* goes one step further, however, and associates this passionate abandon to madness with femininity. The text asks rhetorically '[w]hat use are prayers and shrines to a passionate woman? [...] Dido was on fire with love and wandered all over the city in her misery and madness' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.65-70), while Mercury later comments to

Aeneas that '[w]omen are unstable creatures, always changing' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.569-70). By focusing extensively on Dido's senseless love, *The Aeneid* closely associates Eastern sexuality and femininity itself with immorality. As such, aided particularly by the bookended references of Dido's marriage vows to Sychaeus, Eastern sexuality is represented as a desecration and parody of real love and marriage, led by hysteria rather than sense.

Dido's desire not only betrays her own reputation and honour, but it also leads Aeneas astray. Once he sexually engages with her, he too loses 'all recollection of [his] good name' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.220-27) and of his mission. As such, their unrestrained Eastern sexuality leads him to betray his 'sacred duty' as the leader of his people. Jupiter states that Aeneas is 'linger[ing] in Tyrian Carthage without a thought for the cities granted him by the Fates' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.223-30). Rather than fulfilling his divine destiny and moving on to Italy in order to found Rome, he is found instead to be 'laying the foundations for the high towers of Carthage and building a splendid city to please [his] wife [...] entirely forg[etting his] own kingdom and [his] own destiny' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.260-70). This statement reinforces his betrayal of his people and further associates this immorality with effeminacy. Aeneas is being controlled by and serving the whims of a woman, expending his efforts for a kingdom that is not his own and forgetting his own duty as a result. Mercury goes on to claim that this effort he is expending for the sake of a foreign kingdom is a betrayal of his own destiny, his duty as a leader, as well as of his familial duty – his son Ascanius being the intended heir of Rome (Verg. *Aen.* 4.270-80). Indeed, after receiving Mercury's message Aeneas states as much, saying that he is 'cheating [Ascanius] of his kingdom in Hesperia and the lands the Fates have decreed for him' (Verg. *Aen.* 4.350-60). This image of the betrayal of Rome, its people, and family for a foreign Oriental kingdom would have had particular significance for Virgil's audience, as it closely mirrors contemporary political events within his society. At the time of his writing, Rome had only just emerged from widespread civil war, arguably initiated due to Marc Antony's affair with Cleopatra.

Similar to characterisations of Aeneas in the Dido episode, ancient authors portray Antony's relationship as a betrayal of his own reputation, his family, and of Rome. Furthermore, this criticism is couched in terms of him becoming 'more Eastern' and thus more effeminate and ostentatious as the direct result of his infatuation with Cleopatra. Plutarch comments that, despite the imminent threat of a Parthian army threatening Roman territory, Antony was 'carried off' by Cleopatra to 'squander' his time on leisure and

various luxuries and pleasures (Plutarch. *Life of Antony* 28). This comment is intended to emasculate him, suggesting that he had become completely subjected to her power and was thus no longer in control of his more 'masculine' faculties of reason. That he would choose pleasure activities over war and his duty to the Roman people further indicates a belief of his becoming more Eastern and effeminate in presentation. Plutarch thus employs the barbaric discourse against Antony, questioning his masculinity and by extension, his civility and 'Romanness'.

Not only did Antony neglect to fight for the Roman people, but his infatuation also led him to actively betray them. He gifted Cleopatra with Roman territories (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 36), and he betrayed his own men who, despite giving their lives for his cause, he abandoned in the field to be with Cleopatra (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 66). Indeed, Plutarch argues that Antony was 'not governed by his own mind at all' (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 66), being rather an appendage to Cleopatra and 'grafted' to her (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 62; 66). Antony's affair with Egypt, then, is portrayed as an absolute betrayal of every aspect of his Roman identity. It led him to betray his country, his people, his military and personal reputation, and his masculinity, subsumed as he was by a foreign woman and being 'grafted' to her rather than in the dominant position of his own relationship. Plutarch states as much when, after being petitioned by her agents, Antony abandons his position and his (Roman) wife to rush to her side, having become 'so soft and effeminate that he became afraid of Cleopatra wasting away' (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 53). His abandonment of his Roman principles and adoption of a 'more Eastern' identity is finally epitomised through the 'theatrical, overdone, and anti-Roman' (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 54) provisions he made for his children in Alexandria. He had golden thrones made and set on a silver stage for himself and Cleopatra, and proceeded to 'proclaim his sons by Cleopatra 'king of kings'', presenting them in foreign dress, one in Median clothes and one in the style of dress 'adopted by all the kings since Alexander the Great'. Antony also assigned to one of his sons a 'guard of honour consisting of Armenians', while the other 'was given [a guard] of Macedonians' (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 54). He presented his sons as foreign kings rather than as Romans: 'king of kings' being the title adopted by Parthian rulers, while their bodyguard was composed of Easterners and foreigners rather than Roman soldiers. In this section, it is overtly implied that Antony had become completely naturalised to Eastern barbaric customs, reinforced by the fact his will declared a wish to be buried in Egypt rather than his rightful 'home' of Rome (Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 58). It is strongly suggested that these actions plunged Rome into a civil war that was only ended with the death of Antony and Cleopatra.

Within this context, Aeneas' lingering in Carthage in spite of Rome's need for him would have had a particularly sinister significance for Virgil's audience. Unlike Antony, however, Aeneas is able to overcome his lust, thus restoring himself as a leader of his people, at which his men are demonstrably overjoyed (Verg. *Aen.* 4.290-300). Through his resistance, however, Aeneas demonstrates the peculiarity of his character. While his Eastern nature means he is susceptible to the sexual (im)morality of the Eastern barbarian and the effeminacy apparently inherent in Eastern gender performance, he is nevertheless able to overcome it – arguably due to his Italian ancestral origin through Dardanus (Verg. *Aen.* 3.165-70). This ancestry casts Aeneas as a unique combination of the barbarian and a 'true' Roman. As such, the accusations levelled at him by other characters, such as Turnus, are almost humorous. While able to be distracted by his barbarian background, his true nature is Italian and, more significantly, Roman. Turnus on the other hand – considering his claim that his people are hardened by bathing infants in icy streams and his society's supposed love of war and weaponry, in addition to his impulsive rage and anger – ironically conforms more to Germanic barbarism than any concept of Roman civilisation. While the hyper-masculinity of the Germanic people is praised in Tacitus, and seeming adoption of Eastern effeminacy and culture is despised in Plutarch, Virgil suggests in his main character of Aeneas that neither extreme is ideal. Indeed Turnus' hyper-masculinity appears to result in an underestimation of his enemy, an inability to control his rage, and impulsive and ill-advised actions on the battlefield. Aeneas in contrast is more thoughtful in his approach, while still maintaining 'masculine' martial prowess and the ability to become roused to anger. As such, the implication in Virgil is that strength of character is found in a more tempered masculinity, while still making clear that effeminacy is not a trait to be admired. It is only when Trojan blood is to be mixed with Italian blood at the conclusion of the text, creating one people speaking one tongue, that Jupiter declares there will come a 'people who [...] will be above all men, above the gods, in devotion and no other race will be their equals' (Verg. *Aen.* 12.830-40).

This mixture of natures is revealing of the Roman conception of self in relation to the barbaric, and the text itself demonstrative of how the barbaric discourse could be and is used in order to navigate complicated questions about one's own society and collective identity. The discourse is deeply embedded within the text and serves to characterise both the East and Turnus' native Latins as barbaric, representing different forms of a perceived inferior model of social organisation. The result is a space in which Virgil is able to carefully negotiate his own idea and perception of what it meant to be Roman, and thus truly 'civil'.

It is evident through *The Aeneid* that Roman people are neither entirely Latin – and thus more ‘Germanic’ in their presentation – nor are they completely Eastern. Rather, like Aeneas, their nature sits at a crossroads between the two, taking the best of each opposing end of the barbaric spectrum. Aeneas is given to luxury, however this is not at the expense of his piety and honour unlike other individuals conforming to the Eastern barbarism. Similarly, he is able to experience sexual passion, but also able to overcome it through the power of reason and duty. Neither is he completely hardened through a hyper-masculinity, unable to feel compassion or emotion. While other characters perceive him to be effeminate in presentation, and thus dismiss him as inconsequential, he has a distinct martial ability and is able to achieve victory for his people through might. Real cultural strength and civilisation, the text thus suggests, is found between the two barbaric worlds of the East and the West. Roman civilisation, according to Virgil, rejects each diametrically opposed extreme and rather inhabits a moderate middle ground between the two.

Conclusion

The barbaric discourse is an ancient one, developed through centuries of literary tradition. It operated as a method of expressing ideas of otherness and, consequently, as a tool through which an audience might assess and engage with their own Roman culture and the requirements for an individual to participate within that culture. Given the number of different barbarian groups surrounding the Roman Empire throughout its history, the models of barbarism applied to these societies that were contained within the discourse necessarily existed on a scale, often diametrically opposed and in the middle of which Roman society existed as representative of ‘true’ civilisation. As such, while there were examples of ‘good’ barbaric societies, these societies were always cast as essentially inferior when considering all contributing aspects that constituted civility. This idea of civility was expressed through the examination of the otherness of different societies according to predetermined cultural concerns, namely: the social order and class structure of a society, and the possibilities for individual freedom and agency within that model; the relationship of a society to violence and military ability and honour; societal emphasis on moral virtue, particularly as regards to sexual morality and familial loyalty; and perceptions of gendered behaviour and performance within these societies.

The inclusion of these thematic markers through which barbarism as a state of inferior otherness was expressed within the barbaric discourse remains an influential paradigm of

selfhood and the way in which contemporary Western cultures construct and establish the other. Furthermore, the discourse of barbarism constitutes an important element of collective Western thought and cultural heritage. Indeed, the barbaric discourse pervades much of modern life, from political rhetoric to the literature produced for children and young adults. Young adult fantasy texts in particular imitate the ancient function of the discourse of barbarism both as a method for exploring otherness, as well as for exploring ideas of selfhood, agency, and subjectivity. Unlike the manifestation of this discourse in Roman literature however, contemporary Western young adult fantasy often, but not always, engages with and subverts the traditional use of the discourse. Rather than simply replicating the discourse in order to establish antagonistic cultural others, contemporary fantasy often uses the discourse in order to reveal and critique it – examining how we other and, in many cases, expose the subtle language systems and paradigms inherent within the discourse that affect how readers are positioned to relate to and understand those from unfamiliar cultural contexts. It is this relationship between contemporary fantasy and the discourse of barbarism with which the remainder of this thesis will be concerned.

Chapter 2

Why Fantasy?

Introduction

When studying the literary presence of an ancient discourse, it may seem an odd decision to choose young adult fantasy as the medium through which this discourse is studied. Surely, one might ask, historical fiction would be better suited. This chapter will demonstrate why I have selected fantasy literature written for young adults for the purposes of this study, rather than historical fiction. In particular, I will argue that fantasy is in a better position to freely examine and speculate upon the consequences of modern social ideologies and societal organisation, and thus the structures of the discourse of barbarism, due to the different expectations placed upon it in relation to historical fiction.

The emergence of the realist genre in the 19th Century gave way to a new preoccupation over the responsibilities and goals of writing fiction, namely in the form of questioning a text's success in creating mimesis (Lodge 30-31) – that is a sense of naturalism and imitation of reality in the construction of a textual world. Throughout this period, the emphasis on realism within literature 'was a product of a ubiquitous human desire for historicity, of recording reality and the present in textual form, by a self-aware and thus present-focused nineteenth-century population experimenting with conceptualizations of time' (Jones 161). For Bakhtin, the existence of a textual present and future, revealing of the discourses and nature of contemporary reality, relied upon an 'authentic profile of the past, an authentic language from another time' (Bakhtin "Discourse in the Novel" 29-30). This emphasis on authenticity placed an expectation upon literature to attempt to recreate reality as 'authentically' as possible, or to perform a mimetic function.

Despite acknowledgement of the limited ability for a text to 'authentically' recreate reality, expectations placed upon texts to perform mimesis has been at the centre of most literary discussion (Hume xi). Given the desire for historicity, this is especially the case in many discussions concerning the production of historical fiction. However, expectations and discussions on a text's ability to achieve a mimetic quality has not been limited to texts that have a tangible relationship to consensus reality. Indeed, from early in its entry to critical discourse, fantasy literature has also frequently been discussed and assessed by its relationship to 'reality' and its ability to achieve or invoke mimesis. In his seminal

discussion, Todorov grounds his definition of the fantastic directly in relation to the genre's relationship to consensus reality – that is to say in a text's ability to cause hesitation as to the reality of the events being narrated (Todorov 41). Mendlesohn similarly considers fantasy literature in relation to its mimetic qualities, however argues that 'immersive fantasy' texts, that is 'high' 'otherworld' or 'marvellous' fantasy, operate as an 'irony of mimesis'. These texts create unfamiliar worlds with which the audience is assumed to be familiar and comfortable in navigating, utilising similar language systems to texts of realism and applying them to an unfamiliar world (Mendlesohn 59).

Understanding the central role that mimesis has in traditionally occupied in literary criticism is integral to understanding the nature of children's literature and its relationship to historical fiction and fantasy. More than this, understanding the expectations for mimesis is essential to understanding how both historical fiction and fantasy interacts with what I have termed 'historicalisms'¹⁴ – a collection and manifestation of ideas about a particular point in history, used to communicate an assumed set of societal values while not being necessarily completely reflective of the *reality* of the past - in the process of constructing a fictional world.

This use of historicalisms to communicate ideas about a textual world is particularly important to our understanding of how the discourse of barbarism manifests within modern literary culture. For when barbarism appears in modern fiction it employs a set of ideas and perceptions of a past people, created over time through the structures of the discourse of barbarism, rather than attempting to reflect and represent the reality of those past people. For example, the codification of Lumatere in Marchetta's *The Chronicles of Lumatere* has been clearly influenced by stereotypes of Germanic culture (discussed in Chapter 1), which have been passed down from the Roman period through literary tradition. Codifying them as such draws upon the discourse of barbarism and uses it as a shortcut, quickly communicating how the audience is intended to understand and interpret the nature of Lumateran society: that is there is a strong emphasis on personal liberty and general equality between different classes (*Froi of the Exiles* 153-55) and genders (*FotE* 21). This use of codification through the discourse of barbarism is similarly seen through the representation of Charynite society, which is ruled over by a despotic king believing

¹⁴ My own term, building on the notion of 'medievalisms' as used by Bradford in *The Middle Ages in Children's Literature* when referring to medieval ideas and themes that are present within texts set in the modern era. Rather than applying specifically to creating a sense of a medieval 'pastness' however, historicalisms may utilise any historical period. The term medievalism will be dealt with in more detail later in the chapter.

himself to be the arbiter of life and death for his people (*Froi of the Exiles* 39, 165) while the culture itself is regarded as effeminate and thus lacking in honour (*FotE* 55).¹⁵ This codification of Charynite society clearly draws upon the stereotypes of Persian or “Eastern” barbarism established throughout the Roman period in the discourse of barbarism and as such the series forms just one example of how this discourse operates in modern fiction, particularly in fantasy for children. As such, the discourse of barbarism is a construct used to direct a reader’s interpretation of a person or nation’s character. It was developed within a historical period and inherited through the transmission of Western cultural heritage through literature, constituting ideas about barbaric people groups rather than the reality of life experienced by those people groups. At its core, the discourse is an ideology of ‘otherness’, developed throughout the Roman period and used to delineate the Roman from the barbarian other, and given ongoing legitimacy up to the modern period by these historical roots. Within our contemporary Western context, the discourse of barbarism similarly employs historical ideas about the nature of barbarism for the purpose of ideologically distinguishing the self from a perceived inferior ‘other’. Considering this ideology that underpins the discourse of barbarism, particularly in light of the ideological nature of children’s literature, it is important to understand how the discourse operates in fiction for young adults and the models of subjectivity, especially in relation to the representation of the ‘other’, being presented to its implied audience as a result of the discourse.

So, why fantasy? This chapter will examine the generic features of fantasy literature in relation to both children’s literature and historical fiction and fantasy’s relationship to consensus reality. In particular, the chapter examines the relationship between history and historical fiction for children and compares this relationship to the relationship between history and fantasy. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate why this thesis is examining the discourse of barbarism through fantasy fiction and also argue that fantasy is in a better suited position to examine and speculate upon the social and societal consequences of implicit ideologies within modern society.

Children’s Literature, Ideology, and Historical Fiction

In his seminal work *Language and Ideology in Children’s Fiction*, John Stephens states:

¹⁵ This codification and the discourse of barbarism in modern texts will be further discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

As with discourse in general, the discourses of children's fiction are pervaded by ideological presuppositions, sometimes obtrusively and sometimes invisibly (Stephens *Language and Ideology* 1-2)

Indeed, children's literature is inherently ideological in nature – written by adults and inscribed with the 'socio-cultural values which, it is assumed, are shared by author and audience' (3). It is, at its essence, an enculturating literature employed to induct children into the ways of thinking and socio-cultural ideologies of their own societal context (Stephens "A Page Just Waiting to Be Written On" 40). This is not a controversial assertion and is indeed an orthodox assumption in most children's literature studies. Bradford observes that children's literature negotiates 'across the spaces between adulthood and childhood. Produced by adults, but (unlike other fields of literature) defined in relation to their readership, children's texts embody adult's fears and anxieties, projected onto the imagined childhoods they construct' (Bradford 7). Similarly, Trites asserts that 'adolescent literature itself serves as a discourse of institutional socialization', mitigating and regulating social power while exploring the relationship between an individual and the social institutions that shape them (Trites *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature* 22-23).

This transcription of adult anxieties and ideologies into literature written for children is no less true in the production of historical fiction. Bradford argues that in children's literature scholarship, there is more of a preoccupation with 'truth', 'accuracy', and 'authenticity' in a text's approach to historical fiction for children than there is within literary and historical scholarship more generally (25-26). Indeed there is an assumption that historical fiction for children and young adults should seek to teach children about an authentic experience of the past, to invoke a 'spirit' or 'sense' of an age, and communicate to children a historical reality of 'what it was like to live back then' (Rahn 3; K. Wilson 1-2; Bradford 6). It is assumed to have an educative purpose of historical fact, rather than the socialising purpose inherent in all literature produced for children. This preoccupation is, however, at odds with the nature of children's literature itself, particularly considering its innate ideologies that 'project the world views and ideological preoccupations of authors, whether or not authors are conscious of these values and ideas' (Bradford 26). It is virtually impossible to produce historical fiction independent from the influences and biases of the present day. As such, the possibility to even 'know' history is itself problematic. The only record available to historians is in the form of documents, archives, or artifacts, interpreted by historians

and thus rendering the past only accessible through textualisations with their associated language codes and discourses (White).¹⁶ Within this context, the past is only available through representation (McCallum 230) and so the claim to absolute accuracy, even in historical studies, is suspect and rarely made.¹⁷

How, then, are we to expect historical fiction, a genre freely associating itself with fiction – or that which is untrue – to ‘accurately’ represent the past, and convey a reality of a time and place to its audience where historical studies do not? Rather, historical fiction more commonly exists in the ‘past present’ – or a past that is consistently interpreted and shaped through the author’s own present context. It is written with the present in mind, assuming the past as a precondition for the author’s context and thus ‘writing the past to accord with teleologies which tend towards the now of the writing subject’ (Bradford 26). Considering this, Bradford asserts that ‘authentic’ representations of past cultures and societies are not the aim of texts written for children, but rather these texts consciously adapt aspects of the past in order to ‘make sense of the present and to imagine the future’ (27).

Despite this tension between the expectation for authenticity and the very nature of fiction, historical fiction for young adults still has an assumed relationship with mimesis that must be explored. It is apparent that authors of historical fiction are at least aware of the ‘concomitant claim and disclaimer to historical legitimacy’ (K. Wilson 2) implied through the name of the genre: the text is both history and it is fiction. As such, in the production of historical fiction for children, it is expected that the author research the period extensively in order to make the world as accurate as possible (Paterson 227) while simultaneously being prepared to abandon most of this research ‘to pare down to the necessary minimum for the success of the plot’ (Keenan 370). In doing so, historical fiction forfeits the claim to accuracy regarding the events of a period of time while still necessitating an amount of research to, at the very least, engage its audience within the ‘otherness’ of the historical age, its cultural attitudes and assumptions, and social reality. To do otherwise in this regard would be to fail in creating ‘historical’ fiction, instead ‘simply [dressing] up modern characters in pseudo-ancient dress and so make the characters tamer and more like

¹⁶ This is the central thesis of Hayden White’s work.

¹⁷ Much more might be said of the narrativisation and problematisation of accuracy within historical studies, however to do so would be outside of the scope of this thesis. The primary point here is that the expectation of accuracy placed upon historical fiction for the sake of education is problematic as history itself is only available through representation, a fact many historians themselves freely accept. See Hsu-Ming Teo “Historical fiction and fictions of history”.

ourselves than historical people' (Paterson 227).¹⁸ Thus, the focus of historical fiction is on the progression of the character and the 'sense' of history within the text, while the factual history surrounding the narrative acts as a backdrop for personal development and societal characterisation with which the character must interact and by which the character is deeply affected.

This use of the past as a backdrop to the character's personal development is most often accompanied by ideological emphases on the ideological and sociological superiority of the present (Stephens *Language and Ideology* 204; 238-39). Historical fiction for children is thus 'embedded with a humanistic metanarrative of positive progression' (K. Wilson 5) that focuses on the progression from the historical world of the text towards the (more civilised) reality of the reader's present. This ideological focus of historical fiction for children is long-established. Jones argues that the ideologies present within children's literature and historical fiction, particularly throughout the nineteenth century, were often focused on the production and proliferation of a nationalistic ideology and 'character', and children's literature seen as a means by which this ideology was passed and perpetuated through the next generation. In particular, she states that:

To write historical novels for children was not only an entertaining medium to shape what they would become in order to ensure the security and strength of the nation's empire, but also an opportunity to instil passion for it and for shaping the future and continuing the processes of enculturation, socialisation, and sense of nationhood through knowledge (Jones 161-62).

This model emphasised progress that favourably situated the present and future and grounded that experience of the present within a representation of the past. Thus the ideological and socialising nature of children's literature is particularly present within historical fiction for children. There are demands placed upon it, in light of its audience, for a sense of accuracy and adherence to historical 'reality' in the interest of didacticism rarely seen in other forms of literature. Historical fiction for children must be mimetic in its function – or imitative of an historical reality – and thus be grounded in the 'accurate' construction of the historical world, society, and culture.

¹⁸ It must be noted here that the otherness of a historical age often conflicts with the time in which the historical fiction is produced through the characterization of protagonists who are purportedly from the past but embody contemporary ideologies in order to allow their audience to better relate to and understand the characters. This will be further discussed later in the chapter.

While this mimesis is expected of historical fiction for children, Patterson's argument that a lack of engagement with the historical period would be to essentially anachronise a character also expresses an expectation for the creation of an 'otherness', to accentuate the distance between the historical fictional world and that of the modern context of the audience. Thus, the reality of historical fiction is both mimetic in that it refers to a real and documented past, while also subverting this mimesis to some extent in that the story operates within a world entirely outside of its modern audience's experiences. Historical fiction's relationship to reality thus creates a sense of distance from the present and also positions the genre for the examination of 'contemporary values and practices' (Bradford 8). It creates the past as 'other', while simultaneously utilising this otherness for the examination and promotion of social change (Stephens, *Language and Ideology* 238-39). Nevertheless, the genre is still constrained by the limitations of expectations for 'accuracy' and, while distanced, the world is not entirely separate from that of its audience. Rather the historical world of historical fiction is essentially presented as a precursor to modernity and is thus subject to a certain amount of scrutiny by the audience, particularly those with some understanding or awareness of the historical past upon which the textual world is based (i.e. adult critics expecting historical fiction for children play an educative role for its young audience). The world is represented as a part of consensus reality rather than a break from it, a past world that has a direct relationship with and has created the reader's present. This is the main point of difference between historical fiction and fantasy fiction. Although both invoke a sense of 'otherness' regarding the fictional world, the otherness of historical fiction is seen as directly related to modern consensus reality and, indeed, on a continuum with it. Unlike the worlds of historical fiction, fantasy worlds have no future reference point towards which the events of the novel should progress. Similarly, there is no expectation placed upon young adult fantasy by critics that it should be educative in its representation of a particular time and place. This lack of expectation allows the fantasy genre more freedom to explore, speculate upon, and exaggerate the consequences of the dominant social realities and ideologies of consensus reality without contradicting the audience's knowledge of and thus belief in the fictional world. This is not to say that all fantasy succeeds in interrogating social ideologies, nor that historical fiction is incapable of doing so. Indeed both genres have the potential to subvert and examine dominant ideologies, as well as the potential to reinforce those ideologies. Rather, fantasy has fewer expectations placed upon it regarding 'recreation' of the world, as opposed to 'representing' the world, in comparison with historical fiction for young adults. As such,

fantasy has greater freedom to explore, speculate, exaggerate, interrogate, and subvert the social and ideological realities of the context of its production.

Fantasy

The nature of fantasy, and what kinds of fiction constitute the genre, has been the subject of much debate for the past several decades. Definitions range from the specific and detailed, such as that exhibited by Nikolajeva in her article 'Fairy Tale and Fantasy: From Archaic to Postmodern' (2003) and that of Rosemary Jackson (1981), to more generalised and inclusive such as that espoused by Irwin (1976) and Hume (1984). The genre itself entered into critical discourse through the work of Todorov in 1975, who sought to understand and deconstruct the formulae and schemas that composed what he referred to as the 'fantastic'. This definition of the genre, however, was limited to literature that caused hesitation in its audience as to the reality of the events it was describing. Fantastic literature, according to Todorov, was based in the uncanny, introducing a fantastic element into a text otherwise performing a mimesis of consensus reality: the fantastic was defined as a literature that subverted reality and a belief in it (Todorov 41). His discussion, while seminal, unfortunately fails to account for the number of 'otherworld' or 'marvellous' fantasy texts that exist within the genre such as the iconic *Lord of the Rings*, or instances of Science Fiction (a subgenre of Fantasy) such as Herbert's *Dune* (which was created about a decade before Todorov's writing). In each of these cases, the fictional world is notably separate from that of reality, and is self-sustained and self-sufficient with its own physical laws and internal logical consistency. This separation is, for Manlove (1982) and Wolfe (1982), the essence of fantasy writing. It operates in the realm of the impossible, beyond any 'remotely conceivable extension of our plane of reality or thought' (Manlove 18), creating 'fact' from 'non-fact' and deliberately violating the norms and expectations that construct our own consensus reality (Wolfe 1).

Jackson borrows many of her distinctions between different forms of Fantasy from Todorov's discussion; however she does provide space for the forms of fantastic writing omitted by Todorov. The sub-genre of 'pure marvellous' fantasy for Jackson, however, is not afforded the same kind of respect as the fantastic. In the only paragraph in which she discusses 'marvellous' writings, she is very dismissive of it as a textual form worthy of critical engagement and academic study. She states that:

The marvellous is characterized by a minimal functional narrative, whose narrator is omniscient and has absolute authority. It is a form which discourages reader participation, representing events which are in the long distant past, contained and fixed by a long temporal perspective and carrying the implication that their *effects* have long since ceased to disturb [...] The reader, like the protagonist, is merely a receiver of events which enact a preconceived pattern (Jackson 32-33).

This assessment of the genre is demonstrably untrue. While many fantasy fictions of the 'marvellous' nature do engage with an omniscient and authoritative narrator, this does not necessarily correlate to the creation of passive reading positions. Often in marvellous fantasies, within which science fiction is included, the narrative structure itself is manipulated in order to interrogate the institutions and ideologies of consensus reality through metaphor. Nikolajeva argues that:

the best examples of fantasy for children use the fantastic form as a narrative device, as a metaphor for reality ... Fantasy has indeed a huge subversive potential as it can interrogate the existing power relationships, including those between child and adult, without necessarily shattering the real order of the world (Nikolajeva *Power, Voice and Subjectivity in Literature for Young Readers* 42).

Despite the shortcomings of her argument, Jackson's attitude towards and assessment of 'marvellous' fantasy has been influential throughout critical discussion of the fantastic in the past few decades – leading to fantasy being a point of critical contention and either 'taken seriously (and enthusiastically), or seriously rejected' (Hunt 2). Indeed, for many the term 'fantasy literature' may appear paradoxical: fantasy has been typically associated with a lack of sophistication, escapism, and being considered 'childish' in nature, in large part due to the accusations of formulaic writing and its use of archetypes and schemas. Jackson's disdain for such literary features has resulted in the preclusion of a close examination of these schemas and archetypes and their effect on the meaning-making processes of fantasy texts within critical discourse. Indeed, even when the 'marvellous' has been defended in the past, it tends to be in terms of its clean polarisation of good and evil, and its subsequent adult yearning for a time of innocence and simplicity in which unambiguous moral realities exist (Gates, Steffel and Molson 4; Hunt 5). It is these very schemas and archetypes, however, that contribute to the subversive potential of much fantasy literature, creating a subversive or 'ironic' mimesis out of the genre. While existing

in the realm of the impossible, and the world bearing no real resemblance to that of contemporary reality, fantasy nevertheless reveals 'truths' of the world, its ideologies, and its political and socio-economic systems. Ursula Le Guin summarises this position as such: '[Fantasy] is true. It isn't factual but it's true [...] its truth challenges, even threatens, all that is false, all that is phony, unnecessary, and trivial in the life [the public] have let themselves be forced into living' (Le Guin 44). For Le Guin, fantasy reveals and exposes the implicit ideological realities of contemporary life, and in many cases challenges its audience to question and break free from those realities. Thus fantasy, as a genre, holds the potential to subvert oppressive social systems and as a result encourage societal change.

So what might be said then of 'marvellous' or 'immersive' fantasy, how it operates, and its relationship to the process of writing historical fiction and, in particular, historical ideas? To begin with, it is more helpful to take an inclusive approach as a working definition than an explicit one such as that demonstrated by Todorov and Jackson. Fantasy, as a genre, is an evolving one and as such no specific checklist of structural features will be sufficient enough to define it. Rather, as Hume suggests, literature more generally should be considered 'fantasy' if it consciously seeks to depart from consensus reality (Irwin 4-5; Hume 21). Within that broad scope, the 'marvellous' or 'immersive' fantasy might generally be defined as a fantasy that creates a secondary world with no reliance upon contemporary reality. Within this definition, both Science Fiction and what I would call 'high' or 'otherworld' fantasy might be included. Otherworld fantasy creates a foreign, imaginary, and non-existent land that is, by and large, incompatible with consensus reality and entirely within the realm of 'impossible' for modern audiences to experience. Texts such as *Lord of the Rings*, *A Song of Ice and Fire*, and the *Discworld* series would be considered 'otherworld' fantasy.¹⁹ Science Fiction, on the other hand, occasionally has a vague relationship with modern consensus reality in that the sub-genre establishes the modern world as a precursor for the textual world. In these science fiction texts, however, our modern world is so far in the distant past (or indeed, many worlds away) that knowledge of it has fallen out of cultural memory and only a vague sense of 'before' is retained. This is particularly the case in many post-apocalyptic and dystopian young adult novels, in which

¹⁹ While *Discworld* fits generally into the definition of 'Otherworld' Fantasy, it is a 'fantastic' example of the subversive potential of Otherworld Fantasy, the evolving nature of the genre, as well as the way that Otherworld fantasy can engage with modern consensus reality in order to critique its institutions and create meaning, while not relying on it for the textual world to exist nor needing it for the foundation of that textual world, its physical laws, and 'logical' consistency. Rather, with a keen sense of irony, in the spin-off book *The Science of Discworld* it is quite the opposite in that Earth and consensus reality is created by Wizards of Discworld by accident.

our current world is rendered completely alien and foreign to the characters that it may as well, itself, be a fantasy. Within this context, the world of science fiction is, by and large, possible, but the processes by which it might occur, particularly within our modern experience are incredibly unlikely. As such the worlds of dystopian and science fiction are very much otherworlds, however they do slightly differ from more general otherworld fantasy in terms of possibility.

'Otherworld' and science fiction fantasies are characterised primarily by distance from our contemporary reality, whether by a sense of time or a sense of place. Yet the language systems employed within these types of fantasy fiction are similar to the mimetic language of realist fiction: the audience is presented with a foreign world that is portrayed largely in 'realist' terms: there is an assumed familiarity with the unfamiliar. This process is what Tolkien refers to when he speaks of 'Secondary Belief' and 'Secondary Worlds', where the audience is immersed within the world and comes to 'believe' in the story and created world for as long as they are within (that is, reading) the story (Tolkien "On Fairy Stories" 36-37). The success of a fantasy novel relies on its ability to create secondary belief. As such the world of the text must be internally consistent, self-sufficient, and logical. Thus fantasy texts, while not necessarily being mimetic of consensus reality, must nevertheless be logical in their presentation of the world: that is, adhering to a sense of internal logical consistency. This Mendlesohn refers to as an 'irony of mimesis'. This irony is developed through the use of an authoritative narrative voice within an unfamiliar fantasy setting that assumes reader familiarity, and that the reader is as much a part of the world as the characters within it. There is no exclamation over the details of the fantastic world, nor how unusual, remarkable, impossible or fantastic the events or the world are; rather the characters of 'immersive' fantasy fiction take these elements as normal and completely familiar, approaching them with 'interest rather than amazement' (Mendlesohn 69). It is the creation of a 'real' world with which the reader is assumed to be familiar with and comfortable in navigating (59) and is thus the mirror of mimetic literature (69). The world is presented to the reader using the language of realism without the expectation of 'realistic' content (Irwin 70). This, however, is not unique to the fantasy genre. Indeed Mendlesohn argues that:

The immersive fantasy is both the mirror of mimetic literature and its inner soul. It reveals what is frequently hidden: that all literature builds worlds, but some genres are more honest about it than others (59).

This comment reveals a belief that, rather than fantasy being imitative of 'reality', the genre draws attention to the nature of *all* literature – that every fictional world is a construction rather than a reflection of reality and that this reality manifests in multiple and various forms.

Hume argues that this difference between the fantasy world and the real encourages the audience to engage with their own reality through comparison and contrast (Hume 82-83). Where historical fiction typically represents this comparison as an ideological emphasis on the superiority of the present over the past, fantasy makes no such claim. There is no present reality or reference point towards which the narrative is progressing, and as such the future of the fantasy world is entirely speculative and open to reader interpretation. This results in the encouragement of open-ended engagement with the audience's contemporary society and, as such, fantasy allows greater freedom in the engagement with and critique of contemporary societal ideologies and assumptions.

Historical Fiction, History and Fantasy

Fantasy is, in essence, liberated from the expectations for a mimetic reconstruction of the world and its customs. This is not to say, however, that it is always entirely divorced from the use of reality and in particular history within its world building. It is important in this regard to understand the similarities and differences between historical fiction and fantasy fiction and, resultantly, the different ways in which they are able to treat history.

Both historical fiction and fantasy fiction are characterised by a sense of otherness and distance from the audience's consensus reality. This otherness manifests in varying degrees of familiarity depending upon the audience's understanding of the historical or 'real world' intertext that is being invoked in the process of world building. In the case of historical fiction, this intertext should be apparent and directly refer to or rely on a particular historical period through which the narrative is framed, while fantasy fiction relies on the foreign and unfamiliar. However, if the world of a fantasy novel were entirely unfamiliar, it would be difficult for an audience to properly relate to the world and narrative events. Rather, what often occurs in the creation of fantasy and science fiction worlds is that the author will typically build a world of hybridised historical and modern

time intertexts.²⁰ This process relies on the use of historical ‘motifs’ and the creation of ‘chronotopes’ – a term coined by Bakhtin and literally referring to a sense of ‘time-space’ that communicates ideas about the ‘interconnectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature’ (Bakhtin “Forms of Time” 81) – in order to frame audience interpretation and engagement with the text. For example, *The Hunger Games* series builds its futuristic world through indirect reference to the Roman era, both through the names of the characters residing in the Capitol and the socio-economic environment of Panem very much resembling that of an imperial Rome.²¹ The Districts of Panem stand in the place of conquered ‘barbarian’ provinces, from which Tributes (Gladiators) are taken to fight to the death in an arena (Colosseum) for the entertainment of the citizens of the Capitol (Rome). The citizens of the Capitol are never entered into the Games, rather the Games are run entirely for their entertainment and enjoyment: the lives of the people of the ‘barbarian’ provinces (and indeed the word ‘barbarism’ is used by the character Effie when discussing her ‘sales’ tactic for the two District 12 contestants (*Hunger Games* 90)) are entirely owned and coopted for the Capitol’s pleasure, similar to the reality of ‘barbarian slaves’ within the Roman empire. Occurring alongside this reference to the past in the world-building process of Panem is futuristic speculation. Panem possesses technology far advanced to that of our own contemporary reality, but this technology is only accessible to the wealthy and distant Capitol while the prosperity and product of the work of the Districts are kept from them. This hybridisation of the past and speculation about the future subsequently communicates how we are to interpret the societal ideologies of the futuristic world of Panem, in particular the socio-economic power imbalance present within that society.

Alternatively, a fantasy text might establish a more exclusively medieval chronotope through the use of historical motifs such as a lack of modern technological advancement, the use of swords and other medieval-style weaponry, descriptions of medieval-style buildings and cityscapes, or even medieval-style judicial systems particularly in terms of

²⁰ The same might also be said of historical fiction in that it often mediates the past through a modern consciousness and value system. These texts frequently apply modern notions of justice and ethics to past events and people that would have experienced different thought processes and interpreted (now considered barbaric) events differently to an average contemporary person. However this fiction is still bound by what we know (or can know) about the past, so the world of historical fiction itself must be seen to be ‘historical’. Fantasy on the other hand can blend the past, present, and speculative future within the world itself as a backdrop to produce a world that is at the same time familiar and unfamiliar.

²¹ The name Panem itself is Latin for bread – commonly used in the phrase “bread and circuses” or *panem et circuses* and typically refers to the practice of throwing entertainment and games for the citizens of Rome as a distraction from substantial political or social issues, public discontent, or in an attempt to win votes.

crime and punishment. These texts, commonly referred to as ‘sword and sorcery’ fantasy, are exemplified by David Eddings’ *The Belgariad* or Martin’s *A Song of Ice and Fire*, the latter of which is based on the War of the Roses. Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings* and Douglass’ *The Axis Trilogy* similarly epitomize the use of medieval chronotopes within the construction of fantasy worlds, the practice of which constitutes medievalism.

Medievalism itself is difficult to define as it incorporates a vast number of ‘cultural practices, discourses, and material artefacts with a daunting breadth of scope, temporally, geographically, and culturally’ (D’Arcens 2). Indeed, ‘The Middle Ages’ as an era is generally agreed to have spanned the millennia between the fifth and fifteenth centuries, while geographically spanning from the Celtic east of Europe, to the Russian west, and down to North Africa and the Levant (4). Given the temporal and geographical scope of the period, medievalism as it frequently appears in literature uses

impressionistic tropes and generalised ideas of ‘the medieval’ drawn as much from literature or art [...] as from history. The effect of this is that in some cases a single text representing the Middle Ages will include people and features which would not have coexisted historically, but which together create an aggregate of ‘the medieval’ (D’Arcens 5).

It is this practice of representing an un-historical past for the purposes of creating and reproducing a ‘spirit’ of that past with which this thesis is particularly interested. The adaptation of discourses assumed to be associated with the medieval past has become a pervasive, global, and subtle influence within our contemporary modern world and, in particular, how we are encouraged to construct that world. Medievalism signifies the resurrection of a medieval past and culture ‘in post-medieval times outside the limits of Western Europe’ (Barrington 180), through the adaptation of ideas surrounding that past rather than an impulse to faithfully recreate it. Indeed Bradford argues that rather ‘than drawing unproblematically on a ‘real Middle Ages’ for setting, characters and other elements of fiction, children’s authors engage with versions of the middle Ages which are themselves mediated and contingent’ (Bradford 6). That is to say, medievalism as it appears in children’s texts is far more about the *idea* of the medieval past, mitigated through modern perceptions and ideologies, than it is about faithfully representing that past. This concept of medievalism – the resurrection of a past culture and time through *ideas* of that past within a society that exists outside of that time – is the basis for the

'historicalism' of the barbaric discourse. Though it existed and was developed through the Roman period as a tangible method for distinguishing and identifying 'Roman' and 'Other' (and itself existing in this time as an adaptation of the Greek sense of barbarian simply meaning 'not Greek'), the spirit and structure of the discourse has evolved and adapted to each subsequent era, gradually becoming entrenched in the way we structure our political and socio-cultural language and thought.²²

While medievalisms are, by and large, overrepresented within this subgenre of fantasy, there are instances of authors utilising other historical societies and motifs within their fantasy world. Tamora Pierce, for example, readily admits that the world of *Battle Magic* is modelled on Imperial China in her acknowledgements, although the primary world of the wider *Circle of Magic* series is very much based in a westernised medieval world. This creates a unique othering effect, as not only is the fantasy world 'other' in and of itself, but the use of Imperial China in her world building breaks from the expectation and familiarity of a more 'westernised' fantasy world, which she uses throughout the rest of her series. The world is 'other' to the audience through virtue of it being fantasy, and also 'other' in the sense that it breaks with the more commonly used fantasy conventions and tropes of western medievalism. This creates a second level of otherness for the text while still operating easily within the fantasy genre. In each case, the texts utilise certain ideas about an historical period, whether 'accurate' or not, in order to create the fantasy world as 'historical', and this is not necessarily limited to ideas of western medieval history. Thus utilising 'history' within fantasy literature is not limited to one particular image or historical period. Rather fantasy often utilises multiple images and ideas about a time and place, or 'historicalisms,' in order to create meaning. This process within fantasy literature is a method of communication rather than, as some have suggested, mere escapism to a 'simpler time'. Furthermore, as seen in the example of *The Hunger Games*, the use of these 'historicalisms' is fluid. Unlike historical fiction, where it would be jarring to find a holographic projection in a medieval French castle,²³ utilising *ideas* of the historical in the construction of the fantasy world means that the past and the future can coexist

²² The structure of the barbaric discourse and the implications for how it affects and structures the way we think and speak about the other will be further discussed throughout the thesis. See Chapter 1 for historic structure, 3 and 4 for application and adaptation of the discourse, and 5 for the implications for how it structures our world.

²³ The exception for this, where it is done relatively well, is the *Assassins Creed* game franchise. The premise of these games is a Sci-Fi/Historical Fiction hybrid. Players operate a modern character that is then placed in an historical time period in which 'real' historical events are tweaked slightly and act as a backdrop for a modern-day science fiction plot. Thus, while slightly jarring, the appearance of holographic images in historical settings does not completely break immersion.

comfortably within the genre. The interplay between the two creates meaning as to the nature of that fantasy society.

It is clear at this point that it is the *ideas* about a historical period that governs how history is incorporated into fantasy fiction. This incorporation and presence of history is clearer in some types of fantasy than in others. It can range from allusions to the 'physical' representation of history (for example objects, buildings, and clothing) and adapting 'real' historical settings into a fantasy society (as in *Battle Magic*), to the assumed ideologies of an historical period (for example an imperial ideology that governs the fantasy society, and restrictive gender roles and class systems). The latter of these is far less tangible in its reference to history, and constitutes the use of historical *ideas* and *ideologies*, as an extension of a collective cultural heritage, more so than direct references and historical events. As such, even texts that seemingly have no connection to an historical chronotope might still use historical ideas surrounding constructions of gender and class in order to build their societies. As shown in Chapter 1, constructions of gender roles and expectations for gendered behaviour featured prominently in the discourse of barbarism, alongside an emphasis on social class and societal organisation. These ideas, in particular the structured comparison between two societal systems based upon a consideration of their respective treatments of class and gender, forms the discourse of barbarism.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to outline the generic features of fantasy, how it interacts with history, and how this differs from the appropriation of history within historical fiction. Both historical fiction and fantasy fiction seek to break from the modern world and create a sense of distance from the reality of their readers. In each case, the two genres employ ideas about the historic in order to build their worlds, i.e. historicalisms, however they differ fundamentally in the nature of their relationship to this history. Historical fiction, in order to be believed, *must* achieve a sense of 'realism' in its portrayal of an historical time period; while fantasy is able to manipulate and pare a time period back to the fundamental ideologies behind that historical society, its societal organisations, power structures, and societal assumptions in order to more closely examine and more fully engage with the fundamental ideologies and discourses of our own modern world.

One of these ideologies that consistently appear within works of fantasy is that of discourse of barbarism. Fantasy is able to use its freedom in order to exaggerate the historicalism that is ideas, of past barbarian peoples in order to better explore the discursive system and structures that inform the way we construct and structure 'otherness'. This ancient discourse, with its associated ideologies of the 'barbaric other' and the 'civilised self', comprises an inherited component of our Western cultural identity. It is a foundation of the ideologies and rhetoric of colonialism, orientalism, and in a more modern context racism – for without the underlying discourse of the barbaric these systems of thought and language would be unable to express the assumed inferiority of the 'other'. It is found within our modern political discourse, in Western media, and importantly within fiction written for children and young adults. Considering the close relationship between texts written for young adults and the dialogic construction of subjectivity, understanding this discourse as it appears in literature written for young adults is fundamental to understanding the effect it can have on the formation of subjectivity and selfhood.

The history of the barbarian, and the idea of the barbarian along with its primary function as a method of expressing otherness, is appropriated and incorporated into our modern literary discourses. Where historical fiction would be bound to the time of barbarian tribes and Roman generals in the treatment of this history, however, fantasy is able to isolate the underlying ideologies of the barbaric discourse and recreate it in different settings. It is free to examine the cultural and ideological 'truth' of barbarism in isolation of its historical precedent, and in doing so critique and challenge how we are encouraged to construct the self in relation to society. In this way fantasy utilises the barbaric discourse, and the history surrounding the idea, without being beholden to it. It is for this reason I am examining the discourse of barbarism through fantasy.

Chapter 3

Barbaric Oppression: When Societies Go Wrong

Introduction

In Chapter One I demonstrated how barbarism operates as a social discourse. This discourse affects how we *construct* an other as barbaric – that is as a culturally inferior other. This discursive structuring is achieved through the comparative assessment of another society's class systems and social structure, their performance of gender, and through their relationship to violence. Although the value judgements present within the original formulation of the discourse of barbarism may have changed with cultural and temporal shifts,²⁴ the *structures* by which we represent the other as barbaric has remained a cultural constant, inherited from the Roman period and naturalised into Western thought. I would like to note here that I am not seeking to discuss the use of the term barbarian or barbarism in everyday English, or its more specific use in the field of Linguistics. Rather I seek through this project to understand the discourse created for the purposes of representing people and societal groups as barbaric: that is the structures and ideological function of the discourse.

Throughout the ancient period, the discourse of barbarism was used to express a consensus societal identity as well as a framework through which the Romans could understand and navigate the cultural otherness of the people groups of the Mediterranean world. In its modern usage, coding a society as barbaric reveals commonly held cultural assumptions about the societies in which that codification occurs, the nature of civility, and cultural superiority over an assumed barbaric other. As seen in Chapter One, a fundamental way this codification is achieved is through the examination of the class and power structures within an 'other' society. This chapter will focus on the way in which class and power structures feature prominently in the formation of the barbaric discourse within its modern usage, and how this paradigm is reflected in modern fantasy literature written for young adults.

²⁴ For example, in Western societies the association of excessive violence with the barbaric has remained somewhat constant, however we no longer necessarily associate casual and consensual sex with barbarism. Rather this lack of automatic association of sexual liberty with barbarism is contextual. Sexual behavior can and is used in some contexts in order to discredit others and represent them as untrustworthy, exploitative, base, or simple in order to infer their barbarity. As such, while a woman with many affairs in her romantic history might not be 'barbaric' in everyday life, it is unlikely she would be accepted to a position of public office in some Western cultures and her sexual history would be used against her to imply a lack of moral quality – that is to barbarize her.

While the function of the barbaric discourse as a method for representing otherness is still present within modern literary culture, and indeed modern thought, in many young adult fantasy novels its purpose has evolved from that of the ancient Roman invocation of the 'barbaric'. Where Roman writers typically sought to reinforce the otherness of peoples living around the empire's borders, and the underlying supremacy of their own society, in many cases modern authors utilise ideas of barbaric otherness expressed through observations of class structure in order to question the implicit value judgement of barbarism and the converse assumption of civility. More importantly however, many texts apply barbarism self-reflexively to an otherwise 'civilised' society in an attempt to reveal the underlying barbarism that commonly operates under the guise of civility. This interrogation is aided by, and best situated in, the genre of fantasy. Given the genre's ability to exist beyond the realm of the (im)possible without compromising a text's internal consistency, as discussed in Chapter 2, a fantasy text is able to exaggerate a social reality for the sake of speculative, hypothetical and ideological discussion. Indeed, this interrogation into the underlying ideologies of modern societal social structures is a key feature of the dystopian fantasy genre, which 'seeks to shock its readership into a realization of the urgent need for a radical revisioning of current human political and social organization' (Sambell 163). The presence of the barbaric discourse within a fantasy text, particularly when it is presented in exaggerated terms, is thus able to reflect upon the effect of that discourse on the order and function of society, as well as the effect of that discourse on an individual's experience of that society, free from the constraints of a modern consensus reality.

Barbaric societal structures, as we found in Chapter One, are typically represented as sitting at either extreme of a scale on which the level of liberty, equality, social order, and the legal and justice systems of a society are diametrically opposed. On one extreme, exemplified by the Germanic barbarians of the ancient Roman period, society is radically egalitarian and devoted to a sense of freedom, sometimes to excess. There is a sense of order; however this order is generally determined by a moral consensus rather than any codified law. At the other extreme, exemplified by the more advanced societies to Rome's east, the social structure is harsh and cruel in both justice and social stratification, where even the free people are treated as though they are slaves. In these cases, there is no possibility for social mobility or self-determination for the poorer members of society, while the wealthier classes hold the power of life and death over those beneath them in the

hierarchy. As such, understanding the role of the barbaric discourse within a text is inseparable from engaging with and understanding that texts' commentary upon social and societal power.

This preoccupation with societal power structures, and the effect these structures have on the development of selfhood within a societal context, is an integral feature of young adult literature. Indeed, Trites argues that '[v]irtually every adolescent novel assesses some aspect of the interaction between the individual adolescent and the institutions that shape her or him. When adolescent novels problematize institutions, they instinctively explore the issues of language in which the institution is immersed' (Trites *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature* 23). This active engagement with social institutions and their effect on the development of identity and subjectivity is, according to Trites, a key distinction between children's fiction and adolescent fiction (20). Considering this integral feature of young adult fiction, in conjunction with the ideological nature of fantasy texts, the genre is well suited to examine the discourse of barbarism in the exploration of otherness, selfhood, and the critique of social institutions and their associated discourses and language structures.

As argued in Chapter Two, this thesis broadly defines fantasy as a text that subverts or breaks from consensus reality. Within this definition, in this chapter I will be focusing specifically on the construction of fantasy societies within what Mendlesohn describes as 'immersive' fantasies – texts that are entirely self-contained and self-sufficient, and are characterised by an alienation from consensus reality (Mendlesohn 59-61).²⁵ This break from the expectation of 'realism' allows a fantasy to operate freely within an ideological discourse, critiquing and reflecting upon modern social ideologies and social structures. For, as Ursula Le Guin argued, fantasy 'is true [...] It isn't factual but it's true [...] its truth challenges, even threatens, all that is false, all that is phony, unnecessary, and trivial in the life they have let themselves be forced into living' (Le Guin 44).

Considering this broad definition, it is pertinent to mention that both science fiction texts as well as those that would be considered 'high' or 'marvellous' fantasy are included within the concept of immersive fantasy, as both genres build an internal logical consistency independent from modern consensus reality. Science fiction texts are primarily concerned

²⁵ See also Tolkien's "On Fairy Stories".

with representing future possibilities, oftentimes speculating on the eventual outcome of modern social norms and ideologies. 'High' or 'marvellous' fantasies, on the other hand, deal in the impossible, often metaphorically representing modern societies built around ideological norms through use of disassociation from contemporary reality. Each of these sub-genres are essentially characterised by unfamiliarity with the modern world. In doing so, they create the space and distance required for free engagement with hypothetical and ideological discussions of social and societal norms. For this reason, this chapter considers examples of both 'high' or 'marvellous' young adult fantasy as well as that which might be considered science fiction or dystopian young adult fantasy. These texts include: Melina Marchetta's second two novels in her *Chronicles of Lumatere* trilogy, *Froi of the Exiles* (2011) and *Quintana of Charyn* (2012); Kass Morgan's *The 100* (2013), *Day 21* (2014), and *Homecoming* (2015); Suzanne Collins' trilogy *The Hunger Games* (2008), *Catching Fire* (2009), and *Mockingjay* (2010); Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* (first published 2005); and Tamora Pierce's *Battle Magic* (2013). The nature of many fantasy series are such that, in many cases, the full meaning of a text might only be found if considering the complete story and narrative of which one book is only one part. This is the purpose of including the first three of Kass Morgan's and Suzanne Collins' work for consideration, and the last two of Melina Marchetta's series. Where texts are able to be considered in isolation, such as in the case of Westerfeld's and Pierce's novels, I have attempted to do so for pragmatic reasons. As such, where I will be dealing with series, I will be considering them as one complete text.

This chapter will examine the social structures present in young adult fantasy texts as a formulation of the barbaric discourse. To accomplish this, I will focus on the representations of societal organisation and structure as barbaric, including considerations of legal and justice systems, and the resultant implications for the development of agency within a 'barbaric' societal context. Thus, in considering the operation of political systems and social hierarchies within the context of barbarism, it will become clear that in instances where the barbaric discourse is invoked in young adult fantasy fiction, it is most often for the purposes of interrogating societal attitudes towards existing class structures and socio-economic otherness.

Social Inequality, Barbarism and the Politics of Disposability

In order to understand the implications for the discourse of barbarism in young adult fantasy texts as it relates to the representation of class and social structures, we must first

understand how it contributes to the construction of contemporary socio-economic hierarchical thinking and issues of social inequality. Of particular note is the subtle operation of the barbaric discourse within what Evans and Giroux call the 'politics of disposability'. This political attitude is underpinned by the discourse of barbarism: that is a discourse that provides the framework by which we are able to judge, and justify, the relative worth and humanity of another. At its core, the barbaric discourse is a discourse of exclusion, used to express the conditions of membership within the speaker's community and conversely diminishing the inherent value of people or cultures that fall short of those conditions. Consequently, those excluded and inhabiting the liminal spaces of society are cast off and rendered as barbaric, forming an 'underclass' which is "in" but it is clearly not "of" the society' (Bauman 3). It is in this barbaric space that modern political systems are able to engage in a 'politics of disposability': 'the ways in which people, families, and communities are not only increasingly considered excess to be discarded, but also alienated from the millions of similarly oppressed others' (Evans and Giroux 15). As in the Roman period, the barbaric discourse is used to justify any number of violent and hostile attitudes towards the excluded for the sake of the privileged community of the included. Within modern society, those falling under the category of excluded are often those living within society.

Bauman, and Evans and Giroux all comment on the modern conceptualisation of the poor and vulnerable of our society as inherently disposable, or 'collateral damage' of the progress of society. These groups inhabit the liminal spaces of modern society, outcast by a world that increasingly judges a society's health based on average wealth, rather than its wealth inequality (Bauman 3). The result is the reconfiguration of poverty as an issue of law and order rather than a social one. This configuration means that those without wealth are excluded from gaining the political leverage to improve their condition while simultaneously being held accountable for it. As such, in contemporary late stage capitalist societies 'individuals are expected to devise individual solutions to socially generated problems' while 'communal solidarity [... is] perceived as by and large irrelevant, if not downright counterproductive' (Bauman 17). Contemporary western societies have moved away from a social and welfare state, and the community-building apparatus that comes with it, towards a more privatised and individualistic state that shifts the responsibility for social ills and inequalities away from the political collective and on to individual participants in society (Bauman 16). This coupled with a modern capitalist world, where profit is based more on the exploitation of consumers rather than of labour, creates an

absence of empathy or responsibility for the poor because, it is perceived, they lack the capital, wealth, and political resources to be 'useful' to this consumer driven society.

Such a state would be impossible to reach without first having the discursive framework that allows such devaluation to take place. I argue that the discourse of barbarism is central to these politics of disposability. It operates on a system of dehumanisation where it systemically breaks down and undermines the basic and shared humanity of an other. Such dehumanisation is essential to the justification of violence and hostility, as in the ancient era, and to the pursuit of social and economic policies that fail to account for the effect or damage that they will have for large sections of the population, which results in the suffering of the poor becoming 'collateral damage'. This linguistic term and euphemism is based in dehumanisation: 'collateral damage' removes the humanity of the people to whom it refers and instead designates them to an abstract number. The damage is an unfortunate yet necessary by-product of the goals of the State, and is almost always used in reference to the poor and those who society has deemed barbaric: the invisible 'aliens inside' a society, but not considered a part of it (Bauman 8).

As such there is an intimate relationship between barbarism and social and political power structures. Where the barbaric discourse once applied to those external to the dominant Roman culture of the Mediterranean world, within a modern context this discourse has also been adapted and internalised to refer to those who are also within modern western society. The discourse of barbarism is now employed by those in power to describe, undermine, and dehumanise those unable to access the political and social resources to improve their own condition. This discourse in turn provides those in power with the justification for hostility and violence, and to pursue policies that adversely affect the 'barbarians inside'. Given the socialising nature of young adult literature, it is essential to understand how the barbaric discourse is represented within this literature, particularly as the discourse interacts with economic, institutional, and political power structures. Furthermore, considering the damage it can cause to social cohesion and community through the socio-cultural and political attitudes it encourages, it is essential to understand if and how this literature either reinforces or challenges the use and proliferation of the discourse of barbarism.

The External Barbarian

Within an ancient literary context, barbarian societies were most typically examined as an external and oppositional force. This oppositional relationship with the external barbarian figure is still one of the primary ways in which the barbaric discourse operates within modern fantasy literature, particularly fantasy literature written for young adults. This is most clearly seen through Marchetta's *Chronicles of Lumatere*, Pierce's *Battle Magic*, and occasionally in Westerfeld's *Uglies*. In each case, this relationship is explored through the choices made regarding narrative voice and focalising characters.

The first book of Marchetta's series follows the efforts of Finnikin in his attempt to return his people to their homeland, having been previously exiled by a curse that blocked access to their home country of Lumatere following a military incursion seeking to place an imposter from Charyn on the throne. Throughout this first novel, Charyn is established as an absolute enemy, barbaric in its treatment of its own people and the people of Lumatere. The sequel *Froi of the Exiles* and the third novel in the series *Quintana of Charyn* constitute a new narrative arc, picking up where the previous novel left off by following the attempts of Froi, previously a secondary character, to assassinate the royal family of Charyn as retribution.

The characterisation of Charyn at the beginning of *Froi of the Exiles* does little to oppose the previously established barbarism and absolute otherness of the Charynites. They are presented as evil and ruthless beyond doubt, and this critique is grounded primarily in the representation of their class structure within the story world of the narrative: their nobility are 'useless' (Marchetta *Froi of the Exiles* 62) and vacuous, full of empty words and spend their conversations 'dron[ing] on and on about absolutely nothing worthwhile' (97). The monarchy, on the other hand, is aloof and distant from its people.²⁶ The social reality of Charynite class structure is further reflected in the physical description of the capital:

Against the dirty-coloured capital was the white of the castle [...] the roofs of the houses were the actual path to the palace [...] this castle was built for defence [...] it] was built on its own rock, a fraction higher and separate from the rest of the Citavita (*FotE* 90-91).

²⁶ This description of the upper echelons of Charynite society is reminiscent of Ammianus Marcellinus' description of the Persians during the 4th Century AD, as discussed in Chapter 1, and one of the reasons for his low estimation of their culture.

Here, imagery of the physical design of the capital is used to reinforce the social stratification of Charynite society. Just to reach the palace, a visitor must literally walk over the dwellings and livelihoods of common citizens. The capital is dirty, while the palace is white, clean, and well-kept; and the physical location of the palace is separated from the common people by a giant chasm and placed higher than the rest of the city. The image that is created before Froi even meets anyone within the city is of a people ruled over by a indifferent and shallow elite, intent on maintaining their power through force and imposing imagery while reinforcing the social inequality of the society through the landscape. Indeed one character notes that the design of the city and its symbolic reinforcement of the societal structure caused the king to 'feel like a god until he believed he had the status of one' (190). The king believes himself to be an arbiter of life and death, capable of ordering the slaughter of a significant number of his own people for the sake of increasing his control, a revelation that evokes horror from the Lumaterans (39). This entitlement is also shown in his actions during famine, raiding his people's food stores in order to 'barricade himself in the palace' (165) with little concern or thought for his people. At the outset of the novel, the text is careful to establish Charynite society as despotic and utterly barbaric.

Charynite barbarism is frequently and consciously contrasted against Froi's experience of Lumateran society, where freedom and relative equality is considered a given. The function of the palace in Lumatere is primarily residential (90), and the nobility are, for the most part, capable and hardworking citizens. Furthermore, most of the nobility see themselves as caretakers rather than overlords. They are often found working alongside their people in manual labour (153-55), while those that do not do this are coded as contemptible and honourless. This attitude of equality is also adopted by the Lumateran royal family, who similarly aid their citizens in manual labour during tours of the kingdom. Lumateran society is thus coded as being devoted to and characterised by a radically egalitarian spirit. The comparative barbarity of Charyn is therefore, at least initially, utilised within a diametrically oppositional framework in order to establish a sense of Lumateran civility and cultural superiority.

Similarly, Pierce's *Battle Magic* represents the otherness of the Yanjing Empire as essentially barbaric through the portrayal of its class stratification. The text is a stand-alone novel within the wider series *Circle of Magic*, following the characters Briar, Rosethorn, and Evvy in their travels through the eastern countries of their world. Much of

the action of the novel revolves around a defensive war with which the focalising characters become embroiled, and in which the Yanjingyi aggressors are coded unequivocally as antagonists and barbarians. The Imperial court of Yanjing controls every aspect of its subjects' lives from the language they speak to their very identities. The emperor burns his gardeners alive for allowing a plant to grow sick (85); slaves are chained to the emperor's throne and kept in suspended cages on display when not needed (42-43; 54); and the emperor sees nothing in 'trad[ing] people to and fro like trinkets' (265). Furthermore, the emperor demands the complete subservience of his servants' identity and personhood. When an imperial messenger is asked for his name, his response is to diminish himself, commenting that when 'this humble servant [...] speaks in the voice of so great and puissant a master, his own pathetic name and being is obliterated' (20). The ownership of the lower class by a tyrannical ruler is absolute. The people have neither choice nor self-determination, and their identity is often erased in the service of the emperor. This situation is consistently represented as alien and remarkable, and is compared unfavourably with Briar and Rosethorn's home country, which is codified as a western medieval society. Thus, the text creates an implicit value judgement on the 'barbaric otherness' of the Yanjing Empire as inherently inferior (236).

The textual construction of Briar and Rosethorn's native culture as superior is emphasised through the focalisation of the three main characters. While the character Evvy is not native to Briar and Rosethorn's kingdom, she is largely naturalised to their culture and Briar comments throughout the text that it is his job to teach her the correct way to behave. The foreign perspectives of Briar, Rosethorn, and Evvy in their journey through the Yanjing and Gyongxe Empires are thus privileged over that of the people they are encountering. As such, though polyfocalised through these three characters, the focalised narration is nevertheless culturally exclusive. There is no 'barbarian' voice offered as a counterpoint to the assumption of the superiority of Briar, Rosethorn, and Evvy's cultural background. The result of this cultural exclusivity is a shift in the representation of other as barbaric. Rather than barbarism existing as a singular schema, Briar, Rosethorn, and Evvy's culturally distant perspectives create a *scale* of barbarism along which the foreign cultures are placed depending on the level of their likeness and acceptability to Briar and Rosethorn's cultural proclivities. The result of this exclusivity is twofold. First, the barbarism, that is the inferiority, of the cultures that the protagonists encounter is unable to be effectively challenged. The focalisation is from a culturally privileged position and the barbarian people are never afforded the opportunity to speak and thus to define their own selves

against the narrative perspectives of Briar, Rosethorn, and Evvy. Secondly, this results in a lack of interrogation into the thought processes and cultural assumptions that construct otherness when exposed to the foreign. While the other texts discussed in this chapter that deal with external barbarism tend to critique the assumptions that create otherness within a developing subjectivity, *Battle Magic* fails to do so and thus inadvertently reinforces the use of the barbaric discourse when encountering foreign cultures.

As should be apparent, the Yanjingyi Empire is coded as particularly beyond redemption from its barbarity, becoming increasingly violent throughout the text. Indeed, Rosethorn actively compares the Emperor with her own king, claiming that she 'never appreciated what a fine ruler he [was] before [they] made this journey' (Pierce 236). This statement reveals a sense of cultural superiority accompanied by a sense of their alienation from the culture surrounding them. Briar, Rosethorn, and Evvy are indeed 'other' to the Yanjingyi, and glad for it. The social order of the Yanjing Empire is thus unreservedly criticised by the more 'westernised' primary characters. Accompanied by the aforementioned lack of interrogation of the role of the barbaric discourse, this textual construction of western as civilised and eastern as barbaric has particularly concerning implications for the kinds of subjectivities being presented to the text's young adult audience, particularly as they pertain to models of interaction and engagement with the cultural and ethnic other. This will be further discussed in Chapter 5.

In *Battle Magic* this sense of cultural supremacy is reiterated through the protagonists' interactions with the Gyongxe Empire. Though they are coded as an example of 'good' barbarians they are still represented as barbarians nonetheless, an attitude that is reminiscent of Roman representations of the Germanic people. Upon hearing of the Gyongxin practice of sky burial in which bodies are left to the elements and scavengers in order to be returned to their land, Briar responds with disgust:

Briar envied the polite curiosity in Rosethorn's voice. He was clenching his fists to keep from yelping in disgust. He had seen the buzzards haunting the gorge as they had fled into Gyongxe, but hadn't thought they were following meals left by Captain Rana. Or by him and his companions. He knew the Yanjingyi soldiers had their own elaborate funeral rituals that did not include being left to rot in the open. At home, the dead were buried to return to the earth (Pierce 233-34).

Despite being allied with Gyongxe and aiding in their defence against the Yanjingyi Empire, Briar is highly conscious of the perceived difference in civility between his own culture and the customs of Gyongxe and Yanjing. Furthermore, the narrative choice to utilise Briar's focalisation in this section makes these differences clearer and more readily apparent. Rosethorn's attitude towards this information is apparently polite curiosity, and as such the representation of it would have been significantly different had she been the focaliser at this point in the text. Briar's reaction however is visceral. That the dead soldiers are equated to 'meals' left out by the captain suggests that Briar considers this practice as flippant towards the humanity of the dead and denotes a complete lack of cultural sensitivity on his part. However, this interpretation of the burial practice is never challenged in the text. Indeed, upon realising that he has been an unwilling participant in this burial practice, the text presents a strong sense of anger and disbelief through the focalisation of Briar's perspective, establishing an expectation that the audience share his emotional response to the cultural difference in burial tradition. The comparative aspect of this barbarism becomes clear through the mention of the Yanjingyi soldiers. Already established as especially cruel and barbaric, Briar's observation that not even these people leave their dead to 'rot in the open' positions the reader to similarly respond to the Gyongxin burial practice with a visceral disgust. In this regard at least, they are represented as particularly uncivil and worse than the Yanjingyi. Briar's final thought of the burial practice at home makes the presence of the discourse of barbarism all the more apparent: his own practices are represented as 'normal' and 'civil', starkly contrasted against the beliefs and practices of the Gyongxin and directly compared to the barbaric Yanjingyi. This difference does not result in the complete rejection of the Gyongxin, as it is clear through repeated references to their religiosity and culture that they are respected as allies. Rather the point of difference in burial practice, highlighted through the narrative choice of focalisation, serves to slightly lower their status to a place on a spectrum of barbarity rather than represent them as culturally different but nevertheless equal. They are mostly civil, 'good' barbarians, but barbarians nonetheless, while Briar, Rosethorn, and Evvy are comparatively placed in the position of privilege and cultural superiority. This is by far the most problematic use of the discourse of barbarism encountered in this thesis, and is useful for understanding how barbarism can operate negatively within texts, reaffirming dominant social ideologies of the superiority of one familiar culture over another unfamiliar culture.

Westerfeld's *Uglies* also employs the barbaric discourse in the characterisation of the Smoke, an external society that has rejected the technology and social system of the cities in favour of a more egalitarian and labour-built social order. When deciding to run away from the city where, on her sixteenth birthday, she would undergo surgery in order to conform to a pre-determined aesthetic standard, Shay describes the Smoke to Tally in an attempt to have her join the external community. Tally's response, however, is revealing of her concept of otherness and how it shapes her understanding of the world:

"It's not a city, and nobody's in charge. And nobody's pretty."

"Sounds like a nightmare [...] how do people *live* out there, Shay? Like the Rusties? Burning trees for heat and burying their junk everywhere? It's wrong to live in nature, unless you want to live like an animal" (Westerfeld 91-93)

Tally further expresses disgust at the idea of hunting for food (93) and, once she arrives at the Smoke, her focalisation makes clear her discomfort and repulsion at the idea of genuine leather (213) and felling trees to make furniture (203). Tally, at least initially, equates this mode of absolute egalitarian existence and the reliance on natural resources to survive, with animalism. She creates a distinction between the 'civility' of her city and the 'barbarity' of the Smoke, based primarily in the disparity between their technological level and partially in their social order. This distinction is, however, gradually overturned throughout the course of the novel. Once in the Smoke, Tally learns that the city's civility is illusory as its social order is built upon the stripping of its citizens' free will through the operation to become pretty. As such, the respective societal orders of the city and the Smoke are brought into direct contrast. Through the representation of the Smoke as egalitarian, the text exposes the underlying barbarism of the city and thus implicitly preferences an ecological, symbiotic coexistence with nature over a technological existence reliant on the city. This in turn associates true civility as being characterised by hard work and a communal attitude that enjoys a symbiotic relationship with nature, while a reliance on technology is conversely cast as a path to barbarism expressed through a dystopian social order.

As in the case of *Uglies*, most Young Adult Fantasy texts (with exceptions such as *Battle Magic*), undermine and challenge the initial establishment and assumption of cultural superiority in response to the external barbarian. This is achieved primarily through the choices of narrative voice and focalisation. The *Chronicles of Lumatere* utilises

polyfocalisation to this effect, following the perspectives of multiple characters from differing cultural backgrounds in order to undermine the previously established cultural assumptions of absolute barbarism as it applies to the kingdom of Charyn. This is achieved through the conflicting perspectives of Froi and that of Isaboe, the queen of Lumatere, and her cousin Lucian, the leader of a group of Lumaterans called the Monts, both of whom are ignorant of Charynite culture and regard the Charynites with blind hatred.

Isaboe states early in the text that she wants the Charynites 'all dead, especially everyone in that cursed palace [...] Because I want to lie down to sleep and not imagine them coming over our mountain and annihilating my *yata* and Mont cousins first' (Marchetta *Froi of the Exiles* 47). Her hatred is intertwined with fear, exacerbated by ignorance, and this attitude continues to affect her response towards the Charynite refugees seeking safety in Lumatere. She feels no compulsion to provide food or resources to the Charynite refugees. When Phaedra, a Charynite Lucian was pressured into marrying, appears to have died, this causes the supply of food from her father's province to stop due to the Provincaro's grief. Yet Isaboe refuses to feel empathy for his loss or send condolences in the interest of diplomacy, stating that:

I don't grieve for Charynites [...] I owe the Provincaro nothing. He, on the other hand, owes Lumatere for relieving him of the problem of a crowded province. Write to him [...] and demand he feed his people. I will not have them dropping like flies on my land! (Marchetta *Quintana of Charyn* 47).

She homogenises and stereotypes the Charynites, and seems consistently determined to regard them as nothing more than violent and power-crazed barbarians. This attitude, while initially represented as a reasonable reaction given their role as absolute antagonist in the first novel, becomes increasingly frustrating when presented with the different perspectives of the other characters in the series. This is particularly the case with the character of Lucian. Lucian's perspective is used to present the reality of the refugee situation on the Lumateran border as he and his people are forced to reassess their own prejudice. This narrative strategy seeks to present the disparity between cultural assumption and reality. As the Monts are gradually exposed to the realities of the refugees' situations, and come to empathise with their suffering, Isaboe's hard and unempathetic attitude towards the refugees is exposed as increasingly intolerant, bigoted, and ignorant of reality. Furthermore, she is unwilling to have these prejudices challenged. The implication

of this conflict results in a textual insistence on empathy across cultural difference, and further encourages the audience to reflect on more modern political and social issues, particularly dominant societal attitudes towards refugees.

Similarly, Froi's experience of Charyn serves to undermine Isaboe's assumption of a homogenously cruel and 'barbaric' society. While Froi's experience of the Citavita – or the Capital – is indeed one of oppression and violence, originating both from the palace and the thugs known as 'street lords', upon being forced to flee he is exposed to the societies of the Provinces. These Provinces are diverse in their social structure and nature, and serve to immediately contradict any assertion of Charynite cultural homogeneity:

Froi fell in love. He didn't want to. Not with a Charyn city. But he did because people didn't stand around in Paladozza and stare suspiciously, they sat around and spoke to each other and laughed. Because at the entrance to the city, they had a town square called the vicinata where the people of Paladozza would take a stroll at night or watch performances or set up market stalls where merchants sold sweet tea and pastries [...] Because it was the first time he saw Lirah animated with a stranger as she spoke to an artist about his paintings. Because Gargarin and Arjuro had their heads together over books in a stand [...] Similar to the Citavita, the road that ran alongside the entrance to the city was steep, but not as narrow. Unlike the Citavita, the stalls that lined the road were not selling goods for survival, but trinkets and beautifully crafted daggers and swords and fabrics full of colour (Marchetta *Froi of the Exiles* 486-87).

The contrast to the Charynite capital could not be clearer. Where there was fear, violence, and brutality in the Citavita, the image of Paladozza is one of serenity, vibrancy, and more importantly cultural richness. There is no anxiety among the people about survival. Books are freely available, art is publicly displayed and theatre is performed daily. People wander and 'stroll', rather than walk; items of luxury are freely available; and the city itself is not built with defence in mind, although the people are well drilled in 'going to ground' should the city be attacked (487). It is a place of ease and relaxation, and notably lacks the systemic oppression that characterised the Citavita. Charyn, through Froi's eyes, thus becomes a kingdom of immense cultural diversity. Furthermore, the image of Paladozzan society directly undermines the assumption of Charynite barbarity thus far established throughout the text. Most notably however, it does not undermine the barbarism of Charyn

by erasing their differences, but rather by highlighting them as unique, and insisting on their own cultural value separate from Lumateran expectations of civilisation. There are barbaric qualities about Charyn, yet these do not define its people or its society as a whole. As such, Froi's focalisation is used to draw attention to the assumption of Charynite cultural and societal inferiority. Rather than affirming Charynite barbarism, the text presents a far more nuanced society than initially believed. In doing so, the text undermines the traditional operation of barbarism, disrupting the stereotypical relationship between barbarian and civilised.

This disruption of the traditional distinction between the external barbarian and the civilised focalised culture is demonstrated again in Kass Morgan's *The 100*. This series follows two main narrative arcs, one of which follows one hundred juvenile delinquents sent back to Earth to determine its habitability three hundred years after a nuclear cataclysm. The other narrative strain follows the gradual breakdown in social order back on the Colony, a collection of three ships from which the One Hundred were sent. At the conclusion of the first novel in the series, the One Hundred discover that Earth had been inhabited all along, and that they landed close to a society of Earthborns. In the case of this text, the external barbarian society of the Earthborns is used in order to expose the underlying barbarism of the One Hundred's native culture of the Colony. This external society is unequivocally represented as favourable to the systems and social order of the Colony, and the comparison is narrated primarily through the perspective of the character Wells, the Chancellor's son, as he attempts to establish a new society on Earth.

The first image of the Earthborn settlement presented to the audience is one of community:

[People] were everywhere: carrying baskets full of vegetables, pushing huge piles of firewood in wheeled carts, running down the streets and greeting one another. Children laughed as they played some kind of game along the dirt path that wove around the houses (Morgan *Day 21* 283).

Encountering the village again through the perspective of Wells, this idyllic image is emphasised: 'Nature was beautiful in a way he'd never imagined, but this... this was *life*' (Morgan *Homecoming* 160). The Earthborns, it becomes evident, also have a keen sense of hospitality, offering aid and food to the survivors from an earlier expedition from the Colony. It is only when they perceive the Colonists to have violated the laws of 'hospitium'

that a group of Earthborns leave the main society and become violent antagonists (Morgan *Day 21* 286-89). Earthborn leadership is similarly represented favourably. Though Max is the Earthborn leader, his leadership is one of service and community consultation. Bellamy's perspective describes the Earthborn town as

[...] both orderly and relaxed. Everyone had a place to live and enough to eat, and there were no power-tripping guards running around, scrutinizing everyone's movements. [Max] was clearly in charge, but he wasn't like Rhodes, or even like the Chancellor. He listened closely to his advisors, and from what Bellamy could tell, most important decisions were put to a vote (Morgan *Homecoming* 181).

Here the differences in governance between the Colony and the Town are brought into stark contrast. Where the interim leader of the Colony, Rhodes, rules with dictatorial authority and oppression upon arriving on Earth, Max rules with consultation and democracy. This is made clear when Max calls the community to vote on whether or not to protect Bellamy from Rhodes (Morgan *Homecoming* 190-91). The Earthborn leader refuses to take control and ownership over the lives of his people based on his own beliefs and desires, treating them with dignity and allowing them the right to self-determination. There is order within the Earthborn society, yet every person is free. As such, the text undermines the assumption of the barbarism of Earthborns and in doing so disrupts the barbaric discourse.

This image of the Earthborns is consciously and starkly contrasted against the experience of life in the Colony, related through flashbacks as well as through the concurrent narrative of the character Glass. The result of this discursive representation of different systems of governance in the series is the exposure of the Colony's internal barbarism, and a subsequent critique and engagement in a discussion on various societal models and the most valid one to adopt. As such, as in many young adult fantasy texts, the barbaric discourse extends beyond the negotiation of cultural difference and serves as a way to engage with and navigate different modes of social and societal organisation, and the underlying ideologies that construct modern society.

Barbaric Societies and the Barbarian Within

As discussed previously, it is often the case that the construction of external barbarism serves more to reflect upon and expose the internal barbarism of the focalised society. This is often expressed most clearly within YA dystopian and science fiction fantasies, as utopian and dystopian texts are particularly concerned with 'society itself: the political systems, the networks of power and resistance, and the discursive regimes, which constrain and enable identity-formation' (Bradford et al. 8). As such, a key feature of young adult dystopian fiction is a preoccupation with modern social structures and ideologies that are exaggerated for the sake of closely examining their implications and broader societal effect. Young adult dystopian fiction thus engages in a process of '*reductio ad absurdum* [...]' extending a utopia to its most extreme ends in order to caution against the destructive politics and culture of the author's present' (Basu, Broad and Hintz 2). It is within this context that *The 100* series and *The Hunger Games* most comfortably sit, turning the use of barbaric signification inwards and, through their use of narrative voice and focalisation, critiquing the processes and ideologies that create their societies and, in particular, their social stratification. Considering the centrality of power systems and social structures to the genre of YA dystopian fiction, often explored through the representation of extremes, this genre is particularly well suited to examining how the discourse of barbarism operates within and affects the functioning of relationships and power between individuals within society.

The polyfocalised narration of *The 100* functions primarily to compare and contrast different models of government and social order. As a result of the one hundred's attempts to rebuild society on Earth, the originally singular cultural identity of the Colony becomes divided. The separation of the one hundred from the Colony creates the space for the teenagers to develop their own sense of social and societal identity while the Colony remains constricted, stratified, and repressive in nature. This performs a comparative function resulting in the exposure of the Colony as essentially barbaric due to its represented class dynamic and social stratification while the events in the one hundred's camp provide the opportunity to imagine a better future.

The most notable characteristic of the Colony is the extreme class disparity. Phoenix, the central ship, is the centre of government and wealth in the Colony. The outer ships of Walden and Arcadia are comparatively impoverished and, as a result, the people on them considered far less valuable. Phoenixians are given access to books, a more thorough education, and are thus given opportunities to choose their career. Waldenites however

have no choice in the job they have, and do not have easy access to books or a more complete education (Morgan *The 100* 152-53). As such the Colony is a society that actively resists and discourages upward mobility, if not rendering it altogether impossible. Furthermore, rations are strictly controlled on Arcadia and Walden to the point of widespread malnutrition (Morgan *The 100* 2), while on Phoenix concessions are made for the sake of luxurious parties (Morgan *The 100* 266), the likes of which are completely foreign to the citizens of Walden and Arcadian. Waldenites are given a few hours of running water a day (Morgan *The 100* 113), while Phoenixians are given an unlimited supply (Morgan *The 100* 312). Phoenixians are treated to annual music concerts with the last remaining instruments in known existence (Morgan *The 100* 266-67), while Waldenites are denied access to this luxury and cultural heritage (Morgan *The 100* 269). Furthermore, many of the council members are corrupt, breaking the laws that they themselves enforce (Morgan *Day 21* 112).

This situation results in a society characterised by extreme class stratification and in which certain people are ascribed intrinsic value, or lack thereof, based on the circumstance of their birth. The text emphasises this social reality and its implications through the introduction of a crisis – the depletion of the Colony’s oxygen reserves. The text makes clear references to the disaster of the Titanic, from the lack of dropships able to take everyone to Earth (Morgan *Day 21* 194), to the musician playing as the crowd panics to escape (Morgan *Day 21* 269). Glass, who is the focalising character for the events on the ship, even comments that Wells had for a time been ‘obsessed with this book about a famous boat crash. Apparently, everyone put on their best clothes and then listened to music while the ship was going down’ (Morgan *Day 21* 33). The intertextuality of the Titanic thus acts as a framework for understanding the disaster in the novel and, in particular, for interpreting the particular class dynamics and attitudes that are ingrained in the social fabric and organisation of the Colony: the lower class is, in the terminology of Evans and Giroux, disposable. The survival of the wealthy, on the other hand, is prioritized regardless of their personal qualities or character. Personal value is based entirely in wealth. This is amply demonstrated through the chilling attitude of the Phoenixians and those in power towards the Waldenites and Arcadians throughout the course of the disaster. While there is a reserve of oxygen on Phoenix, this is not the case on Walden and Arcadia and in order to maintain their own lives, the Council closes the bridge connecting the ships essentially leaving the lower classes to die by asphyxiation (Morgan *The 100* 291-92). The lack of concern the Phoenixians have for the Waldenites and Arcadians in this

situation is emphasised throughout *Day 21*, eventually manifesting in the description of desperation at the bridge:

There were only two guards at the skybridge [...] about a third of the way down the bridge, their hands on the guns at their hips, watching the partition at the middle of the skybridge. So many people were pressed against the clear wall that it almost seemed to be made of human flesh.

Men and women were pushing their faces against it, screaming, holding blue-faced children up for the guards to see. No sound came through, but their anguish echoed in Glass's head nonetheless. She watched palms grow red from the banging (Morgan *Day 21* 138).

The incongruity between the passivity of the guards and the active desperation of the Waldenites and Arcadians speaks to a long enforced dehumanisation of the lower class and, conversely, the complacent assumption of intrinsic superiority by the upper class. The wall between the outer ships and Phoenix becomes a symbol of this dehumanisation and emotional distance created between the lower and upper class within the society of the Colony. The misery and hardship of the lower class is visible but the real effect of it is entirely separated from the experience of the Phoenicians. Despite the obvious suffering of the Waldenites and Arcadians, the lack of sound distances the Phoenician guards from feeling any responsibility or empathy for that suffering. It creates them as completely 'other' and as almost un-real. Glass' perspective, however, focuses on the misery, and is thus used to undermine this way of thinking and in turn demand an empathetic and horrified response from the reader both at the events being described as well as the indifferent and inhumane attitude of the guards.

The situation in the text embodies what Giroux and Evans refer to as the 'politics of disposability'. As introduced earlier in this chapter, in *Disposable Futures* Giroux and Evans argue that modern neo-liberal, capitalist societies intentionally dehumanise the vulnerable in an attempt to render them disposable, to the effect that:

Any collective sense of ethical imagination and social responsibility toward those who are vulnerable or in need of care is now viewed as a scourge or pathology [...] [I]nterventions that might benefit the disadvantaged are perversely deemed to be irresponsible acts that prevent individuals from learning to deal with their own

suffering – even though, as we know, the forces that condition their plight remain beyond their control, let alone their ability to influence them to any degree (Evans and Giroux 50).

This system places the responsibility of social suffering onto the poor (Evans and Giroux 54), with the result of this mode of thought being disassociation from and lack of empathy towards the poor and disenfranchised, as their situation is believed to have been self-wrought. They are, in this construction of society, utterly dehumanised and thus positioned as barbaric and other. In Morgan's text, we can see the discourse of barbarism operating on two levels. On a societal level, the Colony is clearly signified as barbaric, recalling the extreme that was exemplified by Roman constructions of Persian barbarism in the ancient era, in which harsh class stratification and complete control was a key feature. More importantly however, the text demonstrates the effect of internalising this discourse. Through the systematic dehumanisation of the Waldenites and Arcadians, the Phoenicians have internalised the construction of the lower classes as a barbaric other – an entity of lesser inherent value that, when the need arises, must be sacrificed for the survival of the 'true' civilisation.

While *The 100* series engages with this notion of the politics of disposability, it is also careful to do so in a critical way. Rather than perpetuating the attitudes necessary to the development of a politics of disposability, the text uses the character of Glass in order to challenge the validity of rigid class structures through her gradual education about her own privilege. This realisation, and in particular her demonstrated ability to become self-aware, in turn creates the acceptance of the disposability of two thirds of the population as particularly abhorrent. Through her relationship with Luke and her resulting exposure to the way of life experienced by many Waldenites and Arcadians, she comes to recognise her own elitist solipsism. Services and luxuries she had previously taken for granted are exposed as inequitably distributed, such as the ability to maintain a long hair style due to the Phoenicians' easy access to water. When it is pointed out to her that most Waldenites and Arcadians avoid having long hair simply because their water allotment would not accommodate its upkeep, she realises 'with a small measure of guilt' that she never noticed (Morgan *The 100* 84). As such her relationship with Luke increases her awareness and empathy for the Waldenites and Arcadians, clashing starkly with the normative solipsistic attitude the majority of her Phoenician peers share. This is brought to bear particularly through her horror at the council's decision to cut off the outer ships' oxygen supply. Yet

still Glass underestimates the extent of Phoenician indifference for the Waldenites and Arcadians, as she responds with shock when the guards shoot the people fleeing across the Skybridge after she opens it:

[...] that wasn't as troubling as the sight of a dozen guards marching toward the bridge, guns raised.

Even then, Glass hadn't expected them to actually shoot anyone.

She was wrong (*Morgan Day* 21 185).

The paragraph structure in this moment is telling of her horror. The paragraphs themselves are extremely short, constituting a singular sentence. The sentences too are short and sharp. This fragmentation is used to convey her own disjointedness as she is forced to confront the reality of the Phoenician attitude towards the lower class. Furthermore, her assumption that despite the warnings given there would be no violence suggests she has led a life of privilege in which she never needed to face or even consider such consequences. This, it is revealed, has led her to be completely ignorant of the social reality experienced by those on the outer ships. It is through Glass' focalisation that we understand the barbaric social order of the Colony and how it operates within a society. In encouraging ignorance between the different classes it ensures a lack of empathy while reinforcing an undeserved sense of superiority among the upper class. Simultaneously, this social effect ensures the ability to subjugate the Outer ships through force without being concerned with the emotional consequences of enacting brutality against other people. It is only through Glass' relationship with Luke that she is exposed to the reality of life on Walden. This relationship and exposure in turn begins to affect her perception of her own social reality, and her attitude towards the people around her begins to shift towards a more empathetic consideration of the other. Furthermore, due to the way this growth is focalised through the character, this shift toward empathy between different social classes is represented as desirable.

This social reality of the ship is sharply and frequently contrasted with the teenagers on Earth. Where life on the ship is restricted by limited oxygen and water, suddenly the One Hundred are offered choice concerning the type of society they wish to establish within an environment of abundant resources. This contrast exposes life on the Colony as even more barbaric than initially apparent. The majority of the One Hundred are from Walden and Arcadia, with only three people representing Phoenix. This immediately exposes the

injustice of the legal system of the Colony, with an overrepresentation of the outer ships in the number of confined teenagers. This disparity is stressed by Graham, a Phoenician turned inmate for committing murder, in his recurring conflicts with Wells. Both Graham and Bellamy express distrust in Wells as he attempts to direct the establishment of a camp, and consistently resist Wells' efforts due to resentment of the socially ingrained attitude of Phoenician superiority exhibited towards the Waldenites and Arcadians back on the Colony (Morgan *The 100* 59-60). This distrust is expressed again by Bellamy when the One Hundred capture a native Earthborn girl suspected to have kidnapped Bellamy's sister. Bellamy's expression of anger at Wells' calm approach to questioning her is informed in part by the context of the justice system on the Colony to which he was previously subjected:

"That's it? *That's* your idea of questioning her? [...] Do you know what your father and his Council friends do when they need information from someone?"

"That's not how we're going to do things here," Wells said with infuriating self-righteousness, as if half the people in camp hadn't been interrogated by his father's guards at some point (Morgan *Day 21* 53).

It is clear from Wells' response, as well as his other attempts to establish order, (Morgan *The 100* 108-10) that he regards Earth as an opportunity in which to create a more equitable society. Upon setting the captive Earthborn free he states that:

"We can't just lock people up without a reason."

"Are you serious? [...] Your *father* locked us all up for hardly any reason at all."

"So what, then?" Wells asked, raising his voice in frustration. "We're going to keep making the same mistakes? We have the chance to do something different. Something *better*" (Morgan *Day 21* 249).

Wells readily acknowledges the failings of the societal organisation of the Colony and seeks to build a better society. Within this context, the Earthborn society is used as an idealised representation of the society Wells wishes to create, and acts as a focal point for desired social change.

Wells' focalisation operates as a space in which these two disparate systems of government are negotiated. His relationship with Sasha, the daughter of Max, the Earthborn leader, exposes him to the possibilities of a different model of societal organisation and a more egalitarian way of life. While the other One Hundred regard Sasha with fear and suspicion, Wells approaches her with far more reserve and rationality while attempting to understand her purpose for being in the camp. He protects Sasha from the anger of the other One Hundred on multiple occasions, refusing to use torture or to kill her (Morgan *Day 21* 108-09; 83), and while the other members of the One Hundred refuse to feed Sasha upon her capture (Morgan *Day 21* 105), Wells provides her with food as he believes she has 'done nothing wrong, and it [is] cruel to treat her like a prisoner of war' (Morgan *Day 21* 110). As such, through Wells' relationship with Sasha and his interest in the Earthborn society (Morgan *Day 21* 117) alongside his calm and more rational nature, the text advocates for the overcoming of cultural differences and seeking understanding above emotional reaction. In doing so, the text also encourages critical engagement with different models of governmental organisation and the kinds of societies those forms of organisation create.

Wells' efforts to negotiate a better future is ongoing throughout the series, shown through his dedication to the One Hundred, and his interruption of fights and various mob situations (Morgan *The 100* 110-12; 249; Morgan *Day 21* 7; 53; 105-08; 83; 233; 49). His vision for a better society is, however, brought into direct conflict with the old order upon the arrival of Vice Chancellor Rhodes and his immediate re-assertion of control. Despite being on Earth, Rhodes sees no need to abandon the Gaia doctrine, the system of laws developed to keep humanity alive within the scope of a situation of limited resources. Instead, he sentences Bellamy to death by this law, without a trial, alongside Clarke and Wells for attempting to aid Bellamy's escape (Morgan *Homecoming* 291-92). The use of Wells as a focalising character for this moment presents Rhodes' reinstitution of the Gaia doctrine as entirely unnecessary and based in a desire for power and control. The two social orders clash and the Colony's hierarchy and societal system is resultantly presented as gratuitous, while Rhodes is represented as cruel and ridiculous for his insistence in maintaining the former status quo. Indeed, to Wells it appears as though Rhodes is not simply unaware of the possibility to 'do better', but completely rejects the idea:

Rhodes didn't understand what it meant to be a community. He'd never be able to appreciate what the hundred had created during their short time on Earth, the

foundations they'd laid for a better future. They weren't perfect [...] but they had what it took to turn the planet into a real home (Morgan *Homecoming* 310).

Rhodes cannot recognise the strength of the One Hundred's community nor appreciate that they have managed to not only survive but thrive. The disparity between this fact and Rhodes' refusal to recognise their contribution is thus represented as inherently frustrating and foolish. In this moment, the text identifies the primary flaw of the Colony compared with that of the One Hundred's camp and the Earthborn village. Throughout the narrative, having been exposed to the Earthborns and negotiated law and order in the establishment of the camp, Wells comes to the conclusion that it is community that binds a society together, ensures functionality, and more importantly creates the foundation for a 'better' future and life for that society's participants. This, he believes, is an alien concept to Rhodes and many of the other Colonists, and one for which they lack appreciation: there can be no community in a society built upon the politics of disposability and, by extension, the discourse of barbarism.

Bellamy's sarcastic, and often cynical voice throughout the narrative provides the best example of outright criticism of the Colony's society and the discourses upon which it is built. The inclusion of Bellamy as a focalising character gives an active voice to those suffering under the Colony's regulation, and is used specifically to expose the class disparity. Toward the end of the first novel in the series, he attempts to imagine the ship, finding it 'strange to think of life going on as usual hundreds of kilometres away – the Waldenites and Arcadians toiling away while the Phoenicians complimented one another's outfits on the observation deck and ignored the stars' (Morgan *The 100* 273). The reality of the ship, to Bellamy's mind, is entirely defined by systemic oppression overseen by an oblivious, frivolous, and useless upper class. The Phoenicians fail to recognise or appreciate the world around them, and the image invoked is one of a ship operated by slaves: the workers 'toiling' out of sight to keep society running while the elite congratulate each other on frivolous pursuits and achieving a level of status and wealth they did not earn. His perspective of the world is pervasively tainted by his experience as a Waldenite, unique and unlike that presented by any of the other focalisers.

This experience of the ship results in a general distrust of societal structures and regulations. When faced with Wells' attempts to establish the regulation of tools and weapons, Bellamy's response is defiant:

Who the hell did this kid think he was anyway? He reached down, picked a knife up off the ground, and began walking toward Wells [...] Just when it seemed like he might stab Wells in the chest, Bellamy flipped the weapon so that the handle faced Wells, and pushed it into his hand

“Breaking news here, pretty boy.” Bellamy winked. “We’re all criminals here” (Morgan *The 100* 110).

Bellamy actively resists authority, and directly challenges Wells’ assumption of moral superiority. He attempts to break down the class barriers that Wells still appears to adhere to at this point, particularly the distinction between ‘criminal’ and ‘citizen’, placing them all on an equal level. Ironically, although unique among the focalising characters in his perspective on authority and social order, it is apparent that among the One Hundred this perspective is far more representative of the collective experience of the Colony. This in itself is a commentary on the comparative level of voice typically afforded to people in different socio-economic positions. The poor are generally silenced while the wealthy and privileged are heard, the latter often holding positions of power and thus the ability to influence policy decisions that affect the majority of society for their own benefit, despite representing a minority of the population. This interaction between Wells and Bellamy also draws attention to another fundamental thematic discourse of the series – that is a dialogue on different systems of government. This incident suggests that Bellamy both resists attempts at oversight and societal control, and also courts anarchy and disorder. In contrast, Wells consistently attempts to reinvent his society with due respect to the establishment of order. In doing so, the text engages the discourse of barbarism in a way that demands of its audience to make a value judgement on and critically engage with both the textual representations of different social orders and their analogues within the audience’s own societal context.

The barbaric discourse is similarly used to expose the underlying barbarism of the society within the *Hunger Games* series, in which an obscenely wealthy and distant elite control the livelihoods of twelve substantially less wealthy districts, of which District Twelve is among the poorest. The story is narrated from the first-person perspective of Katniss and focuses on the events of the Hunger Games, an annual gladiatorial death match in which the Districts are forced to provide, by lot, one male and one female ‘tribute’ from their population between the ages of twelve and eighteen for the entertainment of the Capitol.

The Hunger Games as a series is keenly interested with class conflict, the narrative voice exclusively occupying the position of one of the most disadvantaged in society. This thematic occupation is clear from early in the text, Katniss stating that the 'reaping system is unfair, with the poor getting the worst of it'. She attributes this inequality to the tessera²⁷ system, in which a person might enter their name additional times in return for one month's supply of grain. As the wealthier citizens of the districts are able to afford food, this system disproportionately affects the poor and desperate (Collins *The Hunger Games* 15). Even for those who can afford food, the disparity between the resources available to District 12 and the luxury of the Capitol is abundantly apparent. Upon her reaping and arrival in the Capitol for the Games, Katniss estimates the worth of just one of the meals with which she is presented:

Days of hunting and gathering for this one meal and even then it would be a poor substitute for the Capitol version.

What must it be like, I wonder, to live in a world where food appears at the press of a button? How would I spend the hours I now commit to combing the woods for sustenance if it were so easy to come by? What do they do all day, these people in the Capitol, besides decorating their bodies and waiting around for a new shipment of tributes to roll in and die for their entertainment? [...] The whole rotten lot of them is despicable (Collins *The Hunger Games* 79-80).

This section is telling of Katniss' perception of, not only the Capitol, but also her understanding of how the Capitol perceives the people of the Districts. Resources in the Capitol are abundant, resulting in a lack of necessity to work for survival. They do not appreciate the luxury they possess nor do they understand how much effort would need to be expended in District 12 just to create a poor substitute of one of their meals. Meanwhile, the people of the Districts are treated as cargo, shipped to the Capitol as an addition to their lives of luxury and entertainment. To the Capitol, the people in the districts are entirely expendable and sub-human, existing only at the whim of the Capitol and specifically for the service and entertainment of its citizens. Katniss' response to such

²⁷ Tessera in Latin has multiple definitions – it can refer to a tile in a mosaic, but also to a ticket to a show, means of identification, or a food voucher. Its function in *The Hunger Games* incorporates all these meanings, reinforcing the status of the District citizens as nothing more than pieces in a game for the Capitol's enjoyment, while simultaneously perverting the typical use of the tessera. Where in Ancient Rome it was a ticket to a show for the receiver's enjoyment at the expense of the giver, in *The Hunger Games* the ticket obligates the receiver to *be* the show for the giver's entertainment.

ignorant privilege is a detached disbelief, accompanied by a sense of moral indignation. This economic disparity is emphasised in *Catching Fire* following Katniss and Peeta's return to the Capitol during their victory tour. At a feast, they discover the people of the Capitol regularly partake in throwing up in order to continue gorging themselves on food – for 'how else would you have any fun at a feast'? (Collins *Catching Fire* 97) – causing Katniss to reflect:

All I can think of is the emaciated bodies of the children on our kitchen table as my mother prescribes what the parents can't give. More food [...] And here in the Capitol they're vomiting for the pleasure of filling their bellies again and again. Not from some illness of body or mind, not from spoiled food. It's what everyone does at a party. Expected. Part of the fun (Collins *Catching Fire* 98).

Following the horrors experienced during the Games, Katniss' attitude towards the Capitol has evolved from indignation to outright disgust. The result is the picture of an upper class with little empathy or even awareness of the struggles of others, no sense of responsibility for the suffering they cause, nor even any understanding of the lower class as human. This is a precondition of all societies that are structured around extreme economic disparity, and through its exaggeration of the dehumanisation of the Districts, the text labours this point and attempts to demonstrate the logical conclusion of this type of social ideology within modern society.

While Katniss' indignation at this state of affairs is clear through her tone, there is also a sense of resignation. When Peeta expresses his outrage at the Capitol's clueless excess and consumption, Katniss' verbal response is merely to remind him that these are, after all, people who 'bring [people] here to fight to the death for their entertainment' (Collins *Catching Fire* 99). They commit violence against the Districts so much worse than their indifference, she implies, that there is almost no point engaging in outrage at this specific issue. What Katniss fails to connect is that this particular practice is symptomatic, and the epitome, of a broader social dysfunction. The people of the Capitol are a brutal, extravagant, and frivolous elite completely assured in their own superiority, and their control is all-encompassing and dependent upon the deprivation of its District subjects. To the Capitol, human life in the Districts has little value and the basic necessities for survival simply constitute further opportunities for increasing control.

The class system of *The Hunger Games* trilogy is clearly coded as barbaric, yet the elite of the Capitol remain unaware of their own barbarism. An irony Katniss is quick to point out in Effie's marketing of Peeta and Katniss to potential sponsors:

"I've done my best with what I had to work with [...] How you've both successfully overcome the barbarism of your district."

Barbarism? That's ironic coming from a woman helping to prepare us for slaughter. And what's she basing our success on? Our table manners? (Collins *The Hunger Games* 90)

Here the text demonstrates the multifaceted nature of the barbaric discourse. On the one hand, the extreme poverty and hardship experienced by those in District 12, resulting in their simplistic living and lack of pretension, causes the Capitol to deem it barbaric and entirely uncivilised. Katniss' definition of barbaric on the other hand is based in her perception of how the Capitol treats those they are in control of. The text thus questions the true nature of barbarity, and considering the dominance of her voice in the narrative, Katniss' perspective is undoubtedly given priority. The text therefore employs the discourse of barbarism in order to encourage its audience to question how society structures the barbaric other, and subsequently whether extreme class stratification and income disparity has any place within a civilised society.

As is the case in *The 100*, the focalisation and narrative voice of *The Hunger Games* series functions primarily as a self-reflexive social critique of the society created and governed by the Capitol. Unlike the other texts discussed in this chapter however, the narrative voice and focalisation is very different. While the other texts typically use a third person narrative voice and were all polyfocalised to various extents, *The Hunger Games* utilises a first-person, present tense narrative voice. The effect of this is a dominant focus on the perspective of Katniss, as well as a sense of immediacy and intimate involvement in the events she is narrating. This in turn positions the audience to align with her perspective, and in particular, her perception of the Capitol as barbaric. Furthermore, the exclusivity of the narrative voice denies any opportunity for a Capitol perspective, reinforcing the portrayal of the Capitol as aloof, indifferent, and completely alienated from the experience of the districts. We are not led to question their representation as barbaric, but rather accept it.

This privileging of Katniss' perspective subverts the traditional operation of the barbaric discourse in which the barbarian voice was typically silenced. Rather than following this more traditional use of the discourse of barbarism, *The Hunger Games* occupies the oppressed position rather than that of the oppressor. The effect of this subversion is that it causes the text to question even the possibility for 'civility' within a world dependent upon both the existence and the exploitation and abuse of a lower class. This question is best demonstrated through the final moments of the trilogy. Upon successfully rebelling against the Capitol, the remaining victors from the Hunger Games are called to vote on whether there should be one final game in which the Capitol's children are entered as retribution. Katniss, out of grief and anger, votes yes, before later changing her mind and assassinating the new president in order to prevent it, stating:

Because something is significantly wrong with a creature that sacrifices its children's lives to settle its differences. You can spin it any way you like. Snow thought the Hunger Games were an efficient means of control. Coin thought the parachutes [that killed Katniss' sister] would expedite the war. But in the end, who does it benefit? No one. The truth is, it benefits no one to live in a world where these things happen (Collins *Mockingjay* 432).

Katniss realises that for change to occur, and healing to begin bringing the people of the Districts and Capitol together, it is necessary to overturn the old way of thinking. She realises that a society cannot exist, and furthermore is deeply flawed if relies on the abuse of its poor and vulnerable to remain ordered. Coin attempting to turn the Games on the children of the Capitol is simply exchanging one tyranny for another. Each of the decisions Katniss makes are narrated and justified – the first is out of despair and exhaustion that 'Nothing has changed. Nothing will ever change now' (Collins *Mockingjay* 432), and the second out of this very realisation, that both Coin and Snow establish and maintain their control through the exploitation of the vulnerable. Her assassination of Coin and sudden change of mind thus signifies an attempt to alter the conversation and shift the societal discourse and way of thinking to one that recognises that a society cannot exist peacefully if it relies on the violent subjugation of its people. Replacing the head of a system without changing the system itself is merely doomed to repeat past mistakes and, furthermore, increase the damage to and suffering of its people. The conclusion of the series therefore questions the circumstances under which this change might occur and be sustained.

Katniss' focalisation, in combination with the previously established barbarism of the Capitol, constitutes a societal critique and much like *The 100* performs this critique self-reflexively. The text, in its essence, examines the concept of power, how it is maintained, and how society is designed around the desire for and maintenance of it. Her particular focalisation engages with this idea and actively criticises it, vocalising the potential trauma and experience of these systems of power in a more immediate and emotional way. In doing so, *The Hunger Games* encourages its audience to critically engage with their own reality and seek to understand the underlying social ideologies governing the structure of their own societies. As such, far from simply reaffirming the use of the barbaric discourse in order to describe and relate to the lower class, *The Hunger Games* utilises the discourse in order to both critique its usage and explore the effect that usage has in modern society.

Barbaric Societies and Education

One of the primary modes of maintaining systemic oppression and class stratification is through controlling the access and quality of education afforded to a society's citizens. In *The 100*, the remnants of an Earthen literary culture is kept on Phoenix, in an area of the ship to which the Arcadians and Waldenites are frequently denied access unless on a 'field trip' or on guard duty. Wells and Clarke have easy access to the books in the library on Phoenix as a result of their birth, and are thus afforded the choice of a more complete education in their own cultural heritage. In contrast, Bellamy must sneak onto Phoenix in order to gain access to this same opportunity and faces death for removing books from the library (Morgan *Day 21* 237) – an act that Clarke frequently engages in without any sense of fear of the law (Morgan *The 100* 15-16). Bellamy comments on the disparity in opportunities afforded the Waldenites and Phoenicians when faced with Clarke's assumptions about his knowledge. She questions how he could possibly know about gangrene as it would never have been a problem on the ship and doubts that anyone would read 'ancient medical' texts. Bellamy responds that he didn't take her for '[o]ne of those Phoenicians who assume all Waldenites are illiterate' (Morgan *The 100* 131); and when Clarke attempts to reference Robin Hood, he stiffly responds: 'We don't get a lot of story time on Walden [...] There aren't many books, so I used to make up fairy tales' (Morgan *The 100* 153). Any knowledge Bellamy has is hard earned and self-directed. Clarke on the other hand takes fairy tales as common knowledge and assumes that a lack of education for a Waldenite is by choice and due to disinterest. The control of access to literary heritage further increases the cultural gap between the lower and upper classes of the colony,

ensuring ignorance on both sides and the impossibility of social mobility, so that both are cast as an inaccessible 'other'.

Similarly, the society of Scott Westerfeld's *Uglies* manipulates education for the purposes of control. While the education offered is democratised, the quality of it ensures widespread illiteracy and a lack of critical thought. The past is unreservedly presented as barbaric and inherently simple – stupid even. Upon sneaking out to the 'Rusty Ruins', Tally reflects for the first time on the way her teachers had carefully constructed the people of the past to be pitied and disdained, and their way of life as barbaric:

The teachers always made the Rusties out to be so stupid. You almost couldn't believe people lived like this, burning trees to clear land, burning oil for heat and power, setting the atmosphere on fire with their weapons. But in the moonlight she could imagine people scrambling over flaming cars to escape the crumbling city, panicking in their flight (Westerfeld 62).

Free from the propaganda of her schooling system on this illicit visit, this passage suggests Tally is truly experiencing the Ruins for the first time. The language with which the teachers had described the Ruins had created the past as a distant cautionary tale. The result of this, however, is that it also avoided the possibility for any real critical engagement or analysis of the socio-economic problems that led to the downfall of the 'Rusties' and the preclusion of developing an empathy and understanding of the human impact and experience of the past. Here, however, Tally sees the humanity of the past for the first time, free from the dominating discourse of her education system which habitually presents any other way of life as reprehensible. The pervasiveness of this education and how it influences the way citizens of the City are able to engage with the world is demonstrated by Tally's disdain at the idea that people live outside the cities in nature. She claims this is wrong 'unless you want to live like an animal'; a belief that Shay points out has been taught to her and does not reflect reality (Westerfeld 92). 'Education' in *Uglies*, then, is all-encompassing and acts more as a form of propaganda, discouraging its citizens from developing a critical attitude towards different models of societal organisation and powerfully representing one form of society as the only 'civilised' way of being. Rather than attempting to properly educate its citizens about their past, the text demonstrates the power of institutional education in ensuring a compliant and controlled population. This is further revealed through the operation to become a 'Pretty'. This operation is taught as an

adherence to biology in an attempt to remove all conflict, as everyone is naturally programmed to only find one aesthetic attractive (Westerfeld 81-83). This is perpetuated by the belief and educational teaching that any deviation from this 'Pretty' form is ugly and, ironically, unnatural. This 'scientific' education ensures that all people not only undergo the operation, a procedure in which surgeons inflict lesions on the brain in order to physically remove any desire or capacity for rebellion or critical thought, but that they also desire it (Westerfeld 268-72). The operation both changes the appearance of a person to a set standard and also changes the way that person thinks. As such, the education system is deliberately employed to ensure people's compliance with the operation and to also desire this kind of widespread societal control, regarding it as a 'natural' outcome of a civilised society.

Alternatively the power of education to reinforce societal hierarchies and systems of power, and conversely its potential for producing equality and civility within society, is acknowledged by the Lumateran king and queen in *Quintana of Charyn*. They wish to establish a school for their people, so that they might build an educated populace; neither of them wants for their daughter 'a school filled only with the children of nobility' (Marchetta *Quintana of Charyn* 250). This attitude reinforces the more egalitarian approach of the Lumateran leadership: They wish to democratise education as much as possible and also refuse to have their daughter grow up exclusively among nobility. The text posits that exposure to the experiences of people from multiple socio-economic backgrounds is essential to the establishment of an egalitarian society. The king and queen wish for their daughter to consider herself as largely equal to her people, and view her royal status not as a signification of inherent value but rather a responsibility like any other in the kingdom. For Isaboe education, when used correctly, brings opportunity, social mobility, and societal sophistication. She asks of her country '[w]here does a learned man or woman go in Lumatere? To quarry stone? To milk a cow?' (Marchetta *Froi of the Exiles* 452). Education from this perspective, particularly widespread education, is the means by which Lumatere might rise above its identity among foreign powers of, by Isaboe's estimation, barbaric 'backwardness'. It is important to her ideology of rulership to allow her people the opportunity to achieve their fullest potential and for her, this is done through education. As such the text demonstrates a belief in the potential for education to either reinforce or dismantle the social barriers that are created and maintained through structures of barbarism.

Evans and Giroux argue that violence, and its transformation into spectacle, is a key feature of the process of the politics of disposability. They argue this transformation

works by turning human suffering into a spectacle, framing and editing the realities of violence, and in doing so renders some lives meaningful while dismissing others as disposable [...] It works precisely at the level of subjectivity by manipulating our desires such that we become cultures to consume and enjoy productions of violence, becoming entertained by the ways in which it is packaged, which divorce domination and suffering from ethical considerations, historical understanding and political contextualization. The spectacle immerses us, encouraging us to experience violence as pleasure such that we become positively invested in its occurrence, while attempting to render us incapable of either challenging the actual atrocities being perpetrated by the same system or steering our collective future in a different direction (Evans and Giroux 32).

It is through the normalisation of violence and its co-option into a form of entertainment that societies create and maintain absolute control as well as create a politics of disposability. The spectacle of violence, enacted upon the body of the individual by systems of power and represented or communicated through mass media in contemporary culture, desensitises us to the use of violence as a form of control. Furthermore, in our reconfiguring of violence as entertainment and pleasure, we also lose the capacity to effectively challenge the societal occurrence and use of violence and the spectacle it creates: that is the exploitation of the individual body by society, resulting in their dehumanisation for the benefit and entertainment of the masses.

This political ideology is important for understanding the processes by which violence against the poorer and more vulnerable members of a society is accepted by the populace. Violence on its own, however, without the context of a barbaric discourse would not create this kind of mass dehumanisation. Rather, a barbaric discourse that systematically dehumanises and debases particular members of the population, and that relies on a system of language that deigns these people as less than human, is essential to the formation and perpetuation of the politics of disposability. If people are barbarians – the violence enacted upon them, no matter how gratuitous, is justified as being for the greater

good. In this way, the discourse of barbarism acts as a frame through which a life might be recognised as a life and thus grievable, or alternatively as simply living, outside of the normative structures of society, law, and order and thus expendable. Butler argues that 'frames' of life are intrinsically connected to the power structures of the society in which they are created. What is considered a life and thus grievable is politically controlled and institutionally 'framed' as valuable. Conversely, that which is considered 'not' a life by the power structures of society is framed as ungrievable. This is seen in issues of immigration, wherein 'certain lives are perceived as lives while others, though apparently living, fail to assume perceptual form as such' (Butler *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable* 24). This paradigm is again played out on the body and mind of the criminal, for example (see in addition Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*), and in racist ideology, which tends 'to produce iconic versions of populations who are eminently grievable, and others whose loss is no loss, and who remain ungrievable' (Butler *Frames of War: When Is Life Grievable* 24). The discourse of barbarism is at the centre of this act of politically framing particular lives as grievable, and those that are not (immigrants, refugees, civilians and soldiers from countries with which we are in military conflict, criminals, and – in many cases – the poor).

This outworking of the politics of disposability and its interaction with the barbaric discourse is ably represented throughout the very concept of the Hunger Games. The gladiatorial nature of the games, in conjunction with the very public year-long spectacle of its aftermath divorces the people of the Capitol from any ability to empathise with the human suffering inflicted on the Districts for the sake of their entertainment. This contributes to the dehumanisation of the tributes within the minds of the elite as well as ensuring the compliance of the Capitol through the provision of entertainment. However, this violence would not be possible if the Capitol were not also conditioned to regard the people of the Districts as barbaric and sub-human in the first place. As such, during a state of rebellion the Capitol's first inclination is to respond with harsher and stricter forms of systemic violence through corporal punishment, and it becomes clear that those ironically named Peacekeepers lack any sense of commonality or ability to identify with the members of the Districts. Indeed, the fact that the body of enforcers are called 'Peacekeepers' reflects the way in which the system manipulates language in order to present human suffering as being for the 'greater good' and in the interests of maintaining social order and harmony.

This dynamic is most notably represented through the incident of Gale's public lashing. Katniss relates that:

He was brought to the square, forced to plead guilty for his crime, and sentenced to a whipping to be carried out immediately. By the time I showed up, he'd been lashed at least forty times. He passed out around thirty (Collins *Catching Fire* 134).

It is only at Katniss' intervention and another local Peacekeeper that the Head Peacekeeper, Thread, stops, despite the required amount of lashes for the crime of poaching having been already administered. The local peacekeeper points out that Thread should stop in his meting out of punishment 'Unless the sentence is death, which [they] would carry out by firing squad' (Collins *Catching Fire* 132). The implication of this comment is that Thread has literally whipped Gale almost to death. To die by the whip would be an excessively cruel, painful, and lengthy death through trauma and blood loss. In comparison, a death by firing squad achieves its objective with minimal suffering. The demonstration of violence from the new Head Peacekeeper is thus represented as entirely gratuitous. In response to the intervention he dispassionately replies "Very well", before '[wiping] his hand along the length of the whip, splattering [Katniss, Haymitch, and Peeta] with blood' (Collins *Catching Fire* 132). This incident is telling of the use of violence within Katniss' world for two reasons. The first is the detachment of Thread himself as he metes out Gale's punishment. There is no empathy or any feeling at all. This same dehumanisation is, however, reflected back onto Thread himself. Katniss' impression of him is also one of complete dehumanisation, as Thread appears more monster than man:

I get a glimpse of my assailant's face. Hard, with deep lines, a cruel mouth. Grey hair shaved almost to non-existence, eyes so black they seem all pupils, a long straight nose reddened by the freezing air (Collins *Catching Fire* 129-30).

In this moment, Thread embodies the barbarism of the Capitol along with all its detachment, lack of care, and love of violence inflicted on the people of the Districts. Conversely, however, Thread's willingness to engage in gratuitous violence is indicative of the District's barbaric status in the eyes of the power structures of the Capitol. As such, the text demonstrates the dualistic consequences of a discourse of barbarism. On the one hand the discourse has enabled the dehumanisation of the Districts; however this process has in turn formed the Capitol and its people into barbaric and inhuman monsters. Their own use of violence has resulted in their dehumanisation. As such, the text suggests that where the discourse of barbarism is dominant, a civilised society can never exist.

It is at this point in the text that the reality and control of the Capitol is brought violently into the everyday lives of District 12. Previously, the Capitol was a distant power, only inflicting its will every year with the Reaping but largely leaving District 12 to its own devices as long as coal quotas were filled. They could be hated, but there was no impetus for action. Now, however, Capitol control has infiltrated the daily life of Katniss' District and brought with it consistent cruelty and daily oppression. Unintentionally, the installation of Thread as the Head Peacekeeper has closed the distance between Capitol and District and, with it, provided a real face personifying the systemic oppression, onto which the frustration and hatred felt by the lower class might be projected. It is this moment, when the Capitol has directly and excessively harmed a person close to her, that represents a significant shift in Katniss' attitude to the Capitol. Her hatred is galvanised into the desire to rebel as she moves from an apathetic resignation towards the Capitol's control to understanding the need to move against them and, implicitly, the ideologies they embody (Collins *Catching Fire* 156).

Similarly the Yanjing Empire in *Battle Magic* maintains absolute control and order through the use of excessive force and violence. The emperor controls every aspect of his subjects' lives and understands their singular purpose to be one of service to him. He manifests this control through extreme violence and fear. Upon discovering a sick rosebush, his immediate reaction is to threaten the gardeners, stating they are to be 'beaten until [their] backs run red!' (Pierce 64) Rosethorn manages to intervene and prevent this punishment, only to later find

all of [the garden] in flames. The gardeners had been bound and left at its center: They were done screaming. The emperor and his soldiers watched on horseback from the main path.

The emperor saw her as he turned his horse to ride away.

"The plants harboured mold and the gardeners allowed them to do so," he said, his face calm. "Surely you understand that no imperfection is permitted at one of my palaces" (Pierce 85).

This insistence on perfection at any cost, and the over-zealous, violent reaction to failure ensures absolute compliance and further indicates how violence interacts with the discourse of barbarism. The emperor is completely unaffected by the pain he inflicts on

others and, through the description of his body language, appears to regard it as his right and a simple matter of state. He does not value the lives or personhoods of those beneath him, as they do not exist as people in his eyes. His cruelty does not merely extend to the magnitude of his punishment but also to the type of punishment he and his officers inflict: when Evvy, a child, is captured she is stripped naked and subjected to foot lashing, in which a person is immobilised and the bare soles of their feet are repeatedly struck in order to inflict the most pain and humiliation possible. Not only is this humiliation and violence forced upon her, her torturer is shown to enjoy it: 'He slapped the strap harder over the soles of Evvy's feet twice, grinning at her screams'. The Yanjingyi Empire thus uses excessive force in their subjugation of people, and are further represented as being either entirely detached from it (Pierce 248-49) or taking sadistic pleasure in it. There is no empathy and the use of violence is predicated on the dehumanisation of the victim. Through the systemic normalisation of excessive violence within the Yanjingyi Empire, such violence has become a spectacle, which in turn ensures a lack of empathy with those affected by it and the opportunity for maximum control.

Creating violence as spectacle requires the consent of the public and their acceptance of violence as entertainment. During the Roman period, the spectacle of violence within the arena acted as a form of pacification of the crowd and was predicated on the dehumanisation of the gladiator slaves performing that violence. This had a secondary effect however, in that 'sanitising' the violence and mediating it through the performative space normalised and desensitised the populace to the use of politicised violence. Similarly in a contemporary Western context, the sanitisation and reduction of violence to spectacle dulls and mediates the reality of that violence, distancing it from everyday life, while also ensuring acceptance of state-enacted violence by the general population. Rothe and Collins argue that there is a relationship between 'the harms and violence of the state and our own consumption, pacification, tacit support and facilitation of these crimes – where such violence and harms are commoditized, consumed, digested, and are a part of the banality within our mediatized lives' (Rothe and Collins 22). The acceptance of violent spectacle, particularly politicised spectacle, desensitises a population to political violence and eventually results in the implicit consent for the realities of violence to continue. In this light, the capacity for texts that seek to problematise the spectacle of violence is reliant on creating spectacle themselves out of that violence, normalising to some extent the act of representing violence in order to argue against it. If not carefully handled, this process inadvertently reinforces the commodification of state-violence through its creation of

distance from contemporary life and impacts the text's capacity for effective critique. Indeed, Adorno argues that 'Works of art that react against empirical reality obey the forces of that reality [...] There is no material content, no formal category of artistic creation, however mysteriously transmitted and itself unaware of the process, which did not originate in the empirical reality from which it breaks free' (Adorno 190). As a result, texts such as *The Hunger Games* must make a spectacle of state violence in order to attempt to dismantle it, however in doing so it risks reinforcing the cultural practice of using violence as politicised entertainment. It is only by making a character appear as human and as relatable as possible, and actively demonstrating the horror and fracturing of self that occurs at the hands of institutionalised power structures, that a text might create a situation of reader empathy with the character and thus overcome this contradiction and effectively critique violence as spectacle.

Most important for understanding the interaction between contemporary social structures and the normalisation of violence, resulting in dehumanisation and a societal lack of empathy for the vulnerable, is the practice of criminalisation – or the association of criminality with a certain group of people who are not necessarily committing true crimes. This in turn creates a value system within which the lives of a society's people are measured against each other. This is explored particularly throughout *The 100*. The One Hundred are deemed by their society as unimportant enough to act as guinea pigs regarding the relative toxicity of Earth, on account of their criminal status (*The 100* 17). Furthermore, the lives and livelihoods of the Phoenicians are routinely prioritised over that of the Waldenites, and this is systemically reinforced through the process of criminalisation. The guards frequently practice raids on Walden, Wells recognising that the attitude of his superior commanders assumes criminality:

While the other cadets always seemed energized by the training exercises on Walden, they left Wells exhausted. Not the physical component [...] It was the rest of it that left him vaguely nauseous: conducting practice raids on residential units, stopping random shoppers at the Exchange for questioning. Why did they have to assume that everyone on this ship was a criminal? (Morgan *The 100* 251)

The actions of the guards, and the training exercises they are encouraged to do, reinforce the status of the Waldenites as second-class, to be always treated with suspicion. The guards are not simply being trained in protocol, their social attitude and response to the

Waldenites is also being manipulated. In limiting the training exercises to hypotheticals of criminal activity, the system of the ship establishes an association of criminality with the people of Walden in the minds of the guards. The association of criminality with an entire class subsequently creates them as an enemy to social order and society at large, and in turn barbarises them. This allows the system of oppression to continue functioning, while alleviating any moral qualms an enforcer might otherwise have in using violent measures against those being oppressed. The discourse of barbarism is necessary for this system to exist, as it relies upon the labelling of people within society as 'other' and as a danger to that same society. It is this system and discourse that results in the callous attitude exhibited towards the Waldenites and Arcadians in the decision to cut off their oxygen supply; and it is this system that sees an overrepresentation of Waldenites and Arcadians among the imprisoned population and, particularly, the One Hundred.

The Development of Agency in a Barbaric Society

Through the texts discussed in this chapter, we can see that young adult fantasy often highlights the ideologies that underpin the way in which societies other their people, create divisions, and work to dehumanise large portions of the population through systemic oppression, language, and violence: the discourse of barbarism. As such, barbarism is a discourse that inherently raises questions of how individual agency and individual value might be expressed and maintained within dominating systems of power. In exploring how barbarism operates in the fictional societies of fantasy texts, we are able to understand how it affects and maintains social stratification and oppressive societal structures. At the same time, the barbaric discourse can be used to represent those societal structures in a particularly negative, and barbaric, way. To this end, fantasy texts for young adults often employ the discourse of barbarism in order to argue against its use within modern society and, in particular, explore how one might exist within a barbaric society and subsequently agitate for a better system of social organisation and relationship with the 'other'.

This conversation is engaged with in Marchetta's *The Chronicles of Lumatere* primarily through comparison between the Charynite and Lumateran cultures, assuming Lumateran equality as the optimal state. Similarly, Pierce's *Battle Magic* comments on the social structure of the Yanjing Empire from an assumed position of moral authority, favourably comparing Briar and Rosethorn's western signified culture to the Yanjing Empire's more restrictive and eastern signified social structure. Each of these texts answer the question

before it is asked: that relative equality is necessary for a 'good' society, in which the individual is considered important and their agency and selfhood is valued and affirmed. Where these texts differ from *The 100* and *The Hunger Games* is that their focalisation forms an external perspective to the oppressive 'barbaric' societies they are describing. As a result, they do not represent the underlying ideologies that create a society's systemic denial of agency and an inability to value its participants. *The Hunger Games* and *The 100* however, by virtue of their focalisation of the oppressed from within the 'barbaric' society, are positioned to both demonstrate the experience of barbaric societal structures, and to also explore how these structures affect the possibility for individual expressions of agency within that society.

The result of the discourse of barbarism being ingrained within the social fabric of the Colony in *The 100*, is a society in which people are unable to exercise self-determination. Political agency is denied to the people of Walden and Arcadia, creating a situation in which the oppressed are unable to agitate for an improvement in their condition or politically demand recognition of their personhood. Rather the system is organised in a way that ensures such agitation would be regarded as criminal. Similarly, the absolute lack of social mobility that characterises the society of the Colony ensures the lower class also experiences a lack of social agency. The result of this state of existence is a society that lacks cohesion and community, emphasising instead survival and personal interest. The Waldenites and Arcadians are silenced and it is only when they escape the confines of the ship that they begin to develop a voice, sense of agency and, consequently, a community in which each individual is valued and cared for. As such, the text strongly suggests that the ability for a society's participants to develop and exercise agency is essential to the cohesive and healthy functioning of that society.

The 100 does not explore the limitations of agency caused by the discourse of barbarism, and the systemic violence and oppression it enables, in as much detail as *The Hunger Games*. *The Hunger Games* is particularly interested in how the discourse of barbarism affects the possibilities for characters to engage agentially with their society despite the systemic oppression and dehumanisation of an individual caused by that discourse. It is clear from the beginning of the series that the Capitol's primary method of control is the Hunger Games themselves, which requires the dehumanisation and devaluing of the people in the Districts. This dehumanisation is combined with the restriction of movement or even the sharing of information between the Districts, which in turn creates and maintains

division between the oppressed (Collins *The Hunger Games* 246). This restriction prevents any coordination or collective uprising, providing instead the space for resentment to build between the Districts as a result of the Games, in which they are competitors, and distract from the injustices inflicted on them by the Capitol. The Capitol actively encourages the Districts to regard each other as a barbaric enemy, defined by their violence, and thus essentially other, consequently repressing the ability to form groups and express political agency through protest, rebellion, or revolt.

Division is not only manufactured between the different districts, it is employed within the districts as well. District 12 is divided between a small merchant class and the impoverished lower-class coal miners in the Seam. As a result, there is a division between those needing to sign up for tesserae and those that are only entered once a year out of requirement. When Gale sarcastically remarks that Madge, the mayor's daughter, would not be going to the Capitol on account of her privilege Katniss notes that

[...] it's hard not to resent those who don't have to sign up for tesserae.

Gale knows his anger at Madge is misdirected [...] I've listened to him rant about how the tesserae are just another tool to cause misery in our district. A way to plant hatred between the starving workers of the Seam and those who can generally count on supper. "It's to the Capitol's advantage to have us divided among ourselves," he might say [...] If it wasn't reaping day (Collins *The Hunger Games* 16-17).

Katniss understands the machinations enabling the oppression of her people and the effect this has on the way the people of the Districts are able to relate to and understand each other. Furthermore, the text also demonstrates how these machinations negatively affect the ability for agentic action within society. The guarantee of division among the Districts, and their separation from the Capitol, ensures they are controlled. This control in turn creates a feeling of powerlessness and impotence, a fact that is reflected through Katniss' attitude toward the Capitol. Despite understanding her oppression, her resentment is tightly controlled and only expressed through glib sarcasm if not apathy. Katniss represses her anger, as she feels it is ultimately impotent. By her own estimation the reaping is organised in order to remind the districts 'how totally [they] are at their mercy [...]' "Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there's nothing you can do" (Collins *The*

Hunger Games 22). The defeat and lack of agency she feels is again shown in her refusal to understand Peeta's desire to assert his own sense of self within the Games:

"I keep wishing I could think of a way to... to show the Capitol they don't own me. That I'm more than just a piece in their Games,"

"But you're not," I say. "None of us are. That's how the Games work."

"OK, but within that framework, there's still you, there's still me," he insists.

"Don't you see?"

"A little. Only... no offence, but who cares Peeta?" I say (Collins *The Hunger Games* 172).

It is clear Peeta understands how the Capitol dehumanises the people of the Districts, and wishes to divest the Capitol audience of this illusion, to insist upon his own humanity. Katniss, however, refuses to confront the implications of the Capitol's power and the use of the Games in their assertion of control, instead accepting the stripping of her identity as an unwelcome fact of her existence. Her defeated attitude is apparent, and yet her blunt reactions suggest this defeat is accompanied by suppressed anger. It is only following Rue's death that she is forced to confront her anger, and she begins to fully understand Peeta's meaning and the effect the systems of oppression have on the people (Collins *The Hunger Games* 286). The Games are predicated on the dehumanisation and barbarisation of the oppressed, and it is this dehumanisation that she must fight against. Through demonstrating the lack of agency caused by the barbaric discourse and its emotional impact on the first person narrator, the text subverts the discourse itself in order to strongly criticise its usage within society and the implications of this usage. In doing so, the series foregrounds the need for the development of an agentic sense of self against oppressive and dehumanising discourses within modern society.

Conclusion

As discussed in this chapter, the codification of societies and social structures as 'barbaric' is still practiced, indicated by the young adult fantasy texts discussed in this thesis. Rather than reinforcing the discourse of barbarism, however, this codification is often used to reveal the ideological underpinnings of how we structure and view the other within a contemporary, late-stage capitalist, society. The codification itself often still utilises ideas developed during the Roman period which characterise societies as barbaric based on their

relative social hierarchies and in particular the level of control, violence, and oppression used to fortify and maintain those hierarchies.

Of particular interest within young adult fantasy texts is how the barbaric discourse enables the systemic dehumanisation of the lower classes. Where Roman texts utilised the barbaric discourse in order to prove the barbarism in the societies surrounding their territory thus justifying hostility towards and dehumanisation of the other, many young adult fantasy texts repurpose this discourse in an attempt to subvert or challenge its presence in modern society. This is achieved to a large extent through the narrative choice of focalisers which, in most of the texts discussed, are used in order to highlight and undermine the assumptions inherent in a barbaric social system. More importantly, however, these focalisers provide insight into the processes by which a barbaric society operates and, particularly, the means by which this society perpetuates its hierarchy and evaluates the value of its individual participants.

Considering the function of the discourse of barbarism within the texts discussed throughout this chapter, while it is often a feature of the world building and the construction, interpretation, and expression of 'otherness' within fantasy texts, the discourse is rarely used unthinkingly. Rather, it is often (but not always) included within the text and subsequently subverted in order to engage with and interrogate the way in which the cultural and economic 'other' is structured and treated within hierarchical societies. As such, fantasy texts that use the barbaric discourse seek to interrogate the social and societal structures themselves and thus critique the way in which the barbaric discourse informs how modern late-capitalist societies position and treat their participants, in particular the poorer and more vulnerable of its members. Class structures and social hierarchies are not, however, the only space in which the discourse of barbarism operates. As seen in Chapter 1, the second key aspect for the establishment and use of the barbaric discourse is within the representation of gender and more specifically masculinity.

Chapter 4

Manly Men in Tight Tights: Barbarism, Masculinity, and Young Adult Fantasy Fiction

Introduction

Mel Brooks' 1993 film *Robin Hood Men in Tights* contains a sequence in which Robin's band of Merry Men confidently exclaim through song:

We're men
Manly men!
We're men in tights
Yes!
[...]
We rob from the rich
and give to the poor
That's right!
We may look like pansies
But don't get us wrong
Or else we'll put out your lights

The humour in this sequence resides primarily in the apparent undermining of the Merry Men's masculinity due to their uniform. "Manly Men" do not, after all, wear tights. The resulting song is filled with overcompensation and insistence that, if any were to associate them with being anything less than 'manly', the merry men would respond with violence to prove their masculinity. Implicit within their insistence are firm ideas about masculinity and how their identity as Merry Men suggests a level of effeminacy that apparently undermines their sense of self. Also implicit is a fear of this effeminacy and being associated with the 'feminine. This ambivalence towards the feminine, and fear of association, is pervasive within modern society and the basis of patriarchal societal thought. Furthermore, it is fundamental to understanding how gender operates within constructions of barbarism.

Thus far this thesis has examined how the fantasy genre interacts with historical periods and ideologies to create 'historicalisms', how barbarism as a formulation of the cultural other (that is, a people group whose cultural identity is distinct from that of the speaking

culture) itself emerges from an historicalism, and the structures that form this discourse of barbarism. The representation of social hierarchies based in class and status is a fundamental structure of this discourse. So too is the question of gendered discourse and power relations. Many elements of the discourse of barbarism, and its associated ideological assertions, manifest as an extension of a patriarchal ideology. The otherness and perceived barbarity of the cultures bordering the Roman Empire was expressed, largely, through concepts of Roman hegemonic masculinity and the other's adherence to, or deviation from it. Their otherness was based in an interrelationship between Roman patriarchal assumptions of the primacy of behaviours and personal qualities typically associated with the masculine over those typically associated with the feminine, in combination with how effeminate a foreign culture appeared to the Roman sensibilities based on their apparent social values and behavioural norms. Such a system is predicated not only on creating the female as other – deviating from the norm that is male identified – but also a hatred of this female other and an overall devaluation of feminine traits and qualities. This is the basis of a patriarchal system. Johnson argues that 'For women, gender oppression is linked to a cultural devaluing of femaleness itself. Women are subordinated and treated as inferior because they are culturally defined as inferior *as women*' (Johnson 24). With this added layer of hatred, when barbarism invokes issues of gender, it carries with it an attitude of contempt towards the other; hatred of the feminine other is transcribed into a representation of culture, and a culture's barbarity, and subsequent devaluation, is assessed by its association with the female.

In order to best understand the relationship between barbarism, masculinity, and femininity, we must first examine how this interrelationship operated within the Roman context – where the conceptualisation of the 'barbarian' was established as an *ideology of otherness*, rather than just an expression of cultural difference. As such, it is essential that we come to understand Roman masculinity, and its consequential attitude toward the feminine, as these attitudes informed the construction of the discourse of barbarism and subsequently its operation within modern ideologies of selfhood and otherness. It must be stated here that I am by no means claiming that gender performance is the same in the modern era as it was in the Roman era; cultural conceptions of gendered identities are naturally dynamic, shifting with the society in which they operate and masculinity is itself better understood 'as a cultural tradition than a biological given' (Williams 4). Indeed even within the Roman period, which spanned hundreds of years, concepts of masculinity changed as the Republic moved into Empire and the Empire similarly expanded across

Europe (Halsall 22). I seek here to merely demonstrate that there is a continuum underpinning the attitudes towards any given society's particular constructions of masculinity and femininity, and the way these attitudes are used in the construction of a 'barbaric other'. Indeed, to some extent the *ideas* about 'proper' Roman masculine performance – what it was to be and act as a true Roman man – are similar to *ideas* surrounding a modern Western concept of hegemonic masculinity.

Ancient Roman Masculinity

Masculinity during the ancient period, and especially within the Roman Empire and its surrounds, is a complex and somewhat difficult concept to negotiate. Much of what we can understand of ancient expectations for masculine performance is gleaned from literary texts, usually written by the social elite. Even within this group, given the geographical expanse of the empire, there were regional differences in expectations for masculine performance. Roman authors, for example, conceived of Greeks to the east as the effeminate other and 'Greece itself as an ancient, learned civilization that eventually became subordinate to Rome due to its decadence' (B. E. Wilson 25). The Greek elite on the other hand often wrote of Rome as culturally and intellectually inferior, and overly concerned with luxury – in their own way effeminate. Similarly, expectations for masculine behaviour differed between rural and urban citizens, and Jewish authors in the east again differed in their impression of the performed masculinity of the surrounding Greco-Roman world (B. E. Wilson 25-26). All this to suggest that masculinity in the Ancient era – or rather acceptable or preferred performances of masculinity – was by no means a static concept. Rather masculinity experienced variation depending on the geographic location and cultural background of the author employing it within their writing, often melding with and influenced by the cultural power of Rome and taking on its own unique variation. As such, constructions of masculinity within the Roman era were rarely a 'true' representation of reality, and many formulations of masculinity would have existed in the ancient world that we are unable to access, alongside those elite views that are recorded in ancient literature to which we still have access.

While constructions of masculinity in the Greco-Roman world were largely variant in their expression, there are still points of continuity regarding the masculine ideal across the Mediterranean. To be a true man in the Greco-Roman world was to be decidedly not female, and masculinity existed within a binary relationship with the feminine other. Thus

to be truly manly was to avoid all feminine traits and behaviours (Williams 126): passivity, subordination both socially and sexually, lack of self-control specifically regarding emotion, love of luxury, and a high concern for personal appearance. True men on the other hand were sexually and socially dominant, self-controlled, and active (B. E. Wilson 40) in both political and military life (McDonnell 166).²⁸ This standard was both the preferred form of masculinity as well as the societal standard for being: “‘man’ is the type whereas ‘woman’ is the antitype’ (B. E. Wilson 40). In most cases a ‘manly woman’, that is to say a woman who behaved as a man should, whether in terms of courage or holding political and social power, was considered an aberration (B. E. Wilson 44, McInerney 326). For the Romans, the separation of superior maleness and inferior femaleness was intrinsic to good social order. Women might only legitimately rise up in the political or social sphere, and exhibit manliness, when this good order was threatened and then only to expose the ‘womanish’ weakness of a bully or tyrant (McInerney 339-340). This paradigm of inherent female inferiority was common throughout the Mediterranean, although there are some examples of Greek authors treating active women with a more charitable attitude in their writing, particularly in the case of ancient fiction during the first and second centuries.²⁹ True manliness, however, was not generally considered accessible to all those living in the Greco-Roman world who were male-sexed. Alongside women, it was typically denied to freeborn men and male slaves, whom it was believed were incapable of ever coming to represent the Roman concept of *virtus*³⁰ – that quality that was truly manly and truly Roman (B. E. Wilson 41).

Virtus, or ‘manliness’, was central to Roman masculinity, and characterised ‘the ideal behaviour of a man’ (McDonnell 2). Furthermore, the concept of *virtus* was heavily associated with ‘Romanness’ itself – it encompassed what it was to be a man and what it was to be Roman (McDonnell 2). Thus to be truly Roman was also to be truly masculine. As such, it was rare and remarkable for barbarians to be attributed with *virtus* specifically, and many barbarian groups that the Romans came into contact with were frequently feminized through the works of Roman authors and elites (B. E. Wilson 42). The concept of *virtus*,

²⁸ By the late Roman Empire after the reforms of the Tetrarchy (from about 324 AD), this expectation for leading a politically and militarily active life changed. Where once ‘proper’ career trajectory and behaviour for a Roman man in the nobility would have incorporated both martial prowess and civil service, during the Later Roman Empire these two forms of public activity had become separate and distinct careers (Halsall 22).

²⁹ Wilson mirrors McInerney’s suggestion that this is partially due to a Greek anxiety over their perceived relationship with Rome, where Greeks were considered submissive (feminine) and Rome dominant (masculine), and the negotiation of power within this new context. (McInerney 342-43; B. E. Wilson 45)

³⁰ The term is derived from the Roman *vir* meaning “man” (McDonnell 2), so *virtus* has a close etymological connection with the notion of manliness.

particularly within the era of the Roman republic, was primarily used in connection with a Roman male's actions in the public sphere – especially as it referred to displays of martial prowess and military courage (McDonnell 180). Similarly it was applied to men who were active in Roman political life, however during the Republic, the possibility for a male to gain political office was determined by their ability in and length of military service (181). Thus, *virtus* was essentially public and essentially male – intrinsically connected to aspects of Roman life that were typically denied to women. This is not to say that women were never attributed with *virtus* throughout the Roman period, merely that it was associated with the masculine and thus rare, and usually denoted a sense of the woman rising above her gender to display 'masculine' courage.³¹ When it was applied to a Roman citizen's private life, it was typically in connection to upholding familial responsibilities and filial relationships, as a reflection upon the Roman family more generally (McDonnell 170-171). As such *virtus*, and thus true 'maleness' in the Roman world, was 'elite, public, involved social performance, competition, the constant scrutiny and judgement of others, and issues of sexuality' (166). The term also incorporated a sense of physicality in line with expectations for a soldier's success. War was fundamental to the Roman male experience, and as such training the body for war with the view of success was an important aspect of Roman *virtus* and thus true manliness (182-183).

The masculine body was integral to the Greco-Roman idea of manliness. The human body was considered to be normatively male, and 'non-men' as deviations from the norm. As such, it was believed that a man's physical body was a reflection of his inner manliness, or lack thereof (B. E. Wilson 49). Physical deformities and chronic injuries undermined a man's masculinity, as did the violation of a man's bodily autonomy. The bodily autonomy of elite Roman men was protected by law, and violence against the elite prohibited. It was therefore expected that elite men had no physical imperfection. Roman women's bodily autonomy was protected by law insofar as it applied to men other than their husbands. Slaves, however, 'could be beaten, tortured, raped, or killed without any legal repercussions' (51-52). As such, to allow oneself to have their bodily autonomy violated was to also be lowered to the level of a woman or, worse, a slave – a group typically denied association with manliness or possession of *virtus*. True Men, and True Romans, were the

³¹ See Sinclair Bell "Introduction: Role Models in the Roman World" – it was possible for women to be attributed with *virtus*, but such a display of courage was considered a novelty. More often it was attributed to young girls who had died before reaching adulthood and they were associated with the virginal huntress Diana, who was often portrayed with more masculine characteristics (15-16).

penetrators – not the penetrated (Walters 31; B. E. Wilson 59). Similarly, the physically performative acts of masculinity were also integral to avoiding accusations of effeminacy, thus ensuring a Roman man's inclusion within the Roman elite. His deportment, his facial expressions and bodily gestures, along with physical fitness and level of grooming (for too much attention to grooming was to be filled with female concerns), were all used as a measure of his masculinity, not just his actions in private and public life. The physical body was very much used as a space upon which expectations for manliness and masculine behaviour was performed.³²

All these behaviours and ideas about Roman masculinity primarily centred around power and control: sexual and political power over the other, both female and slave, as well as control over the self and the maintenance of one's own bodily autonomy and assertion of social independence and agency (B. E. Wilson 74) – if indeed one might achieve true agency in any society that dictates and institutionally socialises acceptable standards of behaviour. This expectation for control and power was a fundamental aspect of manliness. As we saw in Chapter 1 in the case of the ancient Germans, the use of extreme or excessive violence, as well as untempered rage and violent behaviour, was deemed barbaric and masculine. Due to the lack of control, however, this behaviour was not a representation of ideal manliness. The requirement for control as a formation of true manliness was also present in domestic settings, in which the father wielded ultimate authority over his family and household slaves (*paterfamilias*),³³ as well as in public life, where elite Roman males were expected to participate in Roman political life and their success and rank were intrinsic to their public identity and subsequently their performance of masculinity (B. E. Wilson 61-62). Similarly, the military power and courage expected of the Roman elite during the early empire and the associated violence, so long as it was not excessive, was central to Roman constructions of ideal masculinity (63). As such, self-control and the avoidance of excess was an essential aspect of Roman manliness. This was expected both with regards to the assurance and maintenance of bodily autonomy as well as the avoidance of displays of emotion. Such

³² See Judith Butler's seminal discussion on gender performativity in *Gender Trouble*, particularly regarding the notion of the body acting as a space upon which cultural notions of gender are inscribed (175-176), and where gender is the performance of an internal and fabricated reality that is 'the effect and function of a decidedly public and social discourse' in order to 'create the illusion of an interior and organizing gender core' (185-6).

³³ The *paterfamilias* was the oldest living male member of a family in the agnatic line. He wielded the power over every member of his family – including his wife; his sons and their wives and children; their unmarried daughters; and his slaves. The consent of the *paterfamilias* was needed for marriage and divorce, and similarly he could force divorce on those he had power over. He could also sell the members of his family into slavery. Once he died, his sons would go on to become the *paterfamilias* of their own families (McDonnell 173). This system of Roman order was patriarchy at its essence.

displays, it was generally thought, were the domain of women. Thus, to be manly in the Greco-Roman period was to be largely stoic, and endurance of fate, misfortune, or even pain to the point of death without succumbing to an emotional response was expected. These traits were considered to be a clear display of a noble character and reaffirmed one's masculinity (B. E. Wilson 66-67).

The result of this emphasis on masculine behaviour was the subordination, and in many cases the cultural despising, of the feminine. For a male to act in a feminine way was to be deeply dishonourable and deviant. The natural outflow of this state of social composition is the establishment of women as an inferior class of personhood. Despite there being instances of a woman's virtue being praised, their social status was one of inequality. While Roman women were able to appear and act in public, suggesting a greater degree of parity with men than other ancient societies, the feminine qualities that were typically the source of their admiration and social acceptability – modesty, fertility, and domesticity – are typified by silence and submission to the masculine. Thus their ability to become virtuous as women was dependent upon their adherence to behaviours that created and relied upon inequality (Bell 18).

The primacy of the masculine within Roman society is best seen by its apparent divorce from the representation of their barbarian counterparts. As we saw in Chapter 1, a key aspect for constructing the barbarians of the Persian and Eastern civilisations (Egypt and Persia) was through the association of those cultures with (by Roman standards) feminine qualities: A cultural emphasis on style and richness of dress, their style of walking, and their method of fighting through trickery rather than direct combat all suggested a complete antithesis to Roman ideas of *virtus* and thus appropriate expressions of masculinity. It is important to note here that it is unlikely that the Persians as described by Ammianus Marcellinus perceived themselves as being in opposition to the masculine norm within their own context, however according to Roman hegemonic masculinity they appeared as non-compliant. It was this non-compliance that formed a key aspect of their characterisation as barbarians to the Roman mind, and it is the Roman culture from which we have many of our written sources and cultural heritage. As such for the Romans, to feminise an 'other' was to 'barbarise' that other – establishing it as culturally and morally inferior and it is this paradigm that has been culturally transmitted through Western thought and infused into our modern discourse and context surrounding gender relations.

Despite advancements made by the feminist movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, denoting a cultural change in Western attitudes towards women and femininity, hegemonic masculinity in the modern era and particularly the patriarchal discourses that surround its construction, is still predicated on a hierarchical relationship with the feminine other. As such, the power dynamic and relationship between femininity and masculinity appears on a continuum of attitudes present from antiquity. For example, one of the ways that popular media in Western culture undermines a man's legitimacy is by implying an association with the feminine, and a subsequent failure to conform to the values of hegemonic masculinity. Allan Johnson argues that we insult males by associating their identity with the feminine – 'sissy (sister), girl, son of a bitch, mama's boy.' He goes on to note that the opposite is not true for women. Grievous insults to women in modern Western patriarchal discourse are not delivered by associating them with men or implying a lack of femininity. Rather, 'the worst way to insult a woman [... is] to *still* call her a woman but by names that highlight or malign femaleness itself – bitch, whore, pussy, cunt' (Johnson 64). This structuring of language places femaleness as a state of being as inherently inferior to maleness. That the worst insults in the English language are closely connected with femininity, femaleness, or female genitalia elevates masculinity over femininity and further maligns the very act of being or identifying as female. As such our contemporary language and discourse is still very much organised around patriarchal power structures that presuppose the primacy of the masculine and the subordination, distrust and devaluing of the feminine. Thus, as in Roman discourse, if we feminise an other, we seek to barbarise them (that is, establish them as an inferior and separate, ineffable 'other').

While some qualities from the Roman era have become obsolete in the construction of hegemonic masculinity, such as the requirement for military participation and courage, as well as wielding political influence and performing political service in public office, there are some characteristics that have remained associated with modern hegemonic masculinity in the Western world. These characteristics have been particularly influential in constructions of masculinity in popular culture and children's fiction. For example, macho men and the "bronzed Aussie" still appear in advertisements to sell the promise of strength, athleticism, and dominance in breakfast cereals (McCallum and Stephens 343), and children's fiction has typically privileged characteristics ascribed to traditional schemas of masculinity: physical strength and toughness, independence, being active,

aggressive, violent, unemotional, competitive, powerful, commanding, and rational (Pennell 56; Stephens "Gender, Genre, and Children's Literature" 18-19). Indeed Nodelman comments that violence is presented as part of the schema of masculinity such that it appears as though 'aggressive or antisocial behaviour is an inherent and unchangeable aspect of maleness': that 'boys will be boys' (Nodelman "Making Boys Appear" 2). These characteristics share a commonality with the expected performance of Roman masculinity within the paradigm of barbarism, however it is important to note that in response to the feminist movements of the later 20th century much of the literature written for children is increasingly seeking to reconfigure and redefine this masculinity in an age where traditional schemas of masculinity are increasingly understood to be 'socially and personal destructive' (McCallum and Stephens 344).

These efforts to reconfigure schemas of masculinity, however, often fail to challenge the patriarchal societal organisation that privileges masculinity over femininity. Rather, when a particular cultural hegemonic masculinity is challenged, what typically occurs is that the particular masculinity that has claim to social authority and legitimacy is substituted for another (Connell 77-78). This is seen in the introduction of and preference for new types of masculinity in children's literature such as the SNAG (Sensitive New Age Guy), while more toxic forms of masculinity, those based in rage and uncontrolled violence are more frequently being denounced (McCallum and Stephens 344; 59). As such, hegemonic masculinity is not a constant, and the features that combine to present this idealised masculinity change with the society in which they are created. Pennell argues that for masculinity to be truly redeemed through literature, the masculine subjects of the narrative must be shown as being capable of forming intersubjective relationships with women and girls that 'are not premised either implicitly or explicitly upon unequal relations of power' (Pennell 56). Furthermore, the experience and performance of masculinity must be 'pluralized' in order to better reflect the everyday experience of readers with no one performance or experience being represented as the only way to express a masculine identity. Meanwhile, qualities traditionally associated with the schema of femininity 'must be redeemed as valued qualities to be displayed by all members of society in the appropriate contexts' rather than represented as undesirable and abject when present in masculine subjects (Pennell 67). There are many texts for young adults that succeed in this effort, for example *The Chronicles of Lumatere* as discussed in this chapter, however in many cases of modern children's literature, audiences are frequently

presented with a discourse around masculinity that clearly preferences one performance over others and, in particular, over qualities associated with the feminine.

This cultural preference for the masculine over the feminine is an important foundation of the discourse of barbarism, and still operates much as it did through the Roman period. Given its antiquity, the discourse of barbarism is highly conservative in nature and thus ascribes to a more traditional model of a hierarchical relationship between masculinity and femininity. In many cases, the construction of a barbaric other relies upon the subordination and devaluation of the feminine as well as complex ideas of masculinity and in particular the notion of 'true' maleness or being a 'real man'. For the Romans, the barbarity of a people group was directly tied to the apparent effeminacy practiced by their culture; or alternatively the lack of control typically exercised by a people group over their physicality, discipline, and use of violence – both key components of Roman understandings of true manliness or masculinity. As such, control of women and avoiding the feminine aspects of one's personality features prominently in the ideology of barbarism alongside a focus on the attributes associated with 'maleness', whatever form that may take within a given context. This effort to appear manly is often accompanied by a sense of competition and, consequently, a fear of emotional vulnerability. The result of this process is the subordination of the feminine and, in many cases, the manifestation of misogyny. Johnson argues:

[...] the patriarchal expectation that "real men" are autonomous and independent sets men up to both want and resent women at the same time [...] Under patriarchy, women are viewed as trustees of all that makes a rich emotional life possible – of empathy and sympathy, vulnerability and openness to connection, caring and nurturing, sensitivity and compassion, emotional attention and expressiveness – all of which tend to be driven out of men's lives by the cycle of control and fear (Johnson 65).

Thus the paradigm of barbarism is both inherently patriarchal and inherently misogynistic. It relies on deeper cultural assumptions of the supremacy of the traits traditionally associated with schemas of masculinity: feminine qualities and femininity itself are devalued in favour of a general consensus of 'manliness'. This attitude is then used in the process of barbarisation, which occurs when an other is associated with the feminine alongside the simultaneous rejection and avoidance of this same association for the self. When this paradigm is applied to the character of an entire people group or culture, that

people group is resultantly characterised as entirely other and their culture inherently inferior. As such to undermine the masculinity of a person or culture is to barbarise that person or culture, which in turn serves to affirm notions of hegemonic masculinity and its hierarchical relationship with femininity. It is therefore essential that we understand how this aspect of the discourse of barbarism operates in young adult fiction considering the socialising function of that fiction.

Barbarism, Violence, and Masculinity in Young Adult Fantasy

The presence of violence and war is a key aspect of the configuration of hegemonic masculinity and thus in the paradigm of barbarism. This is reflected particularly in young adult fantasy texts, where violence is an ever present expectation for the performance of masculinity. What is pertinent when examining these texts is not so much that violence generally is encouraged, but rather violence in the *right circumstances* is encouraged for the upholding of a character's sense of masculinity, civility, and value. Alternatively, using it in the wrong circumstances is a signification of barbarism. This construction can manifest at a societal level, through the representation of certain wars or battles as either justified or baseless and unnecessary, or at an individual level where violent outbursts are represented as rash and uncontrolled, or alternatively imperative to the defence of one's honour or the protection of those around him. Thus the question of discipline in relation to violence is still very much connected with ideas of manliness and thus to the discourse of barbarism.

Marchetta's *Froi of the Exiles* (2011) deals with this construction of violence, its relationship to discipline, and its effect on the experience and performance of masculinity. This is explored particularly through the characterisation of Froi as he develops his sense of self throughout the text. Froi's relationship with violence is represented in the text as having a direct correlation with how he is treated by other characters as well as his development towards 'manhood'. He reflects early in the text:

It was the rule to count to ten if he wanted to smash a man in the face for saying something he didn't like. It was the rule to count to ten if instinct wasn't needed, but common sense was. It was part of his bond to Trevanion and Perri and the Queen's Guard. Froi did a lot of counting (Marchetta *Froi of the Exiles* 6).

This reflection is revealing of the way the characters around Froi perceive him, as well as his own sense of belonging. Froi is consistently infantilised by the captain of the guard Trevanion, the second in command Perri, and the prince consort, who is also Froi's closest friend, Finnikin. Although evidently fond of him, the men around Froi still see him as a child precisely because of his lack of self-control and his use of impulsive violence. This infantilisation deprives him of the ability to develop a sense of agency or self-determination. Perri tells Froi that he has "a warrior's instinct and the skill of a marksman [... and is] wasted as a farm boy" (7), outlining an expectation for Froi's future and relationship with violence with little reference to Froi's own thoughts or desires. This comment also demonstrates a cultural association of violence with masculinity. While Froi's current use of violence is too emotional and uncontrolled (11), his aptitude for violence is a talent he must not waste on a farm, the latter of which is implied to be a lesser or inferior occupation for a man. In Perri's mind, Froi should be prepared to use violence but only in what is considered the "right way": that is, with military discipline and emotional detachment. Until he joins the guard and learns this discipline, he is still deemed a boy, decisions are made for him, and as such he is on an inferior footing to the other men around him. Froi is thus established as a 'little savage' due to his violent lack of self-control, and this barbaric nature is implicitly connected to his ability, or lack thereof, to express true manliness.

This attitude towards uncontrolled violence, or rather unpredictable violence, and its function within the discourse of barbarism is also reflected in Morgan's *The 100* series. What is important about the construction of violence within this series is that, while casting uncontrolled and unpredictable violence as barbaric and basing that barbarism in fear, the use of systemic and uncompromising violence is similarly maligned as barbaric. This latter form of violence, however, is more associated with rigid class structures and societal hierarchies rather than constructions of masculinity. The barbarism of uncontrolled violence and its connection to expressions of masculinity is seen primarily through the character of Graham, and on occasion through Bellamy and Wells.

Graham is cast as barbaric primarily through his antagonism towards Bellamy, a lower class orphan from Walden, and Wells, the former chancellor's son. The three boys are consistently drawn into competition for dominance over the 100 throughout the series. During the first of these incidents, Graham attempts to gain control over the supply of weapons at the 100's disposal. Bellamy, however, argues for the need to use the tools in

hunting and providing food for the camp. Graham's response is to directly associate this need to hunt with Bellamy's sexuality (and by extension masculinity):

Graham snorted. "And what exactly did you hunt back on Walden except for girls with low standards and even lower self-esteem? [...] Or maybe you don't even have to chase after them." Graham continued. "I suppose that's the benefit to having a sister."

With a sickening crunch, Bellamy's fist sank into Graham's jaw. Graham staggered back a few steps, too stunned to raise his arms before Bellamy landed another punch. Then he righted himself and struck Bellamy with a powerful, well-aimed shot to the chin [...] Graham had him pinned to the ground and was holding something just above his face, something that glinted in the sun. A knife.

"That's *enough*," Wells shouted. He grabbed Graham by the collar and flung him off Bellamy [...]

"What the hell?" Graham bellowed [...] "Just because the Chancellor used to tuck you into bed doesn't mean you're automatically in charge," Graham spat. "I don't care what Daddy told you before we left."

"I have no interest in being in *charge*. I just want to make sure we don't *die*."

[...] Bellamy exhaled [...] He didn't need to get pulled into a pissing contest, not when there was food to find (Morgan *The 100* 111-13).

This scene is representative of a number of different ways in which masculinity operates through the paradigm of barbarism. Graham is portrayed as a predator, a particularly dangerous entity that is unpredictable, ready to both start fights and to also escalate them. Although Bellamy was the first to throw a punch, this is represented as ill-advised while perhaps understandable. Graham, however, escalates the fist fight into attempted murder with a knife, transforming the violence from rash but understandable into excessive and deadly. Furthermore, Graham directly connects the concept of hunting with success in romantic relationships – he implies that the only girls who would be interested in Bellamy would be either those of 'low quality' because of a lack of standards, or his sister to whom he has easy access. He lowers women to the status of prey, while men are at different levels of predator and in competition with each other over this prey. His lack of control and predatory attitude is used as a signifier of Graham's barbarity to the audience, but his comments are also reflective of how the discourse is used by people within society. Graham constructs women as inferior and consumable, while actively attempting to emasculate both Bellamy and Wells by implying a lack of macho superiority. That the text constructs

this way of thinking as itself barbaric encourages the audience to reassess their own concept of acceptable expressions of masculinity.

Bellamy and Wells operate as contrasts to this construction of barbaric masculinity. Bellamy lacks control of his anger and emotions yet appears to have some level of rationality when it comes to his survival, and by extension the survival of those in the camp. Even so, he is quick to violent actions, particularly when he is insulted or his masculinity is questioned. Wells, however, sees the sense in order and regards the fight between Bellamy and Graham as nonsensical and chaotic. As such, Wells' character functions to emphasise self-control in the face of this chaos, embodying a civilised masculinity. Wells dismisses Graham's violence and escalation as idiotic and thus establishes Graham as both antagonist and barbarian. Graham's barbarity is grounded in the fear of unpredictable behaviour, a lack of reason, and emotional violence. That this display is associated with a sense of masculinity – or rather a masculinity that demands competition and dominance – is finally summarised by Bellamy's dismissal of and exit from the situation: "He didn't need to get pulled into a pissing contest, not when there was food to find" (113). True masculinity here is associated with reason and above all practicality. Ironically, despite his initiation of violence, Bellamy's dismissal of Wells and Graham's argument as a "pissing contest" suggests that such masculine competition for dominance is inherently foolish, particularly in the face of hardship and potential starvation. Again, here we see a strange duality in the representation of violence. Wells only uses his physicality to intervene in fights when necessary, and he is represented as an example of positive masculinity as a result. Bellamy's ability to hunt is considered as a "good" use of violence, for the betterment of the camp, however his tendency toward sudden outbursts problematizes his masculinity and thus his level of civility, as it is irrational and unpredictable. Graham's violence on the other hand is destructive, used in an attempt to prove his masculine dominance, as it often occurs within the context of his toxic objectification of women as primarily sexual tools, and resultantly infects those around him and brings about social disorder. It is not violence itself that is the problem, rather how and when it is used that creates the barbarian. In doing so, the text argues heavily against the performance of a toxic and aggressive masculinity and instead promotes a more reasoned and restrained masculinity. As a result, *The 100* series affirms the operation of masculinity within the paradigm of barbarism, which holds rationality and reasonable use of physical strength as superior, while emotionality and aggression are conversely discouraged. Social order and cohesion, the text argues, is found in the appropriate expression of masculinity

and the avoidance of allowing emotional decision making. The consequence of this attitude towards masculinity and the reification of the barbaric paradigm is the implicit subordination of more traditionally feminine characteristics, thus preferencing a gendered masculinity, which though adjusted from the ancient manifestation of the barbaric paradigm, remains clearly non-feminine in its codification.

The Hunger Games, a series in which teenagers of the country Panem are forced to compete against each other in gladiatorial battles to the death, similarly connects violence and masculinity and associates this idea with the personhood or value of a person within society. Violence is integral to the experience of adolescence within the novel, and as such it is fundamental to the way in which the focalising character Katniss interprets and engages with her world. Unlike *The 100* and the *Chronicles of Lumatere*, *The Hunger Games* does not focus on uncontrolled violence as an extension of toxic masculinity and the preference for self-control and order; rather it initially casts physical strength and the ability to act violently as essential to the expression of masculinity and, furthermore, to the valuation of a person. This being said, it is important to note that the *systemic violence* as an extension of the class structure is unequivocally criticised throughout the series, and connected to the excesses of the upper class.

The Hunger Games is told through the first person present tense perspective of Katniss Everdeen. As such, her personal interpretation of characters governs their representation to the audience as well as guides the ideologies at work within the text through which we gain an understanding of those characters. Throughout the trilogy, her contempt for femininity and her preference for traditionally masculine behaviour are exhibited through her changing attitudes towards Peeta, a fellow contestant in the Games, and her childhood friend Gale. In the first novel, Gale is established as her confidant and a person she can trust: 'the only person with whom [she] can be [herself]' (Collins *The Hunger Games* 7). She reflects that:

[...] if he wants kids, Gale won't have any trouble finding a wife. He's good-looking, he's strong enough to handle the work in the mines, and he can hunt. You can tell by the way the girls whisper about him when he walks by in school that they want him. It makes me jealous, but not for the reason people would think. Good hunting partners are hard to find (HG 12).

For Katniss Gale is already a man. It is precisely his ability with a bow, his physical abilities and willingness to commit violence, that deem him both valuable and masculine in Katniss' estimation. He is capable of taking care of himself and those around him, having been 'either helping or single-handedly feeding a family of five for seven years' by the age of eighteen (16). His relationship to violence and the resulting estimation of his value to Katniss is revealed particularly through the following exchange:

"Katniss, it's just hunting. You're the best hunter I know," says Gale

"It's not just hunting. They're armed. They think," I say

"So do you. And you've had more practice. Real practice," he says. "You know how to kill."

"Not people," I say

"How different can it be, really?" says Gale grimly.

The awful thing is that if I can forget they're people, it will be no different at all (*HG* 48).

Gale is valued by Katniss, at least at the outset of the novel, for his ability to disassociate his emotions from the act of committing violence, his ability to hunt and his ability to focus on survival. He is able to reduce people to prey, for the sake of his own survival, and approach the problem of forced participation in the Games with a sense of dispassionate practicality. However, although he is able to easily comprehend the idea of killing someone out of necessity it is only out of necessity that he would do so. He does not revel in the idea of violence and killing, nor does he make a game of it, unlike the Capitol and those from wealthier districts. As such, the masculinity embodied by Gale is represented favourably through the text – that is, having a willingness to use violence while not enjoying it. The children in the other districts however, who see violence as a game, are by contrast represented as lacking in maturity and thus uncivilised and barbaric. This is emphasised through Katniss' first encounter with the Career tributes:

[They] project arrogance and brutality [...] they go for the deadliest-looking weapons in the gym and handle them with ease [...] I look around at the Career Tributes, who are showing off, clearly trying to intimidate the field. Then at the others, the underfed, the incompetent, shakily having their first lessons with a knife or an axe (*HG* 116).

Despite evidently sharing with Gale an attitude of practicality and accepting the necessity to kill for survival, her disgust at the love of violence and the treatment of the weak and vulnerable as prey is clear. It is the capacity for violence, rather than a love for and excess of it that in her mind deems a person as valuable and representative of a truly respectable masculinity.

At the other end of the spectrum from Gale is Peeta, dismissed initially by Katniss not for a love of violence but rather an unwillingness to participate in it. She does not initially see him as a threat or even as an equal despite his higher socio-economic class. The first description of Peeta the audience receives feminises him, and then describes him as prey:

Medium height, stocky build, ashy blond hair that falls in waves over his forehead. The shock of the moment is registering on his face, you can see his struggle to remain emotionless, but his blue eyes show the alarm I've seen so often in prey. Yet he climbs steadily on to the stage and takes his place [...]

Why him? I think. Then I try to convince myself it doesn't matter. Peeta Mellark and I are not friends. Not even neighbours. We don't speak. Our only real interaction happened years ago (HG 31).

Although he clearly possesses physical strength, a fact that is reinforced later in the narrative (HG 49, 109-110), this initial description lowers him to the status of a frightened and innocent child. One that Katniss feels conflicted about the idea of killing, precisely because she considers him to be at a disadvantage to her in measures of resolve and ability to kill and commit violence. To her, his kindness is a weakness and thus her focalisation tends to infantilise him. After remembering the first time she ever interacted with Peeta, in which he saved her and her family from starvation by throwing away a couple of loaves of bread resulting in his own punishment, Katniss' narration comments that:

I feel like I owe him something, and I hate owing people. Maybe if I had thanked him at some point, I'd be feeling less conflicted now. I thought about it a couple of times, but the opportunity never seemed to present itself. And now it never will [...] Exactly how am I supposed to work in a thank-you in [the arena]? Somehow it just won't seem sincere if I'm trying to slit his throat (HG 39).

Although she feels a certain affinity towards Peeta for his kindness to her in that moment, he does not represent the steady and safe masculinity of Gale. In her world, where children are sent into arenas to fight each other to the death every year, she cannot afford to value the type of masculinity that Peeta represents, at least not at this point in the text. The resultant attitude towards him is dismissal. There is no doubt in her mind that Peeta would almost definitely die in the arena, and that if the two of them were in a situation that necessitated them killing each other she would be the one more likely to win even if just through sheer will to survive. Even Peeta's mother, when she comes to say goodbye to her son before he is shipped off to the games, rates Katniss' likelihood of survival over Peeta's citing her specifically as a 'survivor' (*HG* 110). The implication of this comment is that Katniss is hardened to the world, aware of its reality, and is able to do what is necessary. Peeta is not. As such he is dismissed, underestimated, and largely devalued by the society around him precisely because he appears to be unwilling to engage in violence, which has become ingrained into the fabric of Panem society. This is not to say he refuses to kill – he states that he's 'sure [he'll] kill just like everybody else. [He] can't go down without a fight' (*HG* 172) – but he emphasises that he does not want to be turned into a monster by it, another violent spectacle acting purely for the Capitol's entertainment. He considers the violence typically committed by the tributes as monstrous, and furthermore does not want to engage with the monstrosity of violence and the violent system into which he was born and lives. Thus Peeta represents a counter-cultural ideology and a queering of the traditional construction of hegemonic masculinity. He vocalises his hatred of the system and indicates the psychological effect that violence has on a person and their construction of self. As such, the text queers Peeta's performance of gender, offering an alternative to traditional heteronormative models of masculinity, one that regards violence with distaste and connects this violence with a loss of personhood, and thus subverts normative distinctions between male and female.

The type of masculinity embodied by Peeta is represented at the outset of the series as incompatible with the world in which Katniss lives and, as such, creates the person who performs it as a weaker and less valued individual because of this masculinity – in her own mind and the mind of her society. While present at the outset, however, this dismissive view of a softer and more counter-cultural, queered masculinity is by no means maintained through to the completion of the series and this shift is hinted at to the reader despite Katniss' narration. Rather, it is questioned and undermined by the consistent comparison between Peeta and Gale throughout the trilogy as Katniss is forced to reassess the state of

her world and its social and societal needs. In doing so, the text gradually subverts the construction of masculinity within the barbaric paradigm. In particular, the text suggests the need for a more gentle and positive masculinity that values the feminine, embodied by Peeta, in order to overcome the more destructive and dystopian features of society. Peeta, to both Katniss and to the text, is a 'dandelion in the spring' (Collins *Mockingjay* 453): he embodies a masculinity that is representative of hope and potential, and which is needed to build a better world.

What is clear from the initial introduction of the society of *The Hunger Games* is that it plays on the notion of masculinity and violence. Similar to the construction of barbarism in the Roman era and in other texts, it suggests that it is the attitude towards violence that creates the 'real man' or the barbarian rather than just the presence of or ability to commit violence. Most, if not all of the individual violence in the text is necessary for survival within the circumstances. As such the text is primarily interested in how an individual responds emotionally to that necessity, and by extension to their world which is suffused with violence. Through the perspective of Katniss it questions the capability of people, men in particular, who have an aversion towards it, presents them as effeminate prey, and suggests that these people are alive on borrowed time by the goodwill of those around them. Those who actively enjoy violence are conversely represented as sadistic predators and resultantly barbaric. Civility and 'real masculinity' is found in capable and dispassionate violence, both ready and willing to undertake it while avoiding, or refusing to revel in, the prolonging of suffering. This construction of masculinity encourages the young adult audience of the series to consider how a society values people. For the society in *The Hunger Games* the capability for violence is essential to survival and thus to the individual value of a person within that society. Those unable to fight are consequently undervalued as a result of their apparent non-conformity to a more brutal hegemonic masculinity, and as such, through the discourse of barbarism, deemed inferior and disposable.

A similar attitude towards violence is found in Pierce's *Battle Magic* (2013). *Battle Magic*, however, differs slightly from the other texts in its representation of the relationship between masculinity and violence. Where *The 100*, *The Chronicles of Lumatere*, and *The Hunger Games* appear to insist upon the capacity for violence as being essential to the expression of masculinity, *Battle Magic* seeks to reconfigure violence and masculinity through one of the main focalising characters Briar. Throughout the text, Briar's relationship to violence is considerably 'un-masculine' by traditional standards. Rather

than fighting in direct melee combat, as would typically be expected from 'true' masculinity within the barbaric paradigm, Briar often avoids direct combat in his violence, actively taking on a healing role with his magic (Pierce, *Battle Magic*, 280-281, 323, 336) or alternatively using the titular battle magic, which is a form of ranged fighting in his case (158-159, 320, 386). More than this, however, is that his magic is plant based – which is unusual considering the conventional association between flowers and the feminine. In one particular battle, he eschews the opportunity to ride out and take prisoners, choosing instead to remain behind his own allies and defeat enemy mages by reaching out through his magic in order to instantly sprout trees that engulf his enemies (268). Despite the horrific notion of being enveloped by a tree, Briar's magic is a strange combination of violence which is perpetuated through the act of creation and life. When he does ride into battle, he comes back wounded (338-339), and he is generally uninterested in talking of warfare. During one particular night upon reaching a stop in their march, Rosethorn, his mentor, leaves to discuss magic with one of the priests. Briar, on the other hand, is left with their companions who 'began to talk about fighting they had done before. Briar listened until he got so bored that he decided to go for a walk' (229). It is not just that he fights when necessary with indirect and ranged attacks; speaking and reminiscing about battles and violence actively bores him. He has no interest in violence outside of defending himself and those he cares about, using it only when necessary. Here we see a distinctly different and non-traditional construction of masculinity, more in line with that of Peeta's in *The Hunger Games* – however unlike *The Hunger Games* there is never any doubt that this is the preferred and most 'civil' expression of masculinity as it relates to the use of violence. Again, however, we find the familiar duality present in the other texts as well as in Roman notions of barbarism and violence – it is not that violence is used, but rather *how* it is used that separates the civil and the masculine from the barbarian.

The connection between masculinity and violence has an important role in the discourse of barbarism. Considerations of masculinity are inalienable from constructions of the barbaric, and as shown through the modern fantasy texts discussed, considerations of violence and physical prowess are similarly inalienable from constructions of masculinity. In both ancient and modern uses of the discourse of barbarism, what is key to determining the relative barbarity of a person or people group is not so much the capacity for violence, but rather the level of self-control, restraint, or the attitude exhibited towards violent actions. In both ancient and contemporary cases, the capability for violence is inherently connected with notions of masculinity and ability – it is the circumstances in which

violence is used that, in many texts, determines whether masculinity is being performed 'properly' and therefore whether an individual or people are represented as barbaric. As such there is a close relationship between the paradigm of barbarism and cultural constructions of masculine subjectivity.

The Barbarism of Femininity in Young Adult Fantasy

The natural companion to understanding how masculinity operates in the discourse of barbarism is a consideration for how the feminine – or specifically effeminacy, that is exhibiting certain behaviours traditionally coded as feminine – is treated within the texts by the characters as a method of characterisation. Here we find much more troubling constructions of the barbaric and, consequently, reflections of patriarchal ideologies surrounding the primacy of masculinity and 'masculine' qualities. What is notable here is that within our modern discourse, to feminise is still to barbarise – to create an other as inherently 'lesser'. Many modern fantasy texts follow this tradition, however as they were written within a socio-cultural context deeply affected by the feminist movements of the later 20th Century, as well as the LGBTQ+ movements of various kinds throughout the latter decades of the 20th Century and early 21st Century, some also seek to examine, dismantle, and subvert those patriarchal assumptions and associations between femininity and barbarism through a queering and problematising of traditional gender binaries and identities³⁴. Indeed, in recent decades the development of queer theory has resulted in a questioning of the notion of 'essentialist' gender performance. Butler argues in *Gender Trouble* that to assume gender as essentially binary 'implicitly retains the belief in a mimetic relation of gender to sex', however this stands in contradiction to the socially constructed nature of gender, which figures gender as independent from sex and thus becomes 'a free-floating artifice, with the consequence that *man* and *masculine* might just as easily signify a female body as a male one, and *woman* and *feminine* a male body as easily as a female one' (Butler *Gender Trouble* 9. Italics in original). Despite the acknowledgement within queer theory that gender is fluid rather than binary, adolescent fiction generally fails to represent this advancement in gender theory, though it has made some progress. Trites argues that although preadolescent and adolescent fiction has improved in the representation of queered identities in the twenty-first century, it still 'has a way to go

³⁴ Pugh argues that 'queerness' in children's literature should be interpreted 'not as a synonym for *homosexuality* but as a descriptor of disruptions to prevailing cultural codes of sexual and gender normativity' (6). See Tison Pugh, "Introduction: Innocence, Heterosexuality, and the Queerness of Children's Literature".

before gender identity, orientation, and sexuality are routinely treated in ways that complicate and debinarize the millennia-old patterns that continually reinterpellate patriarchal relationship structures' (Trites "Queering Romance, Sexuality, Gender Identity, and Motherhood" 155). In other words, often fictions that seek to destabilise gendered binarism and heteronormativity inadvertently reinforce those same ideological assumptions whether through a 'butch/femme' homosexual relationship (131); bisexual characters abandoning queer protagonists for a heteronormative relationship (137); or the representation of 'queerness' as embracing particular gendered behaviour despite biological sex, as though particular roles are in some way essential and stable constructs against which queer characters might define themselves (Tomboys, women liking 'guy stuff', women hunting, male characters embracing emotionality etc) (140-142). Considering the centrality of patriarchal power structures and gender relationships inherent within the discourse of barbarism, it is important to understand how modern young adult fiction (particularly fantasy fiction) constructs gender and represents the relationship between male/female and masculinity/femininity and how it subverts (or reinforces) traditional gendered binarism and the implicit value it places on particular gendered behaviour.

The configuration of femininity as barbaric, placing it in an oppositional hierarchical relationship with masculinity, is particularly present at the outset of *The Hunger Games* and exhibited most clearly through the character of Katniss and her contempt for what she refers to as "weakness". This weakness, however, is usually emotional vulnerability, a trait traditionally coded as feminine. When she takes her sister Prim's place in the reaping at the beginning of the series, Prim begins 'screaming hysterically', causing Katniss to tell her 'harshly' to let go: 'because this is upsetting me and I don't want to cry. When they televise the replay of the reapings tonight, everyone will make note of my tears, and I'll be marked as an easy target. A weakling' (HG 27-28). She has an intense fear of appearing to give in to emotional vulnerability and associates it with inherent weakness. Thus the avoidance of it is preferable for cultivating strength of character but is also, in her mind, necessary for survival. This fear of appearing weak, and the assumption that avoiding displays of emotion (excluding anger or irritability – both male codified emotions) is necessary for survival and self-sufficiency manifests itself in an attitude of intolerance and dismissal towards those around her who do appear to display their emotions. This is seen particularly in her relationship with her mother as well as her attitude and reaction towards Peeta.

Katniss' relationship with her mother is a complicated one, particularly since the death of her father. It is clear from the text that Katniss' mother sank into a deep depression at the loss of her husband, however Katniss is not only unsympathetic towards this loss, she despises her mother for her response to it. This is partly understandable, as her mother failed to provide for her daughters following the death of their father. Katniss reflects that:

She didn't do anything but sit propped up in a chair or, more often, huddled under the blankets on her bed, eyes fixed on some point in the distance [...] I was terrified. I suppose now that my mother was locked in some dark world of sadness, but at the time, all I knew was that I had lost not only a father, but a mother as well. At eleven years old, with Prim just seven, I took over as head of the family (*HG* 32).

Her mother's symptoms here are consistent with a deep depression; however Katniss only cares about her mother's weakness in giving in to the emotions and the loss of their father, and the resultant suffering and loss of childhood Katniss herself experienced. When leaving for the Games, she shouts at her mother and tells her she cannot disappear again, out of fear for Prim. Her mother responds that she was ill and, if she was as well-resourced as she is now, she might have been able to treat herself and bring herself out of her situation. Katniss' only thought in response is 'That part about her being ill might be true. I've seen her bring back people suffering from immobilizing sadness since. Perhaps it is a sickness, but it's one we can't afford' (*HG* 43). While not entirely dismissing her mother's explanation of her condition, her narration nevertheless expresses just how intolerable Katniss finds emotional vulnerability. Sadness and depression, to Katniss, is a weakness that cannot exist within a world that habitually oppresses its people and murders its children. Katniss later reflects that:

some small gnarled place inside me hated her for her weakness, for her neglect, for the months she had put us through. Prim forgave her, but I had taken a step back from my mother, put up a wall to protect myself from needing her, and nothing was the same between us again (*HG* 64).

Emotional vulnerability, which is traditionally codified as feminine, is hated and 'weak', and avoiding it is essential to self-sufficiency and survival in Katniss' harsh and violent world.

Katniss also views Peeta with contempt due to his non-conformity to traditionally masculine behaviour although she does not necessarily hate him. Rather, similar to her mother, she associates and consistently characterises him through her narrative voice as 'weak' and someone who will be picked apart by their society and the Games. Once again, our first introduction to his character casts him as 'prey', if only because of the emotion he is actively portraying through his eyes (*HG* 31). Furthermore, following his display of kindness towards her, she comments that she associates him with 'hope, and the dandelion that reminded me I was not doomed' (*HG* 39). In her own mind, Peeta is associated with spring, and with a wildflower – both typically associated with the feminine – because of his display of kindness, which is again more typically connected with the feminine. While a symbol of hope, at this point in the text Peeta's softer masculinity seems incompatible with her world, and one that Katniss cannot afford to value. It is clear that Katniss appreciates how Peeta was able to help her through her own troubles; however she also sees his softer, effeminate masculinity as a weakness. As they both leave to embark on the train to the Capitol, she notes that:

I've been right not to cry. The station is swarming with reporters with their insectlike cameras trained directly on my face [...] Peeta Mellark, on the other hand, has obviously been crying, and interestingly enough, does not seem to be trying to cover it up. I immediately wonder if this will be his strategy in the Games. To appear weak and frightened, to reassure the other tributes that he is no competition at all, and then come out fighting. This worked very well for a girl, Joanna Mason, from District 7 a few years back. She seemed like such a snivelling, cowardly fool that no one bothered about her until there were only a handful of contestants left. It turned out she could kill viciously [...] But this seems an odd strategy for Peeta Mellark because he's a baker's son. All those years of having enough to eat and hauling bread trays around have made him broad-shouldered and strong. It will take an awful lot of weeping to convince anyone to overlook him (*HG* 49-50).

It is significant here that Katniss connects outward displays of emotion with 'weakness', and further connects this association with femininity. She notes that a strategy of emotional vulnerability worked for Joanna, primarily because it was believable for a girl to appear a 'snivelling, cowardly fool'. Peeta's physique and gender, on the other hand, seems completely incompatible with his behaviour in Katniss' estimation. How would anyone believe he was truly afraid of entering into an arena death match? To Katniss, he *looks*

strong and 'manly', however his crying seems completely incompatible with that identity and she directly associates it with a previous tribute Joanna who used deceit and femininity to win. That she wonders immediately if it is a part of his game speaks volumes to her understanding and expectations of masculine behaviour. Peeta's emotional vulnerability is very much non-compliant with this conception. It is only when Peeta and Katniss argue with their mentor Haymitch on the train, during which Peeta actually uses violence in order to force Haymitch to train them (*HG* 68-73), that she begins to consider him a decent contender in the games. She comments that: 'He hasn't accepted death. He is already fighting hard to stay alive. Which also means that kind Peeta Mellark, the boy who gave me the bread, is fighting hard to kill me' (*HG* 73). The implication of this comment is that Katniss had assumed Peeta to have already given up by virtue of his personal nature and softer and more effeminate performance of masculinity. As such throughout the first novel of the *Hunger Games* series emotional vulnerability, and by extension more 'feminine' characteristics, are understood by Katniss, and thus represented to the audience, as a weakness that must be avoided for the sake of survival.

A similar attitude towards the feminine is found throughout the *Chronicles of Lumatere*, demonstrated particularly through the Monts, a group that live on the border of Lumatere and Charyn, and their interactions with the Charynites. Here, in particular, we find the paradigm of barbarism and femininity play out through the character of Phaedra, and Lumateran responses towards her. When she is first introduced, it is indirectly through other characters talking about her, with the narrative noting that upon being forced into the marriage,

Lucian had been furious. The girl was said to be frightened of her own shadow, spending most of her day sobbing in the corner of Lucian's cottage [...] The Monts despised Phaedra for more than being a Charynite. Mont women were strong and walked side by side with their men. Phaedra could barely boil water (*FotE* 21).

Phaedra is a character who has been supplanted into a hostile culture and coerced into marriage with Lucian, the leader of the Monts. Her fear of her new situation, however, is a source of contempt rather than empathy or understanding. It is clear, at this point in the narrative, that Phaedra should be understood as inherently useless – both for her emotional reaction as well as her different upbringing. There is a clear preference for strength, action, and ability as practiced by the Monts, however Phaedra's femininity,

codified by her emotional vulnerability is despised. That the narrative mentions specifically her inability to boil water serves to emphasise her 'uselessness': she cannot even perform traditionally feminine tasks. The narrative directly connects her behaviour with her particular Charynite femininity, while codifying the Lumateran women and their expression of femininity as more masculine and, therefore, more valorised and worthy of respect. This is further emphasised through the Lumateran hatred towards the effeminate, and that appearing as such must be avoided. This is particularly demonstrated when Froi is learning the dancing customs of the Charynite court for his mission:

Rafuel sighed and returned to his explanation about the etiquette of dancing [...] 'Hips must beckon while arms are in the air. Never lose eye contact with your partner'.

Lucian made a snorting sound. 'Ridiculous. It will make Froi look like a woman.'

Froi growled. 'Not dancing with no one,' he said in Lumateran.

'It's a seduction, Mont. Not like the dancing of Lumatere and Belegonia, where you stomp as though you're making wine' (*FotE* 55).

That appearing feminine would be a disgrace, and consequently something to be avoided, speaks to the primacy of masculinity and masculine behaviour as a measure of value to the Lumateran culture. Conversely, we also receive a small insight into the opposing culture's outlook. Rafuel, a Charynite scholar and refugee, also has contempt for aspects of Lumateran culture – their avoidance of courtly behaviour and particular forms of dance is, it is suggested, considered uncivilised to the Charynites.

This cultural focus on masculinity and consequential contempt for the perceived Charynite effeminacy is further displayed through the 'Mont lads' and their toxic behaviour. They are frequently boisterous and rowdy, intimidating, and obsessed with their masculinity to the point that they boast of the size of their 'swords of honour' and insult the Charynites among themselves by implying a lack of size on their part. Despite feeling uneasy about the Monts' attitude towards the Charynites, and particularly the Charynite women, Lucian explains and justifies this behaviour as 'lads being lads' (*FotE* 114), a phrase deliberately meant to recall the excuse of 'boys will be boys' within the context of sexual harassment and toxic masculinity. While Lucian excuses the behaviour however, the novel does not. Rather, the novel intercepts the toxic attitude exhibited by Monts and problematizes it. This is

particularly significant considering the intended young adult audience of the novel, who are navigating their own sense of self and concepts of gendered behaviour within society. Kasabian, a Charynite refugee hiding in the Mont's valley, challenges Lucian concerning the Lads' behaviour towards the refugees, forcing Lucian to understand the behaviour for what it is:

'As the leader of your people, could you please ask your lads to refrain from stomping through our vegetable patches?' [...]

Kasabian's eyes were stony. 'And could you ask your lads to refrain from relieving themselves in the stream? It's your stream, I know, but it is also a stream used by our women. We mean no disrespect because it is probably not an insult to do so in front of your Lumateran women, but to have men relieve themselves in front of a Charynite woman is an insult for us. Your lads frighten our women, Mont leader. All I ask is that you speak to them.'

The man's voice was soft, much in the way of Rafael's. Maybe it was a weapon to speak in such a way. All his life, Lucian had never heard his father raise his voice. He didn't have to.

And because Lucian was shamed, he walked away (*FotE* 120).

It is clear that the Monts are engaging in threatening behaviour, built around their expression of masculinity and the subordination of femininity. Yet what is pertinent about this exchange is that it seeks to not only provide a Charynite perspective but to also privilege it, despite the narrative being focalised through the Monts, and the previous novel having been very one sided in its casting of the Charynites as the antagonists. Lucian is shamed by the Monts' behaviour and their refusal to engage in cultural sensitivity, and by Kasabian's leadership ability without needing to prove his masculinity. Kasabian's voice is soft and steady and he appears to at least attempt to empathise with Lucian, demonstrating both the capacity for strong leadership in addition to emotional intelligence. Indeed, Kasabian demonstrates more cultural sensitivity than any of the Lumaterans have towards the Charynite refugees up to this point, allowing for the idea that behaviour he finds to be offensive and intimidating may be custom on the Lumateran side of the stream. In doing so the narrative shifts slightly through Lucian's perspective particularly in the context of hyper-masculine behaviour thus far valorised throughout the text. Lucian later tells the Monts:

‘[...] I care what I think of us and when one of their men gave me a lesson on how they would like their women treated... well, it shamed me. And it made me realise that I did care and that Saro would be horrified [...] and disappointed that our lads would treat the women of any kingdom in such a way. You may say shame on me for believing what the enemy says, but I say shame on all of us if we condone the behaviour of our lads’.

His exchange with Kasabian has led Lucian to see the lads’ behaviour for what it was. Threatening, boisterous, and disrespectful. For Lucian, how the men behave towards women, all women, becomes a matter cultural identity. Although he does not embrace the feminine, and still clearly has an ideal for masculine behaviour within his own mind that should take precedence, he has also come to reject the hyper-masculinity that his particular culture has thus far embodied. Furthermore, this incident exemplifies the notion that society itself, as a collective, has a responsibility for either correcting or holding bad behaviour to account. It must be a societal effort, rather than abdicating responsibility to an individual ‘bad apple’. There is still a clear preference for masculine codified behaviour and attributes, and the Charynites are barbarised through their representation as effeminate; however the text does not leave this barbaric paradigm unchallenged. Rather, it uses the paradigm in order to examine how the process of barbarisation and the contempt for effeminate behaviour operates, leading to the preclusion of empathy and the proliferation of toxic and destructive behaviour. In doing so, the text strongly suggests to its young adult audience the need to examine their own social norms and recognise when normalised behaviours are actually problematic. In particular, the text insists on the collective social responsibility of a society for correcting toxic attitudes and behaviours.

Femininity, Luxury, and Moral Inferiority

The contempt for effeminacy that underpins much of the discourse of barbarism can also be communicated through the focaliser’s response to a culture’s dress or attitude towards luxury. This is seen particularly throughout *The 100* series and *The Hunger Games*.

In *The Hunger Games*, in combination with her intolerance of emotional vulnerability and weakness, Katniss also holds a great deal of contempt and hatred for the luxury and opulence of the Capitol, particularly in the context of it being at the expense of the Districts.

As seen from the Roman period, a love of fashion and luxury has traditionally been associated with the feminine and has featured prominently in the construction of the discourse of barbarism. When exhibited by citizens of the Capitol, this obsession with fashion and luxury is represented as cause for Katniss to dehumanise them. When meeting her prep team, Katniss remarks: 'I should be embarrassed, but they're so unlike people that I'm no more self-conscious than if a trio of oddly coloured birds were pecking around my feet' (*HG* 76). She cannot understand their need to experiment with different fashion trends, and so in her mind they are barely human. Even so, she comments that 'It's hard to hate my prep team. They're such total idiots. And yet in an odd way, I know they're sincerely trying to help me' (*HG* 76). It is specifically their focus and style of fashion that colours this impression, and it is never really challenged by the text. Opulence is to be despised, and this is a consistent attitude within the text across the series. The only Capitol citizen Katniss likes is Cinna, in large part because he is not as extreme with Capitol fashion as her prep team, nor is he as obsessed with the latest trends, to which Katniss openly feels disgust (*HG* 77). Similarly she regards Finnick, another contestant in the Games during *Catching Fire*, with contempt specifically due to his sexualisation by the Capitol and his apparent acquiescence to it. She comments that she never found him attractive because '[m]aybe he's too pretty, or maybe he's too easy to get, or maybe it's really that he'd just be too easy to lose' (Collins *Catching Fire* 251-252). It is precisely the willing exploitation of his body and his 'pretty' sexuality that she finds repulsive, never taking into account his lack of bodily autonomy at the hands of the Capitol. Interest in fashion and luxury, such as that in the Capitol, has frequently and traditionally been associated with femininity. Katniss, however, casts this interest as inherently shallow and idiotic: the people who engage in it are unworthy of respect and deemed far lesser in her estimation than those in her home district. It is seen as frivolous, and therefore despised. In doing so, the feminine is barbarised.

A similar attitude of contempt towards luxury and fashion as a method of othering and barbarising the other is used throughout *The 100*. This is particularly used in reference to the girls on Phoenix. During a flashback, the narrative comments that Wells liked Clarke specifically because she 'didn't spend hours stressing over her appearance, like most girls on Phoenix' (*100* 176), the implication being that the reader, too, should like her for this. This comment is in itself, however, indicative of the text's assumption of femininity as inferior. Clarke stands apart from other girls because she is more intellectually engaged, which consequently implies that this attitude of intellectual pursuit and a strong work ethic

is remarkable in women. Similarly, Glass recalls comments made by a Waldenite that all girls on Phoenix are 'the same', assuming that they sneak around with Waldenites for the rebellious reputation rather than any real interest in relationship or recognition of the personhood of Waldenites. He perceives them as shallow and primarily interested in appearances, both physical and social. This is again established through the Phoenician girls Cora and Huxley, who are more interested in riffling through ribbons and fabric at the exchange than they are in having a deep conversation and relationship with Glass following her pardon (*100* 118-119); and again confirmed through Clarke's memory of a math class, in which she was laughed at for days for being interested in the lesson (*Day 21* 18). Femininity, in *The 100*, is frivolous and completely lacking in depth, authenticity, or moral strength, and is implicitly connected with the luxury of the upper class at the expense of the lower class. Glass, one of the more feminine characters of the novel, succeeds in spite of her femininity rather than because of any inherent virtue in it. Following her father abandoning the family, and Glass and her mother experiencing a fall in their fortunes as a result, Glass resolves that 'She would figure out how to get what she wanted – what she needed – even when her long lashes failed to convince, when her body was no longer young and beautiful. She'd be more than pretty. She'd be strong' (*Day 21* 192). Her mother had been using her body and her femininity in order to keep the family fed and the bills paid. Glass, however, decides to exceed this by being 'strong'. She does not frame this resolve as an attempt to throw off her femininity entirely; however it does suggest she will be strong in spite of it, or rather in excess of it. Femininity is not enough, and it is cast as a lesser state of being, while strength of character is cast as ordinarily sitting in opposition to it. As such, *The 100* series very much engages the barbaric discourse in which femininity – or rather traits typically associated with the feminine – is subordinated, undervalued, and even held in contempt, represented as inherently shallow and silly, and in many cases morally inferior. Thus, while the text actively seeks to challenge constructions of masculinity within the paradigm of barbarism, the text actually affirms the construction of femininity as it operates within this paradigm, that is, as being inherently inferior and a signifier of barbarism. Considering the audience and the socialising function of young adult literature, this has significant implications for the construction of subjectivity and attitudes towards women and the feminine as represented through the text.

This opulence is similarly used as an example of the barbarity of the Yanjing Empire in *Battle Magic*. While the Emperor rules his people with complete authority, in many cases demanding their identity be subsumed into his service (*BM* 18), he enjoys immense luxury

and wealth and as such is feminised through the text despite his power. The Emperor's hand is described as being 'laden with rings that gleamed with jade, rubies, sapphires, and pearls' (*BM* 49). Even the servants are covered in precious stones (*BM* 52) and his slaves restrained in gold (*BM* 28). There are also strict protocols for the presentation and appearance of those in the court – the women must have their faces painted and their lips also receive the 'drop of blood' (*BM* 28). Everything about the Imperial Court is concerned with the appearance of wealth and luxury, and in relation to this wealth, the appearance of power and control. As such the Emperor is gradually revealed as shallow and overly concerned with his appearance and reputation rather than his character. As such, the text's association of this love of luxury with despotism implicitly connects traditionally feminine traits with immorality.

A notable point of the use of femininity in their construction of barbarism in *The Hunger Games* and *The 100* is to whom this femininity is applied. In each case, the upper class is represented as effeminate through its concern for appearance and luxury, while the lower classes are codified as more 'masculine'. Considering the role that effeminacy has in the creation of a discourse of barbarism, the result is a subtle preference and valorisation of the lower class while the upper class is maligned and cast as culturally and morally inferior despite its socio-economic advantage and superiority. This feeds into the representation of wealth inequality and rigid class structures as inherently barbaric, as it seems to advocate for the advancement and support of the lower or working class through its association with more 'honourable' masculine characteristics while suggesting that the power of the upper class is more 'feminine' and thus illegitimate and unsuited to leadership or positions of power. This operates as a critique of contemporary class systems, in particular the pursuit of luxury by the upper class at the expense of the lower class. However, what is concerning about the use of the barbaric paradigm in this critique is the association of femininity as a shorthand signifier of the immorality of the upper class. Considering the socialising function of literature for children and young adults, this has significant implications for the kind of subjectivities and understanding of the world that young people are encouraged to create, particularly as it relates to constructions and approaches to femininity and the feminine other.

Socialisation and the Barbaric Paradigm

Thus far I have examined one way in which the barbarian is created: that is through constructions of masculinity and associating a person or group with the feminine in order to signify barbarism. The question remains, however, as to how the texts then interact with this construction and by extension how (and what) they seek to socialise. Young adult fiction by its nature is a socialising form, and it is through this process of socialisation that 'we learn how to participate in social life – from families, schools, religion, and the mass media, through the examples set by parents, peers, coaches, teachers, and public figures – a continuing stream of ideas and images of people and the world and who we are in relation to them' (Johnson 31). Literature for young adults is inherently interested in the representation of the relationship between self and society, and the processes by which this self is formed (McCallum 3-4). It is within this context that this thesis considers the connection between barbarism and masculinity, and the processes of socialisation surrounding this construction of gender within young adult fantasy fiction.

The first aspect of how the discourse of barbarism appears within these texts as it relates to constructions of gendered behaviour is the way in which all the texts represent a cultural norm of preferencing traditionally masculine traits as superior to feminine traits. Indeed, many of the texts use this cultural ideology as a shorthand method of quickly communicating ideas about a character or people group. The Phoenicians in *The 100* are shallow and appearance-obsessed because they enjoy parties and fashion while the Waldenites are characterised as more substantial because they work and are more practical. Girls like Clarke are celebrated in the text because she eschews more feminine paradigms of behaviour, not really caring for her appearance in favour of becoming a doctor and student of science. The Charynites in *The Chronicles of Lumatere* are morally inferior because they behave in 'womanish' ways – their women are more demure and reserved while their men are concerned with their appearance. The Lumaterans on the other hand are warriors and physical labourers, disdaining education for the most part while their women are capable of hard labour in the fields and are less concerned with appearance than they are with capability. The Capitol in *The Hunger Games* waste their time on parties and increasingly ludicrous fashions and surgical alterations, while gorging themselves on rich and luxurious food. In contrast, the people in the Districts are valorised through their disdain for such luxury in favour of practicality and survival skills. People within the Districts themselves are similarly polarised as either strong and worthy or useless and weak based on the level of their effeminacy. The Yanjing Empire in *Battle Magic*, too, which is codified as Eastern, is feminised, represented as overly concerned with

the appearance of wealth, opulence and power without actually engaging in fair rulership or reason such as that in Briar's home city, which is generically codified as Western Medieval. This dichotomous relationship between feminised and masculinised cultures as symbolic of worth and value is pervasive throughout the fantasy genre and, indeed, in many texts outside those discussed here. It reflects, and relies upon, a cultural devaluation of femininity in preference for the 'stronger' and 'nobler' qualities typically associated with masculinity.

That the texts utilise this relationship between masculinity and femininity for the purpose of barbarising the 'other' would suggest that they are participating in the socialisation and reinforcement of this paradigm as well as the concept of barbarism itself. Two of the texts, *The 100* and *Battle Magic*, fail to really question this process, and utilise it seemingly unquestioningly as a shorthand communication of one people group as inherently inferior, while still seeking to reconfigure models of hegemonic masculinity. While both *The 100* and *Battle Magic* do question and somewhat argue for a more sensitive and emotionally intelligent masculinity that is still strong and capable when it comes to physical feats and martial ability, they never question the implicit societal construction present within the text that *prefers* masculinity over femininity, and which casts these two gender presentations in hierarchical opposition. *The Hunger Games* and *The Chronicles of Lumatere* however do successfully engage with the idea of reconfiguring hegemonic masculinity, and furthermore question the construction of barbarism along the lines of gender itself. This is primarily achieved through the use of focalisation and, in particular, insight into the thoughts of focalising characters as their opinions of other characters are reassessed and changed.

As previously discussed, in *The Hunger Games* Katniss' characterisation of Peeta casts him as weak precisely because of his queered masculinity. He possesses a great deal of emotional intelligence and does not wish to commit violence, typically seeking to solve his problems through conversation and charisma rather than violence or intimidation. This is seen particularly through his frequently mentioned ability to win the crowd to his side and sell his personality rather than his strength (*HG* 72-73, 88, 157-158, 162). However, throughout the text it becomes clear that Katniss comes to see Peeta's personality both as a strength, and also as a desirable performance of masculinity. The result is a problematisation of traditional gender binarism: Peeta does not fit neatly within conventional performances of masculinity, indeed within their relationships the traditional

gender roles are reversed. Peeta provides emotional support and encouragement while Katniss performs the role of protector and hunter. Peeta's queered masculinity thus constitutes a disruption to heteronormativity within the text which, it becomes clear throughout the second and third novels of the series, is not only accepted but preferred. Katniss notes that because of his love and kindness he is the 'superior one' of herself, Haymitch, and Peeta (*CF* 215). Furthermore, Katniss comes to rely on Peeta's kindness and care for her as she struggles with her own nightmares and trauma from the games (*CF* 89). It is when Peeta loses this kindness and love towards Katniss as a result of Capitol torture that she recognises the true strength in those qualities as well as how much she had come to rely on them herself. Having lost his capacity for kindness and love, in Katniss' mind, he has lost a part of himself (Collins *Mockingjay* 222, 268-271).

As she comes to reassess the value of Peeta's kindness, she simultaneously begins to question Gale's ruthlessness. Where once she saw this as strength, throughout the final novel in the trilogy, *Mockingjay*, she begins to associate his capacity for violence with the ruthlessness of the Capitol. She challenges him on the traps that he concocts for the war, which eventually results in the end of any possibility for a relationship between them (*Mockingjay* 428). She comes to abhor his view of human life as disposable in the service of a greater goal and his ability to rationalise this disposability. Following the use of a deliberate mine collapse to trap the citizens of District 2, Gale comments:

"You think I'm heartless."

"I know you're not. But I won't tell you it's OK," I say.

Now he draws back, almost impatiently. "Katniss, what difference is there, really, between crushing our enemy in a mine or blowing them out of the sky with one of Beetee's arrows? The result is the same."

"I don't know. We were under attack in Eight, for one thing. The hospital was under attack," I say.

"Yes, and those hoverplanes came from District Two," he says. "So, by taking them out, we prevented further attacks."

"But that kind of thinking ... you could turn it into an argument for killing anyone at any time. You could justify sending kids into the Hunger Games to prevent the districts from getting out of line," I say.

"I don't buy that," he tells me.

"I do," I reply. "It must be all those trips to the arena" (*Mockingjay* 258-259).

Where once she took his ability to detach from his violence and think like the enemy as strength, it has now become a weakness of personality. Although she does not agree that he is heartless, it is clear that his outlook has become one that is incompatible with Katniss' own outlook following her understanding of the trauma that ensues from the devaluing of human life. He willingly sacrifices children, including Katniss' sister, in the course of the war for the sake of ending it. His practical and cold rationality now repulses Katniss and his outlook is now the same as that of the Capitol. In her mind they are one and the same. As such, where Gale's masculinity, exemplified by practicality, rationality and a conformity to traditional constructs of gendered behaviour, was once clearly preferred within the text; through Katniss' focalisation and first person narration this preference is shifted towards Peeta and thus towards a more emotionally sensitive and intelligent masculinity that holds all life as valuable. Peeta and Gale's masculinity is not changed, only Katniss' assessment of them and with that an increase in the value of feminine codified behaviour. The result of this shift in value over the course of the series is not only a vindication of traditionally feminine behaviour, but also an endorsement by the text of more fluid and non-binary gender identities, particularly with regards to different masculinities.

Similarly, in *Catching Fire* she is forced to reassess her initial opinion of her prep team – surprised by their kindness and respect towards her mother she comments: 'I feel bad about how I go around feeling so superior to them. Who knows who I would be or what I would talk about if I had been raised in the Capitol?' (CF 46). While this does not necessarily subvert the implicit preference for masculine traits over feminine, it is clear that she is starting to experience a shift in the personal qualities she values in others. For Katniss, the kindness exhibited by the prep team undercuts their barbarism and humanises them. As such, this moment is indicative of her change in attitude towards the feminine and contributes to the gradual breakdown of the absolute gendered binarism within the barbaric paradigm.

In this way, the focalisation and narrative voice of Katniss serves to interrogate the association between the feminine and the barbaric throughout the course of the series. Where at the outset it affirms the notion of masculinity and traditionally masculine traits being morally and socially superior, by the conclusion of the trilogy the preference for these traits has been subverted while Katniss has been forced to recognise the value and strength in more feminine associated behaviour such as emotional vulnerability, emotional

intelligence, and kindness. These traits, the text appears to suggest, are essential to both the emotional health of the individual and to the functional running of society, as they directly contradict the societal construction of human life as disposable and in constant competition for survival and power. In doing so, *The Hunger Games* utilises the function of masculinity and femininity within the discourse of barbarism in order to undermine both the constructions of hegemonic masculinity and the patriarchal privileging of such models, more traditional modes of gender performance and gender roles within heteronormative relationships, as well as the process of barbarisation itself.

The use of the feminine and masculine in the *Chronicles of Lumatere* as it applies to barbarism operates in a similar way to *The Hunger Games*. Although the texts are focalised largely through a Lumateran perspective which privileges the masculine over the feminine, as previously demonstrated, throughout the two novels this inherent value of masculine codified behaviour over that of the feminine is questioned and overturned, particularly through the character of Phaedra. Similar to the *Hunger Games*, the effeminacy of the Charynites and masculinity of the Lumaterans do not change, however the reactions toward and value placed upon those characteristics do.

Phaedra, initially characterised as weak and useless because of her femininity, is gradually accepted and eventually loved by the Monts because of her emotional sensitivity and ability to empathise. She has compassion towards those around her and she is keenly aware and concerned for the wellbeing of the less fortunate (*FotE* 399). More than this, her quiet personality and emotional strength allows those around her to feel safe in also being emotionally vulnerable. It allows her to understand them and connect in a way that would be incompatible with a traditionally masculine personality:

Lucian was beginning to get used to hearing Phaedra's small observations at night. Whether Lumateran or Charynite, people revealed things to her that they told no other. More than anything, he realised that he liked her voice in the dark. It made him feel less lonely. Only last night he had spoken to her about life in exile, and had found himself recalling memories cast aside since his father's death (*FotE* 505).

Phaedra has not changed; she has not become more masculine in her behaviour or more physically capable. Rather, her more feminine personality and emotional intelligence are shown to have an active and positive effect on Lucian's process of grieving the death of his

father and coping with the trauma of the Lumateran exile. It is also this emotional intelligence and resilience that enables her to withstand the abrasive personality of Quintana, the pregnant refugee Charynite princess, and the other women co-opted into hiding the princess in a cave (Marchetta, *Quintana of Charyn* 154-159), even coming to love them. She sees their protection as her duty to her kingdom, without which her 'people would fall' (*QoC* 309-310). Through her characterisation, those qualities more traditionally associated with the feminine are shown to have an innate strength in their own right, allowing for emotional resilience as well as for the support and healing of others. Indeed by knowing Phaedra, Lucian is forced to reassess his concept of 'strength' and 'weakness':

He wanted to change that one night in Alonso when he was expected to take the rights of a husband. He knew he hadn't used force. Was careful not to. But he hadn't acknowledged her fear of being alone with a man for the first time in her life. She was no Mont girl, unabashed and earthy and used to swimming naked in the river with the lads. He had mistaken so much for weakness, yet there was nothing weak about Phaedra of Alonso (*QoC* 306-307).

What is important about this moment is not only the acknowledgement of strength in femininity, but also the acknowledgement of a cultural difference that still shares that characteristic of strength. It is evident that the Charynite culture has a greater sense of shame surrounding their bodies and the people are thus more reserved. Lumaterans on the other hand are far more open and blunt concerning both sex and nudity. The narrative, however, does not minimise this difference – rather it acknowledges the innate strength in both the more masculine coded Lumateran culture as well as the feminine coded Charynite culture. Of particular significance here, the weakness that was associated with Phaedra was actually a lack of understanding or empathy for cultural difference. Furthermore, Lucian's ability to recognise Phaedra's point of view – why she had been crying when brought to the mountain – speaks to a greater sense of character development into a more well-rounded and intersubjective sense of self; and this is primarily due to the exposure to Phaedra's more feminine attributes and emotional intelligence.

In this way, similar to *The Hunger Games*, *The Chronicles of Lumatere* seeks to dismantle the association between barbarism and femininity; however unlike *The Hunger Games* it does not do so through directly reconfiguring the idea of hegemonic masculinity. Rather, it evaluates the characteristics typically associated with femininity through its female

characters and raises them to a place of equality, insisting on the inherent strength that traditionally feminine behaviour possesses in its own right, and in particular demonstrates the value such behaviour has to the cohesion of a society as well as the development of a well-rounded, emotionally healthy, and intersubjective self. In doing so, the text argues for a sense of cultural parity and thus subverts the ideology of barbarism itself. While the series still uses the construction of a masculine culture and a feminine culture in conflict with each other, it does not seek to homogenise and erase these cultural differences. Rather the text discredits the assumption that one culture can be inferior to another based on its relative association with femininity; instead insisting that each culture has its own unique, inherent value and strength, and are thus equal. This in turn strongly encourages the young adult readership to value other cultures in their own right, while disassociating their own gendered and cultured world from the discourse of barbarism.

Conclusion

The discourse of barbarism has a direct relationship with a culture's hegemonic masculinity. It was developed throughout the Roman period and was built upon a fear of being associated with the feminine. This fear of association is still present within modern discourse, and has similarly contributed to the societal privileging of masculinity and the subordination of femininity and traditionally feminine associated characteristics and interests. As in the case of the Ancient world: to feminise an 'other' is to barbarise that 'other'. In this way, barbarism is at its essence a discourse of power – a gatekeeper that determines the potential for both inclusion within society and inter-cultural equality and value.

This patriarchal ideology of privileging the masculine while barbarising the feminine is pervasive throughout our modern Western culture, and is particularly present within young adult fantasy. Within this literature, femininity is used as a shorthand method of communicating an idea of the inferior cultural status of an 'other' nation or people group within society. Considering its enculturating and socialising function, it is important to understand the operation of the feminine and masculine within the context of barbarism in young adult fantasy. Ideologies about the ideals of masculinity and femininity are disseminated through these texts, and by perpetuating the association of the barbaric with the feminine it often reinforces the patriarchal ideology and devaluation and subordination of women and femininity.

Young adult fantasy does, however, have the opportunity to interrogate and dismantle the implicit assumptions associated with this patriarchal ideology and barbarisation of the feminine. As we have seen in both *The Hunger Games* and *The Chronicles of Lumatere*, through their particular character constructions and focalisation, these texts often establish a sense of masculine supremacy before undermining it and exposing such ideologies as counterintuitive to both the development of a functioning society as well as an intersubjective and well-rounded self. In each of these cases, they do not seek to subsume the feminine or claim a character's strength *in spite* of it, but rather suggest that typically associated feminine qualities like emotional vulnerability and emotional intelligence possess an inherent strength in their own right. The result is that modern social assumptions and ideologies surrounding hegemonic masculinity are revealed, as well as the patriarchal discourse that privileges this masculinity. In this way, both of these texts seek to call not only patriarchal ideologies into question, but also the process of barbarisation and the discourse of barbarism itself. As such, young adult fantasy can, but clearly does not always, reveal and interrogate the gendered social power structures that exist within our own society and seek to dismantle them for the creation of a more intersubjective self.

Chapter 5

Barbaric Subjectivity and the Power of Language

Introduction

Modern adolescence is closely associated with ideas surrounding subjectivity and identity. This stage of an individual's development is typically thought of as constituting 'rapid and radical transformation' of selfhood. As a result, ideas of subjectivity and identity, within the context of modern adolescence and its progression towards adulthood, underpin much of young adult adolescent fiction (McCallum 3). This is partially affected by the deeply pedagogical and enculturating nature of fiction written for children and young adults. As the development of subjectivity is primarily concerned with the development of a concept of self as subject within intersecting societal, social, and ideological discourses, the texts written for adolescents who are at this point in their development tend to reflect the processes by which this development takes place. Indeed, Stephens comments that considerations of subjectivity and the representation of its construction has become a naturalised and assumed fact of any discussion dealing with literature written for children and young adults, however he also points out that the particular approaches and attitudes towards this development are very much culturally affected: Western notions of subjectivity are rarely appropriate in a global context (Stephens "Introduction" 1, 4-5). Considering this assertion, it would be reasonable to assume that literature written for children and young adults both models the methods by which subjectivity is constructed, as well as reflects the world and concerns of the culture in which it is produced. In a Western context, our concern for formations of subjectivity and its connection with social agency and an interest in the concept of self, society, and other has consequently affected both the fiction that is produced as well as the expectations and ways in which we approach the fiction written for children and young adults.

Children's literature is a deeply pedagogical and didactic genre. In the case of literature written for children, stories and narratives are often used in order to both induct children into cultural ways of thinking as well as introduce and reinforce dominant social ideologies (Thacker 4). Indeed, Nodelman likens this function of children's literature to the process of colonisation itself. Children's literature is written by adults for children about childhood, essentially removing the child's actual voice from the process and in its stead presents adult fantasies and ideals about a preferred childhood and an acceptable child subjectivity

(See Nodelman "The Other: Orientalism, Colonialism, and Children's Literature" 1992). As such, children's literature is deeply ideological. It reflects the dominant social discourses of society and often provides a value judgement concerning the preferred method of appropriation of these discourses. It contains ideas about society and lessons concerning that society's operation and the individual's place within it, teaching and socialising its target audience through a combination of child and adult discourses and voices (Hintz and Ostry 7).

Children's texts are read by their audience at a point in their development that Thacker suggests is coterminous with Lacan's 'mirror stage' (Thacker 6) – that point in which a child comes to understand themselves as a subject and the disconnect between their experience of reality and the image or imaginary concept of a whole self, and the social and societal discourses that act upon the formation of this self. Indeed, Coats similarly suggests that because stories are so powerful – and that it is through narrative that we both navigate and understand the world and express ideas of ourselves as existing within that world – stories written for children are integral to the process of subject formation. She states that

Children are especially vulnerable to being structured by stories because they are still in the process of collecting the experiences that will shape and define their relation to the Other [...] What we get from children's literature are the very patterns and signifiers that define our understanding of and our positions with respect to the Other [...] The literature we encounter as children, then, should be seen as central to the formation of subjectivity (Coats 4).

Literature for children and young adults is written for an audience that has not yet negotiated their sense of self and their subject position within society. As such, there is a certain level of didacticism within this literature seeking to form those readers alongside an emphasis in the literature on demonstrating that process of negotiation and the subsequent development of subjectivity. Coats further argues that these texts provide a model, or indeed a mirror, to which children might look in order to progress in their development towards an idealised self as represented through the text (Coats 6). This sentiment reflects Stephens' assertion in his seminal work, *Language and Ideology in Children's Fiction*, stating that:

On the one hand, the relationship between a reader and a text is dialectical, a negotiation of meaning between a subject's multi-faceted sense of self and the many interpretative positions which a text may make possible. On the other hand, a work of fiction itself to some degree always mirrors the kinds of picturation and narrative which the subject draws upon for its own sense of selfhood, and it especially replicates the pragmatic functions of language in the actual world through which interpersonal relationships are constituted (Stephens *Language and Ideology* 47).

In such a way, children's texts and stories expose children to social discourses and model the processes by which they might negotiate these various discourses and reconcile them into a sense of self, while also mirroring the process and power of language and discourse in the formation of self and the construction, interpretation and understanding of 'other'. In this way, understanding the ideologies and societal discourses in literature for children, and in particular how they operate and are treated within the fictional world, is fundamental to understanding the way in which subjectivity is constructed and represented to children and young adults.

It is within this context of the socialising nature of children's literature that we consider fantasy texts written for children and young adults. While representations of the formation of subjectivity are central themes of most texts for children and young adults, the fantasy genre, in which science fiction is included, is particularly concerned with the positioning of the individual within a broader social context and the interrogation of dominant social ideologies and discourses. Hintz states that 'young adult novels are promising vehicles for utopian writers to speculate about the way individuals position themselves in reference to a wider collective' (Hintz 254), suggesting a seemingly natural connection between the emphasis on subjectivity in young adult fiction and that of utopian and dystopian texts. Similarly, Nikolajeva connects the process of the development of subjectivity with the alienation from consensus reality inherent within the fantasy genre. She states that fantasy, through virtue of its alienation, 'encourages the reader to adopt an independent subject position'. This is achieved through the discrepancy and distance between the reader's and the character's life experiences, caused by the alien world of fantasy fiction, which forces the reader to disengage from the protagonist in order to arrive at their own subject position and value judgement concerning the events of the text (Nikolajeva "The Identification Fallacy: Perspective and Subjectivity in Children's Literature" 197-200). As such, fantasy texts encourage active reading positions by virtue of their nature – that is,

their alienation from consensus reality. This includes utopian and dystopian texts, however it should be noted that while most fantasy texts fall within this category, not all utopias or dystopias are fantasies. The relationship between subjectivity and utopian and dystopian fiction will be further discussed later in the chapter.

It is by considering the centrality of stories and narrative in the construction and representation of subjectivity, and the role they play in disseminating (or challenging) dominant social ideologies and discourse, that we come to the consideration of barbarism as one of those ideological discourses and its role in young adult fantasy novels. If indeed young adult novels are didactic in nature, and the fantasy genre particularly interested in interrogating and engaging with social discourses, the presence of barbarism within these novels must be considered with regards to its impact on the representation of the development of subjectivity and selfhood. In previous chapters, we have seen how barbarism is utilised through representations of class structures and gender constructions in order to communicate and guide the interpretation of 'others' within young adult texts. This chapter is concerned with the represented consequences of that particular ideological discourse on the ability of characters to develop an agentic subjectivity within their fictional world. In order to properly understand this process, this chapter will first consider in more detail the processes by which subjectivity is constructed, and provide the model of subjectivity informing this chapter. Following this, I will briefly reiterate the argument of preceding chapters, which highlight barbarism as a social discourse. Thirdly, I will examine the relationship between subjectivity and utopian and dystopian writing for young adults, taking time to explain the definition of the genre and how it typically functions. I will then demonstrate in detail the interaction between these ideas within my selection of contemporary fantasy texts for young adults: *The 100* series, *The Chronicles of Lumatere* series, *The Hunger Games* series, and *Battle Magic*. Finally, I will attempt to reflect on some of the broader social implications of such ways of thinking, in particular the treatment of barbarism as an ideology within the texts, in relation to our modern socio-political context. In doing so, I hope to reveal that the discourse of barbarism, that is the structures by which it seeks to establish the 'other' as culturally inferior, as a present, implicit social discourse and ideology which is ingrained in and disseminated through texts written for children and young adults. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate how the texts explore the implications for its usage in modern texts written for children and the way modern Western culture constructs both self and 'other'.

Dialogism, Discourse, and the Construction of Subjectivity

In 'Discourse of the Novel' Bakhtin argues that the 'ideological becoming of a human being' is the result of a process of 'selectively assimilating the words of others' (Bakhtin "Discourse in the Novel" 341-42) – that is to say, subjectivity is formed through the appropriation of the social and societal ideological discourses within that individual's society. McCallum builds on Bakhtin's formulation of subjectivity, stating that subjectivity is the 'sense of a personal identity an individual has of her/his self as distinct from other selves, as occupying a position within society and in relation to other selves, and as being capable of deliberate thought and action' and that this sense of identity is formed in dialogue with others in society and with 'the discourses constituting the society and culture s/he inhabits' (McCallum 3). Subjectivity is thus intrinsically connected with an individual's own self-perception and particularly the perception of their place within a society and their ability to act within and upon that society. The capacity for agency, in McCallum's formulation, is an important part of the construction of subjectivity and this agency applies to both the ability to act freely within society as well as to control the construction of self.

This construction of self is the result of a number of influences and ideologies on the individual. It is formed within the context of dominant social ideologies and discourses, and deeply affected by the culture and language systems of those surrounding the individual. This process is by no means a passive one, rather the individual selectively appropriates ideologically charged linguistic modes in order to find and express an idea of 'self'. This selective appropriation of certain discourses is indicative of the role of agency in the process of constructing the self, in that the individual has the capacity to actively select which ideological and linguistic codes might form them. More than this, the fact that selective appropriation is possible demonstrates that at any given point society itself is made up of a number of different ideological and social groups that coexist and which have their own systems of language and discourse. These coexisting language and discourse systems are differentiated by various socially stratifying factors such as level of education, nationality, generational group, and socio-economic level (Bakhtin "Discourse in the Novel" 290-91). As such, language itself is socio-ideological. Individuals define themselves discursively, that is through language, and conversely language and discourse provide the means by which individuals are able to shape, and be shaped and defined, by others. In this

way language, as a conduit for and expression of social and societal ideology, has far-reaching implications for both the structuring and reinforcement of socio-political hierarchies, and is further indicative of the capacity that societies possess to impact the formation of self: systems of language and their associated discourses enable individuals to selectively structure themselves as superior or inferior to an 'other' group within society.³⁵ The barbaric discourse, as demonstrated in Chapter 1, is one such language system that has significant implications for the formation of self.

The effect of society, and in particular societal discourses on the formation of self, is further explored through Bakhtin's consideration of the 'authoritative discourse' and 'internally persuasive' discourse. Authoritative discourse concerns discourses external to the individual subject and their consciousness, such as political, religious, or moral discourses that act upon the individual. 'Internally persuasive' discourse, on the other hand, is internally defined and is separate from society and the social authority that societal discourses might wield (Bakhtin "Discourse in the Novel" 341-42; McCallum 103). In practice, there is initially no distinction between the two discourses. It is when the individual develops their own discourse as both distinct from and partially adapted from the external discourses of others, and when this internal discourse comes into conflict with the external authoritative discourse, that a sense of self, personal identity, and individual consciousness is developed (McCallum 103): that the 'struggle and dialogic interrelationship of these categories of ideological discourse [that is, internally persuasive and external authoritative discourse] are what usually determine the history of an individual ideological consciousness' (Bakhtin "Discourse in the Novel" 345; McCallum 103). In this way, the subject is seen as being formed both passively and actively, that it 'has agency and responsibility, but at the same time it is bound by rules and laws outside itself and constrained by its own unconscious processes' (Coats 3). It is deeply informed by the social discourses surrounding its construction and cannot develop apart from the language systems of that individual subject's society. Within and through the language and images of his or her own society, the subject 'must both *find* and *create* himself' (Coats 4).

³⁵ This is not to say that interaction and appropriation of different language systems and societal discourses is the sole method of self-expression or the only way to express a particular subjectivity. There are clearly other methods by which an individual might express a sense of self or belonging to a particular group outside of language such as clothing, artistic expression, involvement with sport teams, and musical expression. However, these expressions are often accompanied by particular discourses that serve to identify that individual's place in society. Thus language is an integral aspect of how we communicate ideas about the self, and a sense of belonging to particular social groups and ideological positions.

The implications for this process of subjectivity formation – that is, within the context of external discourses and language systems in society – is that the more overt the societal ideologies are, the greater the effect they will have on the identity and subjectivity being formed. If a particular social ideology is characterised as particularly restrictive and as having a large amount of authority, then the identity of the individual would be subsumed into a broader cultural identity – that is, their individuality will be somewhat diminished. Alternatively, such restriction and strength of a social ideology may galvanise the individual to resist, resulting in the development of a strong and coherent identity that stands against the dominant social discourses of their society. In this case, the individual would come to be viewed as having a more transgressive identity by wider society. It is this situation in particular that causes the fantasy genre to be uniquely suited to narrative exploration of the processes of subjectivity and identity formation. In historical fiction, it would violate secondary belief for a character to easily develop a ‘transgressive’ sense of self, resisting the dominant ideologies of the time period in which the historical fiction is set. Where such a transgressive identity is believable, it would similarly violate secondary belief for the character to be easily welcomed and culturally accepted within their society. This is not to say that people in earlier periods never developed transgressive identities, indeed there are many examples of such identities existing: Joan of Arc, Agrippina the Younger, and even Martin Luther just to name a few. However what is notable of each of these personalities that resisted the dominant ideologies of their time is that their transgression was remarkable, an exception, and they were not accepted easily within their own societies, if at all. Where they were accepted, this acceptance was hard-won. As such, while historical fiction can certainly represent transgressive identities forming within a restrictive historical society, it would break secondary belief for those identities to be *easily* developed and accepted within the fictional world. Similarly, it would break secondary belief for this kind of identity to be normalised and easily developed within others of that society, rather than represented as the exception. Thus, where historical fiction requires a certain amount of adherence to historical reality, fantasy is able to use historicalisms in order to construct societies that are initially restrictive but nevertheless open to change (see Chapter 2). These societies allow for the space in which transgressive identities might develop without breaching secondary belief, as they lack a historical reality with which to compare. Fantasy is a genre of the impossible (Irwin 63; Hunt 2-3). As such, the genre possesses the freedom and ability to explore how transgressive identities could develop in restrictive societies and, by extension, the effect of different societal ideologies on the development of subjectivity, without breaking secondary belief.

The result of representing these transgressive subjectivities in young adult fantasy fictions within the context of restrictive and authoritative social ideological discourses is the foregrounding of both agentic actions and the processes by which identity is affected by social discourses. Language and social discourses are fundamental to the construction of subjectivity, as they are both used by others to define an individual as well as the means by which an individual is able to find and define their own self within the ideologies and discourses of their own society.

Barbarism as an Ideological Discourse

I have attempted throughout this thesis to demonstrate how an individual or society is represented as barbaric. By examining its ancient roots in Chapter 1, I found that barbarism is primarily established through representations of social organisation and structures; and through the representation of an individual's gender performance. Hyper-masculine traits as well as effeminacy are cast as signifiers of barbarism, as are social disorder and, conversely, intensely restrictive social structures in which individual liberties are heavily repressed. However, these features of a society or individual do not in and of themselves represent the barbaric. Rather, it is when these systems inform the interpretation of a represented 'other' individual or society that a discourse of barbarism occurs. Of particular interest in this chapter is the effect of this barbaric discourse, through which self is explored and through which the 'other' is represented and expressed, on the possibilities for the development of subjectivity within contemporary fantasy fiction for young adults.

As we saw previously, subjectivity cannot exist apart from language, ideology, and discourse. Subjectivity is formed in a dialogue with these systems and informed by these systems. The discourse of barbarism, as it has been appropriated into modern Western thought and inscribed into contemporary literature, is representative of one of these systems and has significant implications for the development of subjectivity, and in particular on the possibility for intersubjectivity to exist. At its essence, barbarism is a discourse that presupposes the subordination of one culture to another, where the subordinated culture is assumed to be inherently inferior. The inferior culture is unmanly or alternatively too aggressive to the point of a lack of control and reason. It is also either completely lacking in societal organisation wherein the society is essentially anarchic in

nature, or the societal organisation might be so rigid that the possibility for any individuality or development of a distinct identity is rendered impossible. The combination of these ideologies used in order to cast aspersions on the level of 'civility' within a particular culture formulates the discourse that is barbarism – that is, the elevation of one culture over another.

This discourse has a long history, as demonstrated in Chapter 1, and has a close relationship with ideologies of imperialism and orientalism. Indeed, these ideological paradigms rely upon the discourse of barbarism in order to maintain and justify themselves. This discourse robs the 'barbaric' - that is, a subordinated group characterised as inferior - of a voice and consequently renders those barbarised people unable to communicate their humanity and value. This results in a barbarian identity that is dictated and colonised by the privileged culture in service to that privileged group's own sense of self, independent of the barbaric group's input or own interactions with wider society. It is this colonisation of identity that is essential to the operation of colonialist and orientalist paradigms. In a modern context where physical colonisation and political imperialism is no longer deemed acceptable on a global stage, the discourse of barbarism enables the continued colonisation of socially subordinated groups; however, it shifts the site of this colonisation from the physical world to the process of subjectivity and identity formation.

The implications for the continued use of this discourse within society for the ability of individuals within that society to develop agentic subjectivities are twofold. First, when barbarism is ingrained in the way we think about and define others, it precludes the ability for empathy or any real acknowledgement of a cultural other and cultural differences as equal. As such, the possibility for intersubjectivity is severely limited and if left unchecked, the barbaric discourse leads to, at the very least, a devaluation of those demonstrating cultural differences and, at most, their dehumanisation in the mind of the speaker – that is, the one applying the discourse. Second, when an individual comes into contact with barbarism as an external authoritative discourse, the development of their own subjectivity is severely affected. Either they will develop a stronger internal discourse that actively opposes the application of barbaric discourse to themselves; or the discourse will become so strong that their own identity will become subsumed into that barbaric model resulting in a fractured identity and perception of self, lacking any sense of self-worth and belief in the validity of their own cultural identity and subjectivity. In this case, the barbaric discourse is internalised, reinforcing their 'barbaric' status within the subject's own mind

and causing dissonance between the subject's experience of self and the image they have learned and had reflected back at them from broader societal discourses. This is seen in varying degrees throughout the texts that I have so far discussed in this thesis. The character Phaedra in *The Chronicles of Lumatere* is a particularly good example of this phenomenon explored through the medium of young adult fantasy, while in a broader theoretical context Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (first published 1952) exemplifies the impact of the racism and dehumanisation inherent within the discourse of barbarism on the selfhood of people of colour.

As such, barbarism is a powerful social discourse; however, it is also a damaging one that has severe implications for the development of subjectivity. More than this, due to its antiquity and the centrality of Roman history to Western culture, the discourse itself has become ingrained in the way we think about the other. As such, exposing it as a very present and influential social ideology through literature is increasingly important, particularly as it appears in young adult fiction, given this genre's inherent interest in exploring the influence of social ideology on the development of subjectivity. This kind of questioning and challenging of dominant ideologies and social discourses, and their subsequent impact on formation of the self, is a practice in which fantasy and utopian or dystopian fiction often engage and for which these genres are particularly well suited.

Dystopias, Utopias, Fantasy, and the Self

The kind of fantasy texts I have been discussing so far throughout this thesis construct other worlds that are entirely distinct from that of our own contemporary experience. They speculate on different modes of social organisation and are thus largely situated within the broader genre of utopian and dystopian fiction. Indeed, most fantasy texts are dystopian in nature, although not all dystopian texts are necessarily fantasy. Dystopian fictions are inherently concerned with questions of social ideologies, organisation, and thus the individual's place within those social systems. As such, the formation of subjectivity and how it is affected by various modes of social organisation is at the forefront of many dystopian texts written for young adults. Thus understanding how fantasy and dystopian texts represent subjectivity cannot be achieved in isolation from first understanding how the genre interacts with issues of societal and social organisation.

Sargent posits that utopias, such as those found in many science fictions and fantasies, are social dreams 'that concern the ways in which groups of people arrange their lives and which usually envision a radically different society than the one in which the dreamers live' (Sargent "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited" 3). These societies are often non-existent ones that are described and represented as though they were real and which imagine a world that is better (or worse) than that currently existing within consensus reality. They are primarily interested in representing the transformation of the everyday, and the political and economic systems of this society in order to ask questions of the way we live now: Could it be improved? How might we improve it? What is wrong with the current state of society? (Sargent "Introduction" 3, 5-6) Considering the nature of fantasy as broadly being that which breaks from consensus reality, it is unsurprising that Sargent connects utopian writing with elements of the fantasy genre (Sargent "Three Faces" 4). Utopian and dystopian fiction is thus an important and in some ways integral part of any discussion of the fantasy genre, for by Sargent's own definition many of them constitute fantasy texts and, conversely, many fantasy texts contain utopian or dystopian thinking.

This element of interest in social organisation and the societal systems that create difference from modern consensus reality perfectly positions dystopian texts, particularly those targeted at young adult audiences, to both engage with and challenge dominant ideological discourses of society. Dystopian fantasy texts, by nature, are able to envision societies that are substantially different from our own and in that point of difference present their readers with different ways of thinking: 'they can offer an improved vision of the future, or address deep and possibly unresolvable fears' (Hintz 263). These texts represent how societies are organised, and how social attitudes and discourses might affect the social outcomes of those societies. The forced encounter with these 'foreign' cultures as found in the text encourages readers to reflect on their own societies and how they are formed: as readers are confronted with solutions to modern social problems as found in utopian texts, or the flaws and social and political breakdown found in dystopian fiction, there emerges an impulse towards critical engagement and evaluation of the reader's own social and political context. In doing so, when combined with the pedagogical nature of children's literature and its focus on subjectivity, utopian and dystopian fantasy writing creates an impetus for individual social and public engagement (Hintz and Ostry 7). Moran states that through 'their idealized communities or horrific exaggerations of existing flawed societies, they invite exploration of orthodox attitudes, values, and structures'. She suggests that this impulse towards political engagement challenges the status quo and, in doing so,

breaks with the traditional role of children's texts in reaffirming and socialising dominant social ideologies and ideals (Moran 140).

The critique of social systems present within dystopian and utopian fiction is often centred on the representation of class structures and the impact of those structures on both the cohesion of society as well as the individual protagonists affected by those structures. Hintz and Ostry comment that utopian and dystopian fictions often reveal

the social foundations of our own world – and the cracks that form in them [...] many texts are predicated on the discovery of a society where the sufferings of some allow for the pleasure, comfort, and exaltation of others [...] Writers often pull no punches in depicting the brutality of class inequality taken to the extreme (Hintz and Ostry 8).

Encountering these kinds of societies encourages young readers to not only empathise with the plight of the poor, but also provides them with the tools to recognise and identify the processes and socio-political mechanisms by which the exploitation of the working class, as well as of developing nations, is enabled. In turn, this unveiling of the processes of exploitation similarly illuminates the ways in which class inequality is systemically enabled and reinforced. In this sense, the language of barbarism, and the process of othering it creates, is revealed through these texts, directly confronting the language with which we discuss and speak of the poor and disenfranchised of our society. Within this context, the status and value of the individual self within society is placed at the forefront of the text's consideration. Dystopian fictions, in particular, often play on the tension between individual freedom and the broader needs of society, demonstrating the way in which we evaluate individual value based on their supposed 'usefulness' rather than any individual consideration. Such considerations in turn encourage young readers to assess for themselves the basis on which we assign individual value, how we construct and consider a sense of community, as well as the 'need to keep society from dismantling individual rights' (Hintz and Ostry 9).

Young adult dystopian and utopian fantasy fictions are thus able to reveal and subsequently challenge the social ideologies and discourses of society. The result of this process is a demand placed upon the reader to actively engage with the discourses and ideologies presented to them throughout the texts. Of particular note is the insistence on

the development of an intersubjective subjectivity presented in many fantasy texts by virtue of the popularity of polyfocalised narrative structures within that genre. This process plays different subject positions against each other, presenting to the reader a multiplicity of possible positions to take towards the ethical and moral questions presented within the text. It allows for sympathy towards a supposed enemy or for understanding to develop towards a character that might otherwise be presented as entirely ineffable and their culture completely alien. This is found in, as just a few examples, Morgan Rhodes' *Falling Kingdoms*, which follows the perspectives of different characters from three warring realms; *The 100* series, in which the perspectives from different social classes are explored against each other; and *The Chronicles of Lumatere*, in which the subject positions of characters from one culture are played powerfully against the subject positions of their enemy culture. The presentation in these texts of multiple subject positions demands a response from the reader and a decision based on the reader's own judgement of the characters' actions and responses towards others within the narrative. In these kinds of texts, there is an insistence on the importance and value of developing an intersubjective subjectivity (that is, a subject position that recognises and affirms the selfhood of other selves as independent from the original self).

There is therefore a focus within dystopian fantasy texts on emphasising the importance of intersubjectivity. In the case of *Feed*, the protagonist Titus is unable to ever truly understand his girlfriend Violet's position or critical attitude towards her world. His inability to develop intersubjectivity, combined with the first-person limited perspective of the narrative voice, leaves the character's narrative arc feeling deeply unsatisfying and his progression towards adulthood incomplete. He is unable, or unwilling, to effectively question his society and as a result is unable to develop towards a coherent selfhood and an intersubjective subject position. The result of this lack of development is a reaffirmation of the importance of critical engagement with the social order and societal discourses of a community or society; as well as an implicit connection between the ability for critical thought and engagement and the ability to form a coherent and intersubjective adult self. Many dystopian texts for young adults follow this didactic form, although most present it through the positive progression of their characters rather than through the deliberate invocation of dissatisfaction. These texts often present this argument through the use of technological dystopias or utopias, in which the city plays a prominent and prohibitive role in the development (or lack thereof) of the protagonists. Ostry argues that the cities in these texts, such as that found in *Uglies*, 'will not allow children to grow up but keeps them

in a state of dependence [...] Much as parents shield children from ugly facts, the city keeps them ignorant of the social ills that make their shining environments dystopian' (Ostry 102). This situation breeds ignorance as well as a lack of desire for the development of critical thought and engagement with the socio-cultural reality of the represented societies. As such, in this social context, the development of an active and coherent sense of self, and understanding of that self within society, is impossible. These societies 'keep characters from developing into questioning, informed, and empowered citizens' (Ostry 106). It is only by escaping the technological 'utopias' into societies in which the characters are encouraged to develop a sense of social responsibility, as well as self-sufficiency (Ostry 105), that they are able to develop a more assured, agentic, and coherent sense of self.

The genre of fantasy when written for young adults, particularly when paired with dystopian fiction, thus foregrounds the development of self within a socio-political context. In many cases, it demands movement from domestic dependence towards an agentic, socially and politically active, independent selfhood. As such, the genre is intensely interested in representing the process of subjectivity formation as being formed in relation to the social and societal discourses surrounding the subject and, ultimately, demonstrating how one might find self within society. Fantasy is thus a uniquely suited genre for examining how a discourse of barbarism affects, and the kind of social conditions it creates for, the development and presentation of subjectivity.

The Discourse of Barbarism and the Construction of Self

The first aspect to consider of the barbaric discourse's interaction with subjectivity is the way in which it impacts (and in some cases inhibits) the sense of self and identity of an individual cast by society as barbaric. In many cases, being treated and defined by others' use of a barbaric discourse results in a fractured and damaged subjectivity. In other cases, it galvanises a subject's development towards an agentic and socially engaged sense of self that opposes the dominant ideologies and discourses of their society. Melina Marchetta's *Chronicles of Lumatere*, Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* trilogy, and Kass Morgan's *The 100* series are all texts in which the barbaric discourse is deeply embedded and that demonstrate the effect of this external discourse on the development of the subject. This is achieved primarily through various narrative voices that provide insight into the characters' minds and their subsequent interpretations of their societies and the other characters around them. Marchetta and Morgan's texts both utilise third-person limited

narrative voices, while Collins employs a first-person present narrative voice, resulting in sympathetic reading positions that are encouraged to somewhat experience the effect of the barbaric discourse on the individual. In this way, the three narratives are able to reveal and challenge the pervasiveness of barbarism as a social discourse.

Throughout the *Chronicles of Lumatere*, the influence of the barbaric discourse on the development of subjectivity is demonstrated primarily through the characterisation of Phaestra and, to a lesser extent, Froi. Throughout the first novel of the series, *Finnikin of the Rock*, the nation of Charyn is frequently characterised as the barbaric antagonist to the nation of Lumatere. Throughout the subsequent novels *Froi of the Exiles* and *Quintana of Charyn*, the texts begin to use Charynites as focalisers: Phaestra, a refugee sent to be married to one of the Lumateran leaders by her father in an attempt to protect her; and Froi, who gradually discovers that he is not originally from Lumatere as initially thought, but rather a Charynite who was spirited out of the country at birth in an effort to save him from a despotic regime. Phaestra, who grew up in Charyn and is thus culturally a Charynite, is used to demonstrate the effect of the discourse of barbarism when cultural differences are apparent and derided by the 'civilised' culture. Froi, on the other hand, demonstrates the effect of the barbaric discourse when it is internalised as the text follows his attempt to reconcile his Lumateran identity with his newly discovered, and hated, Charynite identity.

Phaestra's encounter with the barbaric discourse is demonstrated particularly through her interactions with the Monts. To this community she is the subject of mockery due to her perceived uselessness and emotional intelligence. She lacks the physical hardness of the Mont girls and also exhibits a great deal of embarrassment around Mont social conventions. Furthermore, she is readily associated with the Charynite refugees, a group of people the Lumaterans frequently deride as 'dirty' (Marchetta *Froi of the Exiles* 195) and for whom they express little concern or empathy regarding their struggle and refugee status. The Lumaterans frequently discuss the Charynite situation while Phaestra is in the room, isolating her from the conversation and, through their language and hatred of the refugees, causing her to feel further isolated and 'so far removed and lonely from everyone, even her own' (Marchetta *FotE* 195). The discourse of barbarism used by the Lumaterans in their construction of the Charynites results not only in Phaestra disassociation from the Lumaterans, but also forces her to feel disassociated from her own people – the subject of the Lumaterans' ire. After confronting the Lumaterans with one of the stories of the Charynite refugees, she is told that the former 'meant no harm'. Her reaction speaks not

only to the frustration and dehumanisation she has suffered in her own mind, but also provides a commentary on the lasting impacts of the barbaric discourse on the possibilities for real human connection between cultures.

She was tired of feeling shame. She was tired of feeling helpless all the time [...]
'They say we're dirty,' Phaedra cried, pulling free. 'Luci-en says we're useless. Your queen says we're murderers. I overheard the Mont lads say we should be rounded up and set aflame. We're barren. We worship too many gods. Our bread is tasteless. Our faces are plain. We cry too much. Our fathers abandon us. We don't understand kinship. We're pitiful!'

Phaedra shook her head. 'If your people mean no offence, they should not speak their thoughts out loud in front of their children [...] Because it will be their children who come to slaughter us one day, all because of the careless words passed down by their elders who meant no harm' (Marchetta *FotE* 198).

Phaedra sequentially lists the ways in which the Lumaterans distance themselves from the Charynites in order to justify an attitude of hatred and antipathy: the Charynites have no sense of familial loyalty, they have no flavour in their food, they can't reproduce, they are violent and they deserve to be violently killed themselves, they do not even have their looks as a redeeming feature. All of these traits have been shown to be patently untrue throughout the novel, and yet they are used and held onto as dehumanising strategies with the result being a degradation of Charynite culture and a denial of their ability to achieve 'civility'. Yet Phaedra points to the consequence of this kind of thinking. Not only does being frequently told these external opinions about oneself create feelings of shame and a lack of self-worth, but it also engenders generational hatred among the culture that is utilising this discourse. Children learn these ways of thinking from their parents and their wider society; the continued use of a barbaric discourse results in a culturally ingrained ideology that habitually derides and dehumanises other cultures. It is this attitude that can lead to the casual suggestion of genocide.

The effect of this discourse and engendered hatred is similarly demonstrated through Froi. Once he discovers his Charynite heritage, he begins to struggle with his conception of Lumatere as 'home' while simultaneously feeling a strong connection to the land of his birth. Froi reflects that:

Lumatere was everything Froi wanted to be, whilst Charyn was a reminder of everything he despised about himself [...] Froi wanted to kill that boy he had been. If not for Lumatere, he would be nothing and have no one.

Except it was only when Froi had come to Charyn that he realised there had been nights in Lumatere when he felt loneliness beyond imagining [...] And now, under this full moon, on his way back to his beloved home, Froi felt the ache of loneliness return (Marchetta *FotE* 351).

This point of the novel again demonstrates the effect of the barbaric discourse on the development of subjectivity. Froi, it is clear, feels incomplete. He directly connects the Charynite half of his identity with all his undesirable traits, of which he is deeply ashamed and feels he must disassociate from. Because of the lack of nuance in portraying and speaking of Charyn as an enemy, completely evil and without any possibility of redemption, he has learned to hate a culture which he discovers is an innate part of himself. While it is possible to look to Lumatere for hope, denying and hating his Charynite heritage has left him feeling empty and incomplete. His identity is fractured by external discourses that he has internalised. In *Quintana of Charyn*, when he is still attempting to understand where he finds home, the dichotomy being forced upon him by others is illuminated by his confrontation with Finnikin, his closest friend. In this scene he is being forced to choose between Lumatere and Charyn, resulting in a feeling of anguish before asking 'Why does there have to be a choice?' (Marchetta *Quintana of Charyn* 99). Froi, by this point having accepted his heritage, wishes to incorporate his two identities into a more coherent sense of self. Finnikin, however, scoffs. This causes Froi to feel a deep sense of disassociation from his good friend; the suggestion that he could accept both parts of himself is met with derision and rejection. It is not that these two identities are naturally incompatible, but rather the external discourses surrounding them, rendering one barbaric and entirely unacceptable, demand he choose one over the other. Froi finds himself in an environment that demands he hate and reject a part of himself. The result is anguish and confusion over who he is, who he is allowed to be, and where he might fit within his world. In this way, by using Phaedra and Froi as focalisers and demonstrating their learned antipathy towards themselves, the text deeply personalises the impact of the barbaric discourse on the structuring of subjectivity and identity and the resulting struggle and hurt it causes.

The 100 similarly engages with the effect of the barbaric discourse on the perception of self within society, however it is careful to demonstrate that while there are similarities, the

discourse does not affect everyone in the same way. This is shown particularly through the characters of Bellamy and Luke, who grew up on the lower class outer ship of Walden. Both characters hold the assumption that the Phoenicians – who live where the system of government is centred and enjoy far more luxury and opportunity than those on the outer ships – automatically think of the Waldenites and Arcadians as ‘lesser’ humans and ‘barbarians’. The way in which they respond to this assumption is, however, a point of difference and demonstrative of their respective subjectivities.

Luke is not a focalising character for the narrative, rather his actions and thoughts can only be inferred through Glass – his girlfriend. This is particularly important to note considering his reaction to the barbaric discourse that is deeply entrenched in the Colony’s social systems. Joining the guard corps, his apparent response to the system that rejects his humanity is to not simply abide by and operate within it, but also to further aid in its reinforcement. As a result, the audience loses access to his voice; the only way we are able to gain any knowledge or understanding of Luke’s character and thought processes is through the privileged perspective of Glass, who is sympathetic towards him. In the absence of his advocating for himself by opposing the system he lives in, her perspective controls his representation. When discussing their relationship he comments to Glass that maybe he could change her mother’s mind about him, ‘You know, prove that [he’s] not some barbarian [...] She thinks [he’s] just some Walden jerk taking advantage of [Glass]’ (Morgan *The 100* 271). This comment is telling about his own sense of self and the society and discourses surrounding him. He does not seek to change Glass’ mother’s mind about Waldenites and demonstrate their innate humanity. Rather, he accepts the discourse that casts the Waldenites as barbarians and instead wishes to show that he can rise above the supposed barbarism with which he is supposed to act. He has internalised the notion that the only measure of his value is in his ability for the privileged class to accept his presence as a civilised barbarian. This attitude is particularly shown following the council’s decision to cut off the air supply to the outer ships so the Phoenicians might survive. While he shows concern about the situation, this concern is not for his own safety but for Glass (Morgan *Day 21* 32-35). It is strongly implied that the only reason he thinks of saving himself is because Glass refuses to get to safety without him. Although unhappy about it, he appears to have accepted the Council’s decision to kill two thirds of the ship as just a fact of life. Such an acceptance suggests an internalisation of a discourse that insists on the superiority and value of one social group over another. Even when Luke and Glass decide to open the skybridge it is because Glass pushes the issue, rather than because of any insistence by

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Luke of his – and by extension that of the Waldenites and Arcadians – own inherent value and right to live (Morgan *Day 21* 127). The result of the internalisation of the barbaric discourse is thus shown to result in a perceived lack of courage, the minimisation of the self, and a lack of self-worth.

In contrast, Bellamy actively resists the barbaric discourse that would otherwise deem him as inherently inferior. This resistance primarily manifests as discontentment with the ideology and in challenging the Phoenicians on his assumed inferiority. As such, Bellamy embodies the effect of the internal persuasive discourse coming into conflict with the external authoritative discourse. The result is a defensive distrust of those around him while still maintaining a self-assured and coherent sense of self. When confronted with the distancing language employed by Wells, a Phoenician who got himself imprisoned to join the delinquents being sent to Earth, Bellamy's response is to laugh and remind Wells that they are all the same – all criminals in the eyes of the Colony (Morgan *The 100* 110). His internal discourse, which is acted out, challenges Wells' attempt to establish control and order, and furthermore directly rejects the elevation of one group of people over another. When Wells automatically assumes Bellamy to be dangerous by virtue of his formerly lower position in society (110), Bellamy actively rejects this classification of himself and the attempt by Wells to elevate himself above Bellamy with mockery. Bellamy has a strong sense of his own self-worth, however he is keenly aware that others have been trained to view him as inferior. The result of this disparity is a resistant, rebellious, highly defensive attitude, resulting in a limited ability to build close connections with others or truly become a part of the Colonists' burgeoning society. He prefers his time in the forest, alone, reflecting that he is 'done with all of it – the punishments, the stations, the system. He was through following other people's rules. He was sick of having to fight to survive. Living in the forest wouldn't be easy, but at least he [...] would be free' (148). To Bellamy, belonging to a society is antithetical to freedom. While he has not internalised the barbaric discourse, causing a lack of self-worth or even self-hatred as in the case of Froi and Phaedra in the *Chronicles of Lumatere*, it has nevertheless affected the development of his subjectivity. As he cannot accept and appropriate the discourse into his subjectivity, the discourse has instead alienated him: he has come to view himself as external to his society and unable (and unwilling) to participate in it and belong.

Similar to *The 100* and the *Chronicles of Lumatere*, the *Hunger Games* trilogy demonstrates the effect of barbarism on the construction of self by inhabiting the 'barbarian' position.

Unlike the other two series, however, *The Hunger Games* exclusively portrays the barbarian voice with first-person present narration, rather than a polyfocalised narrative structure. This presents the audience with a sense of immediacy and enables effective communication of how the barbaric discourse impacts the development of self. Indeed, the salient point of the series is how the barbaric discourse enables violence against the oppressed members of society, resulting in the trauma and fragmentation of the subjectivity of those selves.

Panem, the world in which *The Hunger Games* takes place, is a world that is underpinned by barbaric ideologies. Violence and adulthood are inextricably enmeshed in this society, and the violence is such that the barbaric discourse is necessary for its perpetuation: in order for the state to maintain control, it throws gladiatorial matches that presupposes the inherent inferiority and disposability of those forced to compete. Furthermore, this state-enacted violence is performed primarily on the bodies of lower-class children. As such, encounters with death in this world are represented as essential to the process of maturation into adulthood and, even more so, this cultural 'violence, absence, and trauma are irrevocably enmeshed in conceptions of self' (Shau Ming Tan 55). Adults cannot enter their names into the tesserae, which is a lottery that provides one month's supply of grain and oil in exchange for extra entries into the Hunger Games, but children can and, in the poorer Districts do, for the sake of their family. Rather than the duty of provision falling to the adults, children are left with the expectation to provide for their family through the literal sacrifice of their childhood (Shau Ming Tan 56). Throughout the novel this sacrifice and violence against the children of the Districts is commodified, wrapped up, and presented to the citizens of the Capitol as entertainment. As Shau Ming Tan points out: 'Violence is not only made "unreal" through the watching of the Hunger Games; with these visions of "theme-park" atrocity, violence is made fun' (Shau Ming Tan 68). As such, the violence and the people upon whom it is enacted is turned into spectacle. In doing so, the Capitol sends a clear message: these children of the Districts are playthings for our entertainment. The result of the spectacle of violence is a dehumanisation that desensitises the world to the 'devouring of the child' for the sake of political control (Shau Ming Tan 60-62), a process that relies on and is justified by the discourse of barbarism.

The Hunger Games takes this intrinsic relationship between state-enacted violence and the systemic devaluation of the selves of the 'barbaric' Districts and seeks to examine specifically the effect of the resulting trauma on the construction of self through the narration of Katniss. At the outset of the series, although she expresses her dissatisfaction

at the system, Katniss appears to accept its reality as inevitable. The system that has subjected her and systematically reinforced her dehumanisation has resulted in a lack of agency. She does not believe that she, nor anyone in her society, has the capacity or power to initiate systemic change; nor does she believe there is a point in trying. She learns to 'turn [her] features into an indifferent mask [... and] Even at home, where [she is] less pleasant, [she] avoid[s] discussing tricky topics. Like the reaping, or food shortages, or the Hunger Games' (Collins *The Hunger Games* 7). Despite knowing the reality of the injustices in the system, she has learned to stay silent on them. She has learned to minimise herself in order to both avoid attention and avoid upsetting the system out of pure survival. Similarly, she shuts down her long-time friend Gale as he contemplates a different world and future, stating simply that as he does live here in District 12, there is no point in thinking about what they could do. She reflects that they 'can't leave, so why bother talking about it?' (Collins *The Hunger Games* 11). Similarly, when Peeta expresses his desire to demonstrate to the Capitol that he is still himself and that he is more than a piece in the games, Katniss is both unable and unwilling to understand his meaning:

"there's still you, there's still me," he insists. "Don't you see?"

"A little. Only... no offence, but who cares, Peeta?" I say.

"I do. I mean, what else am I allowed to care about at this point?" he asks angrily (Collins *The Hunger Games* 172).

This conversation is telling. It is not only that Katniss sees little point in making a defiant end in the Games, or attempting to prove a sense of self within the arena – but that she does not understand how she can even have self within that context. Peeta wishes to express that he is still himself, despite the repressive society in which he lives. His desire is one to exercise what little agency he feels he has within his brutal world. Katniss, and by extension the text, on the other hand, asks how one can have a self, and an agentic one at that, when every action and even the ownership of one's own body is commodified and controlled by a political system. Her society severely restricts the opportunities for articulation of the self (Shau Ming Tan 57-58); there is no safe space for Katniss to explore and articulate who she is in relation to society and so she does not attempt to. At the beginning of the series, despite expressing her dissatisfaction with the Capitol in her internal monologue, she appears to have accepted the state of her world and expresses little desire or inclination to oppose it.

Even if the subject avoids internalising the barbaric discourse, its proliferation within society ensures a lack of agentic subjectivity. When Katniss becomes a face for the resistance, it is more out of necessity than actively choosing to rebel against the Capitol. Indeed, Katniss frequently makes comparisons between the Capitol and District 13, the latter of which is leading the resistance, and their mutual willingness to use her as a tool in their political games. By the conclusion of the novel, it is clear that the audience is being positioned to view the Capitol and District 13 as essentially the same. While District 13 is not steeped in wealth and luxury, it nevertheless severely limits the freedom of its citizens, uses violence for the sake of control, and uses the lives and deaths of children as a means of political manoeuvring (Collins *Mockingjay* 12, 21, 60, 431-32, 40). This, the text suggests, is the effect of the discourse of barbarism: it renders sections of the population as disposable and denies or severely limits the possibility for those people to develop agentic subjectivities.

The result of this denial of agency through the barbaric discourse and the violence enacted against those subjected to it, is trauma. *The Hunger Games* is particularly interested in demonstrating the effect of this trauma on the construction of self. By the conclusion of the novel, and particularly apparent throughout the epilogue, the discourse that allowed Katniss to be entered into the Games and used as a political pawn has left her sense of self fractured and disassociated from reality. Though she has children, she refers to them only as 'the boy' and 'the girl'. She did not want them, yet she agreed after fifteen years of Peeta asking her. Even after the Games, she lacks a real sense of agency over her own life. She is dreading the day she has to share with her children the reason for her nightmares, and how they 'won't ever really go away'. She now sees her reality as a game that she has to outsmart to stave off despair, listing acts of good that she has witnessed (Collins *Mockingjay* 454-55). In this moment, she is entirely self-focused. Katniss is unable to see beyond her trauma and, as a result, has distanced herself from her children and those that love her. Although the cycle of state-enacted violence has ended, the shadow of it still remains and the consequences of the internalised barbaric discourse is again acted out on the bodies of children: the children of Panem born in the shadow of the Games still suffer in the form of fractured familial relationships. Katniss cannot completely relate to them and the voice she employs through the epilogue is dreamlike. She is not, and cannot bring herself to be, fully engaged and connected to her reality. The voice lacks the immediacy and urgency of the preceding narrative because she has withdrawn. Shau Ming Tan argues that through the trauma experienced by Katniss, the text suggests that "“wholeness” is no longer

an option: the subject is fragmented, the body is scarred, and the reality of nation and world can never be wholly trusted' (69). The effect of the discourse of barbarism, when allowed to run its course and manifest itself in violence against the subject, and perpetuate it for those in relationship with the subject, is trauma and finally fragmentation.

The Discourse of Barbarism and Intersubjectivity

Within the context of a society built upon the discourse of barbarism, which habitually renders large segments of the population as inherently inferior and thus disposable, the possibility for developing towards intersubjectivity is represented as largely impossible. Although Katniss cares for others, she struggles to understand those others as independent selves. Forced to focus on brute survival by the circumstances of her society, she is unable 'to relate to the world outside of the confines of her constructed identity' (Shau Ming Tan 58). She frequently misinterprets Peeta's actions throughout the first novel as a strategy to lure her to her death precisely because that is the way she interprets and thinks about the world (Collins *The Hunger Games* 88, 101-11). Although she shows signs of developing towards intersubjectivity in her protection and care for Rue, a young girl entered into the Games, she is never able to develop into a fully coherent and intersubjective self. Her development is interrupted by Rue's death and Katniss' resulting trauma and grief: a shocking moment of violence that directly inhibits the possibility for growth. During *Mockingjay* she does show further potential for developing intersubjectivity; however, this development is never fully realised. Having joined the community of District 13, she is confronted with her former prep team from the previous two novels who were kidnapped by District 13 and later imprisoned for stealing bread. Katniss is horrified by their imprisonment and defends them, arguing that despite their occupation of dressing tributes up for slaughter, they cannot be held accountable for it as they 'don't view it the way [the Districts] do' (Collins *Mockingjay* 64). This is an example of Katniss' potential for advancement towards an intersubjective self, as she is able to consider the prep team's experience as separate from her own. They were raised and have internalised the discourse that deems the lives of tributes only worth as much as the violent spectacle they can offer. For a moment, she can understand the games from their own limited perspective. However, Katniss is never able to completely reach an intersubjective and coherent subjectivity – by the conclusion of the series, she has regressed due to the trauma suffered, rendering her unable to ever fully mature and reach an intersubjective selfhood. As such,

the novels strongly demonstrate that the proliferation of a barbaric discourse severely limits the opportunity and ability to develop intersubjectivity.

Katniss is unable to ever develop a coherent and intersubjective selfhood throughout the *Hunger Games* trilogy, due primarily to the trauma she suffers as a result of the violence enabled by a society that dehumanises and uses her as a spectacle. However, the impact of the discourse of barbarism is not limited to its effect on Katniss' subjectivity. Rather, the text also takes the time to consider how barbarism affects people within a privileged social position. Of particular note is the assertion in the text that a discourse of barbarism renders intersubjectivity for the privileged as virtually impossible. Through a denial of access and real human connection with the people in the Districts, creating them as spectacle and tools for entertainment, the people of the Capitol are never encouraged to view the tributes as people. Thus, the system simultaneously denies the attempts of people in the Districts to develop and articulate agentic subjectivities, while also preventing the citizens of the Capitol from encountering those selves that exist outside of the Capitol's culture and ideologies. As such, the discourse of barbarism that insists on the inferiority and objectification of the Districts is reinforced and proliferated.

This inability to achieve intersubjectivity is demonstrated particularly through Katniss' prep team. Throughout the novels the citizens of the Capitol are kept in a childlike state. They are never exposed to violence or hardship, and are kept separated from any real experience of the Districts. Even the violence of the Hunger Games is neatly packaged as entertainment. They are shielded from the reality of the violence that is intimately connected with adulthood in Panem, and told from birth that the people of the Districts are expendable, existing only for the Capitol's entertainment. As such, the people of the Capitol are never actually afforded the opportunity to mature into adulthood and develop beyond a solipsistic subjectivity. At the conclusion of the first Games, Katniss listens to the prep team talking about the traumatic events she has just experienced. They never speak about the deaths or the violence, but are rather entirely focused on themselves: 'where they were or what they were doing or how they felt when a specific event occurred [...] Everything is about them, not the dying boys and girls in the arena' (Collins *The Hunger Games* 429-30). The thought that they should be anything but entertained by the deaths of twenty-two children, or have any sympathy or sorrow for their loss, never occurs to them. Similarly, when Katniss is again called to re-enter the arena the following year, the prep team are beside themselves. Katniss remarks through her internal narration: 'The idea of being

strong for someone else having never entered their heads, I find myself in the position of having to console them. Since I'm the person going in to be slaughtered, this is somewhat annoying' (Collins *Catching Fire* 245). Indeed, Katniss is so very aware of their childlike, solipsistic mentality that in *Mockingjay* Katniss argues with Gale that hurting them would be 'like hurting children'. The Capitol has shielded them from the reality of the Games so effectively, and ensured their solipsism and immaturity so handily, that in her mind, despite their age, the prep team are essentially children unable to see beyond their own experience. Gale, however, points out the fallacy in this thinking:

They don't know what, Katniss? [...] That tributes – who are the actual children involved here, not your trio of freaks – are forced to fight to the death? That you were going into that arena for people's amusement? Was that a big secret in the Capitol? (Collins *Mockingjay* 64)

Despite never being afforded the opportunity to grow out of their solipsism and into a more intersubjective subjectivity that recognises the basic humanity and equal value of other selves, the prep team are still culpable. Gale exposes Katniss' perception of them as children as erroneous; such an attitude seeks to absolve them of guilt, yet the reality of the Games was present and visible throughout their entire life. A reality in which they chose to actively participate. They were complicit and therefore culpable in the Games. The discourse of barbarism, which labelled tributes as inferior and thus disposable, has rendered intersubjectivity and growth away from solipsism highly unlikely, if not impossible to achieve. By extension, the text implies that the discourse of barbarism itself, along with the ideology of otherness it entails, ensures perpetual immaturity, maintaining those it privileges in a childlike and solipsistic state that fails to truly engage with the political and social world around them.

Similar messages about the relationship between barbaric discourse and a preclusion of intersubjectivity occur in *The 100* series and the *Chronicles of Lumatere*, however unlike *The Hunger Games* series, Morgan's and Marchetta's series embody a hope in overcoming the discourse of barbarism for the possibility of developing intersubjective selves.

In *The 100*, the narrative actively demonstrates the 100's gradual growth into acceptance of each other, as well as of the Earthborns, whom the 100 initially treat with immense distrust. In doing so, the narrative suggests that the key to overcoming the discourse of

barbarism and progressing towards an intersubjective subjectivity is primarily through interaction. Whereas in *The Hunger Games* interaction between the “civilised” citizens of the Capitol and the “barbaric” citizens of the districts is tightly controlled and prevented in order for the Capitol to maintain social and political control, this interaction across social stratification in *The 100* is not as restricted, although before the 100 are sent to Earth and followed by a remaining third of the Colony in *Homecoming*, it is rare. As a result of needing to work together to survive, however, the Phoenician colonists gradually come to accept the inherent value of the Waldenite and Arcadian colonists; and this slow respect and acceptance is returned. This progress is demonstrated particularly through the focalising characters of Wells and Bellamy. Throughout the first novel, Bellamy regards Wells with a great deal of antipathy and distrust. Wells, similarly, regards Bellamy as dangerous and violent, initially distancing and elevating himself above the criminal he believes Bellamy to be. Through working together, and being forced into community and to rely on each other for survival, however, the two eventually reach a point of understanding (Morgan *The 100* 251). They can each recognise the motivations of the other and, while not necessarily sharing them, understand and respect those motivations and selfhoods. By the point of *Homecoming*, the 100 have grown into a community. They share a sense of unity and have grown to respect a sense of order within their burgeoning society as well as each other. Their community values every individual and creates the space and freedom for the exploration of self. They create a home on Earth (Morgan *Homecoming* 310) precisely because of their newly developed ability to cooperate across socio-economic class; their freedom to locate and articulate their sense of self; their shared hope and vision for the outcome of their own society; and their ability to respect and value other selves within that society. It is through a combination of freedom and exposure, the text suggests, that true understanding and intersubjectivity might develop and, consequently, the rigidity and antagonism encouraged by the discourse of barbarism can be challenged and eventually overturned.

A similar paradigm for the development of intersubjectivity is present in this series through the interactions between the colonists and the Earthborns, a group of people who managed to escape the nuclear destruction of Earth and survive underground. Upon their first encounter with one of the Earthborns named Sasha, the 100 teenaged colonists immediately engage in dehumanising and barbaric language. Graham, one of the more antagonistic members of the group, comments that Wells and Bellamy had ‘caught one’, as though referring to an animal caught in a hunt, while another member of the 100

comments that 'She's probably a mutant. You might catch radiation poisoning just by touching her' (Morgan *Day 21* 49). This language distances Sasha from the 100 in as many ways as possible and characterises her as sub-human. Wells is the only member of the 100 who insists on the Earthborns' inherent humanity. He refutes Bellamy and the 100's characterisation of Sasha, commenting 'She's a human being [...] not some kind of monster' (Morgan *Day 21* 54). Wells, in this comment, gets to the heart of the language thus far used by the 100. Out of ignorance, the 100 have treated Sasha like an animal and suggested that she is unnatural and 'wrong'. Their casual advocacy for her brutal murder further demonstrates the 100's inability to conceive of Earthborn people as human. The 100's language dehumanises and subsequently justifies, in their minds, hatred, distrust, and violence towards the other. In such an environment, if the discourse continues unchallenged, intersubjectivity is impossible. This opinion of the Earthborns, however, does not remain constant. Upon further contact with their peaceful (and civilised) society, the 100 come to understand and value the Earthborns, and eventually look to them as allies once Rhodes arrives from the dying ship and institutes absolute martial control (Morgan *Homecoming* 59, 160, 181, 191-92, 259-260). Following Bellamy's escape from Rhodes, he goes to the Earthborns, however, he is reluctant to accept help purely because of their kindness and generosity. He reflects that

He knew that Max and Sasha's people believed in something bigger than themselves. He had seen it in their kindness toward each other, in the way they welcomed strangers into their lives. He had seen it in Max's leadership. But he didn't know how he could ever bear the burden of their generosity (Morgan *Homecoming* 192).

This moment signifies that his mentality towards them has shifted. Through direct contact and interaction with the Earthborn society, Bellamy has not only come to regard them as humans, but has actually come to regard the Earthborn society as superior due to their treatment and regard for those outside their community. In doing so, the text suggests that an open and welcoming attitude, and a willingness to engage with the other, is essential to the development of intersubjectivity and, ultimately, peace.

This paradigm for the construction of an intersubjective subjectivity is reinforced through the contrasting events occurring simultaneously back on the Colony. With the three ships entirely delineated by class, and the systemic reinforcement of the Waldenites and Arcadians as inferior, there is little opportunity for any real interaction or relationships

across socio-economic statuses to develop. The guards are conditioned to regard the Waldenites as criminals (Morgan *Day 21* 251), and are thus predisposed to view them as inferior and engage in their dehumanisation, which manifests itself in the way they conduct their inspections (Morgan *The 100* 113). In the absence of real opportunity for interaction, the result is a distinct lack of empathy across the classes and the subsequent dehumanisation by the upper class of the lower classes. It is this attitude that leads to the decision to close the skybridge, cutting off the air supply to Walden and Arcadia and thus dooming two thirds of the population to death, and it is this attitude that enables the guards to passively watch as the Waldenites and Arcadians press 'against the clear wall that it almost seemed to be made of human flesh [...] pushing their faces against it, screaming, holding blue-faced children up for the guards to see' (Morgan *Day 21* 138). The guards are unmoved by the image of human anguish and desperation being presented to them, precisely because they have been conditioned to view these people as sub-human. They have not sought the opportunity to build relationships with those they deem barbaric and in doing so leave the discourse of barbarism that renders two thirds of the population disposable unchallenged. The resulting disparity between the horror of the scene and the unconcerned attitude of the guards results in the text making a powerful case to its audience for the rejection of the discourse of barbarism and the necessity to interact with and develop empathy for the cultural and socio-economic 'other'.

This paradigm for the development of intersubjectivity through relationships across cultural and social groups is similarly demonstrated through the *Chronicles of Lumatere*, in particular through the representation of the relationship between the Monts and the Charynite refugees. At the outset of *Froi of the Exiles*, the Monts hold a deep hatred for the Charynites, and frequently tell them to return to the home they are fleeing from. Lucian, having assumed the role of leader of the Monts from his father, reflects that 'deep inside of him a desire burnt bright each night. A desire to steal away down the mountain and cut the throats of every Charynite who slept in the valley' (Marchetta *FotE* 69). Similarly Isaboe, the queen of Lumatere, regards the Charynites with contempt and flatly refuses to have any empathy for them. Indeed, like her cousin Lucian, she expresses a desire to see every Charynite dead (Marchetta *FotE* 47). Her fear and her hatred is to some extent understandable, particularly at this point in the text when the Charynites have not yet been afforded a voice. However, a key point that emerges throughout the text is that no culture homogenously consists of 'murderers' and 'rapists'. The narrative critiques the systemic use of the discourse of barbarism, demonstrating how the hatred and language used by

leaders of a country deeply affects the attitudes of ordinary citizens towards the other. The hatred of the Charynite other is cultural, and the language used to express this hatred is dehumanising, degrading, and deeply embedded within the Lumateran psyche and legitimised by the political leaders of the nation. This, in turn, serves as a warning to the young adult audience against passively accepting the language used within political rhetoric surrounding the other, encouraging instead a more critical and intentional attitude towards the discourses surrounding them.

Similar to *The 100* series, this cultural hatred and thus the discourse of barbarism is undermined through the development of intersubjectivity among the Monts and, eventually Isaboe. Also similar to *The 100*, the path towards this intersubjectivity, in which cultural otherness is not erased but rather acknowledged and valued as an equally valid expression of self, involves interaction and relationship with the hated other. The vehicle for this transition from hatred towards an intersubjectivity that accepts and values other selves is the character of Phaedra. Phaedra's empathy and care for those around her, and her ability to engage with other cultures despite the pain it causes her, creates a space in which her own distinct selfhood might be gradually accepted and eventually celebrated. *Yata*, the matriarch of the Monts, comments that it is because of Phaedra that she is able to reach a point of forgiveness and acceptance of the Charynites. As Lucian is attempting to comprehend the burgeoning feelings of empathy towards the Charynite refugees, and fight his impulse to humanise them and their suffering, *Yata* states:

'But forgiveness has to start somewhere, Lucian. It *did* start somewhere. It started with Phaedra. The Monts learnt not to hate all Charynites because of her. I learnt [...] Because [...] I hated with a fierceness I can't describe. And [...] I forgot the faces of my granddaughters in all that hatred. Hatred smothers all beauty [...] but your Phaedra ... she made me remember [...] and I wasn't angry anymore. I just missed them, and it's the beauty in here,' she said, pointing to her chest, 'that made me remember them. Her beauty' (Marchetta *QoC* 217).

The trauma the Lumaterans had suffered as a result of the murder of the royal family has given way to a hatred that dehumanised an entire culture and denied the validity and the expression of that other cultural self. *Yata*, however, in this statement to Lucian, calls attention to the damage this hatred might cause. Even when the hurt and trauma is real and immediate, allowing hatred to affect the way in which we interpret and perceive other

selves is shown to only add to the trauma and cause irrevocable pain. It causes not only the loss of relationship and the possibility for connection; the discourse of barbarism, and the hatred of other it entails, also smothers the memory of those we are attempting to remember. It is significant here that it is Phaedra – an outsider who treats the Lumaterans alongside her own people with kindness, generosity, and empathy – who reminds *Yata* of her murdered granddaughters, rather than her surviving granddaughter, Isaboe. It is through relationship that understanding might grow, from understanding empathy, and from this empathy a subjectivity that appreciates the experience of others and acknowledges and values the subjectivities of that other. In this way, the discourse of barbarism is directly challenged through the text, and in its stead the text stresses to its young adult audience the importance of empathy, generosity, and ultimately developing an intersubjective subjectivity when confronted with the other for the sake of social cohesion and in particular one's own emotional health and selfhood.

Most of the texts discussed thus far have demonstrated the effect of the barbaric discourse on subjectivity as a method of exposing and discrediting its proliferation within modern culture. This cannot be said for all texts within the young adult fantasy genre, however. While many are interested in espousing the value in developing intersubjectivity, which includes and values the subjectivities of others external to one's own immediate socio-cultural discourse, there are exceptions.

Battle Magic by Tamora Pierce engages in the discourse of barbarism from the Western-signified perspectives of the mages Rosethorn and Briar, while Evvy, who would otherwise represent the cultural other, has become largely enculturated by her association with the two 'Westernised' mages. Much of the text serves to reinforce the use of the discourse of barbarism as it is applied to the antagonistic Yanjing Empire, and it is only nominally challenged by the occasional reminder that, though brutal, the Yanjingyi soldiers would not have had much choice in their actions on the battle field or in service to the emperor. That, if treated with kindness, they might learn that the previous way they lived was not the only way (Pierce 322, 431-32). While this would appear to suggest a development towards a more understanding and intersubjective perspective, it is important to note the difference here between *Battle Magic* and the other texts discussed. First, there is no real acceptance of the differences in culture and society. It is clear through the narration that the audience is being positioned to regard Briar and Rosethorn's way of living, and the society to which they belong, as the 'better' way. They might have sympathy for the soldiers, but it is

because the soldiers are barbarians in their minds who have not been exposed to and thus do not know a 'better' way. Second, unlike the other texts, there is no 'barbarian' focaliser. Katniss of *The Hunger Games* is the sole focaliser of the text; however, she inhabits the barbarian position. *The Chronicles of Lumatere* and *The 100*, while they use privileged focalisers, also take care to have at least one focalising character that represents the barbarian voice. In each case, the previous texts attempt to show the dangers of the barbaric discourse to the construction of self and subjectivity. *Battle Magic*, however, negates the barbarian voice entirely. The events of the novel are related from a privileged Western-signified perspective as they attempt to relate the realities of a culture and society they have no real understanding of, resulting in the affirmation, rather than the dismantling and challenging, of the discourse of barbarism. There is no impetus towards forming a proper relationship with the barbarian other as they are represented as being beyond redemption. The audience is not positioned to be left with the notion that cultural differences are acceptable and equally valid, but rather that one particular way of societal organisation and behaviour, which is codified as Western, is more acceptable than others, leaving the other as inherently inferior and barbaric until such time as they may restructure and conform. It is in cases such as these that the presence of the discourse of barbarism is most concerning, particularly considering that the text is a young adult novel. Young adult novels are deeply ideological in nature and intersect with a stage of life in which young adults are only just becoming socially and politically aware, as well as beginning to process and appropriate the social discourses of their society. As such, the unchallenged use of the barbaric discourse has alarming implications for the way it represents the construction of subjectivity to its audience. Rather than suggesting the need for intersubjectivity and inter-cultural understanding, invoking the barbaric discourse in young adult fantasy fiction without challenging it seems to imply that the discourse is both present in society and also an appropriate method for interacting with and understanding the other. It socialises its audience to not only use the discourse but also accept it into their subjectivity and thus the way in which they perceive, construct, and interpret the world and their own position within it.

Barbaric Implications and Conclusion

Children's literature and literature written for young adults are deeply ideological literary modes. They reflect the social discourses of the context in which they are produced and in many cases operate as a socialising tool that inducts children and young adults into the

dominant ideologies and social discourses of their society. For young adults, the ideologies present within the texts are inextricably connected with questions of subjectivity – that sense of self that develops in relation to other selves and which involves the selective appropriation of the social discourses of one's society. As such, the young adult texts do not merely transmit social ideologies to their audiences but rather present and interrogate their operation within society, and attempt to examine their effect upon the construction of self. Fantasy literature for young adults is a literary genre that is particularly apt for literarily representing this process of closer examination of the social and ideological discourses of a particular social context. It is a deeply ideological genre and, as it explicitly operates in the realm of the impossible, it is able to speculate and play with the implications for the dominance of different social and ideological discourses within modern consensus reality.

One particularly insidious social discourse that operates within modern consensus reality is that of barbarism. It is a discourse that seeks to delineate and explain the 'otherness' of a social or cultural other, but bases this otherness in an ideological assumption of inferiority. In many cases, the discourse of barbarism relates a sense of otherness about another character by constructing that otherness as sub-human. As a result, when used, this discourse justifies a number of reprehensible and violent acts and attitudes against that other. The danger of the barbaric discourse, however, is in its implicitness. The discourse itself is an ancient one and has been naturalised into both our language structures and into Western thought. Over the course of millennia, this discourse has informed, and in many ways dictated, how we understand, define, and relate to the cultural and social others with whom Western societies have come into contact.

Notably, the barbaric discourse operates on a system of silencing – the 'barbarian' is rarely given the space to speak and define their own self in relation to a broader social context. Instead, the discourse of barbarism seeks to define the other's identity and in doing so silences that other. In many ways, the discourse of barbarism colonises the subjectivities and identities of those it seeks to define.

It is at this point that young adult fantasy fiction intercepts the discourse. As fantasy reveals the implicit in society, so to do many fantasy fictions for young adults expose the discourse of barbarism as an essential way in which we construct the other. More than this, however, is the way much of fantasy seeks to challenge the proliferation of the discourse

and ideology of barbarism within wider society, although there are some exceptions. As we have seen in this chapter, a primary method for the challenging of barbarism lies in exposing the damaging effect on the subjectivities of those to which it is applied and, resultantly, to the broader cohesiveness of society. These fantasy texts allow the 'barbarian' to speak, thus demonstrating the real effect of the language of the barbaric discourse on their own sense of self. Barbarism alienates and fractures the subjectivities of those subjected to it. It negatively impacts the ability for the creation of an agentic self and denies the 'barbarian' the right to speak and define their own subjectivity. Finally, barbarism also negatively impacts the possibilities for developing an intersubjective self. It insists upon the superiority of one particular culture or group within society and as a result, the subjectivities of those who do not belong are devalued and cast as inferior, if not defined as sub-human. Such a construction precludes the possibility for one to truly develop an intersubjective subjectivity that acknowledges 'other' selves within society as both distinct and of equal value. This in itself causes division as the identities and subjectivities of large sections of society are both derided and denied through the discourse of barbarism. By giving voice to the suppressed voices and subjectivities of their fictional societies – and the damaging impact it has on both the self as it is able to relate to other selves as well as wider society – the texts powerfully critique the discourse of barbarism and heavily discourage their young audiences from appropriating and accepting it into their own subjectivities.

Conclusion

The discourse of barbarism is ancient and pervasive within contemporary western thought. Although notions of the barbarian, that is an 'other', existed before the Roman period it was during the Roman period that this idea of the barbaric other was formed into a discourse. This discourse dictated how cultures outside of Rome were to be interpreted and interacted with and in particular operated as a way to reinforce the cultural, intellectual, and physical superiority of Rome. This discourse has evolved over the subsequent millennia, however it remained influential in the way western societies interacted and represented cultures outside of the western European world. The discourse of barbarism is ingrained in ideologies of colonialism, racism, and in more recent years white nationalism and political rhetoric regarding conflict in the middle-east. Above all it is a discourse of division, and one that builds an assumption that different cultures cannot coexist in equal standing within society. This paradigm of othering has filtered into contemporary western thought, and as this thesis has shown is particularly present within fantasy literature produced and written for young adults. More significantly than this, however, is the way in which fantasy literature for young adults and children frequently reveals and demonstrates how the discourse of barbarism operates both at a societal and individual level. Furthermore, in many (but not all) cases, this literature seeks to subvert and question the implicit ideologies that are the foundation of the discourse of barbarism, and thereby critique the discourse itself.

As discussed in Chapter 1, barbarism as a discourse was constructed throughout the Roman period based on a number of perceived points of difference between the Romans and the other cultures of the Mediterranean world. These differences existed on a scale, the opposite ends of which were represented by the fierce and wild Germanic peoples to the north of the Italian peninsula, and the heavily restricted and disciplined people of the Persian Empire to the east of the Mediterranean. In reality, however, these differences were rarely based in reality and were more often used in literature in order to negotiate and construct a sense of 'Romanness' in contrast to the barbarian peoples around them. For this purpose, Roman critique of the relative barbarity of the people groups around the Mediterranean was generally organised by first, a consideration of their relative social hierarchies and societal structures, and second the level of perceived effeminacy and performance of masculinity practiced by the people within those societies. As such, the discourse of barbarism evolved to have a very close association with patriarchal ideologies

concerning hegemonic masculinity as well as questions surrounding societal structure and, in particular, the power dynamics between classes.

As demonstrated through Chapters 3 and 4 the structures that form the discourse of barbarism still exist within a modern Western context, particularly with regards to literature and popular culture, although their use and manifestation has clearly shifted. Considerations of social order and the way in which a society is structured are still utilised in constructing the barbaric other. Similarly, criticisms of perceived performances of masculinity still function to suggest a moral and cultural inferiority and thus signify the barbarism of another person or culture. In this way, representations of class structures that are either chaotic and lacking in social order, or are alternatively overly rigid and restrictive, function as a shorthand method for quickly conveying a character or society's barbaric status and thus influencing an audience's responses to and understanding of that character. This is again seen in the gendered values of a society or the performance of a character, where either hyper-masculine, violent, and toxic behaviour signifies the barbaric or barbarity is alternatively indicated by effeminate behaviour that deviates from the speaking culture's norm of hegemonic masculinity. Most importantly, these behaviours and values cannot be represented as barbaric in isolation from the society that constructs them. An effeminate male character on his own is not barbaric, but rather he is represented as barbaric if he is from a culture that is regarded as effeminate by the focalised society and subsequently ridiculed or despised for it. As such, the discourse of barbarism cannot exist without systemic support nor can it be applied to a sole individual without the context of that individual's societal participation and background.

Given the close relationship between the discourse of barbarism, its systemic nature, and the focus on the positioning of an individual within a societal and cultural context, the field of young adult fiction and young adult fantasy fiction in particular, is a well-suited space to explore the impact and implications of the barbaric paradigm, especially as it concerns the construction of subjectivity. As demonstrated throughout this thesis, some texts engage with the ideologies underpinning the discourse consciously, deliberately targeting their young adult audiences and encouraging them to think critically about the ideologies and discourses that create the 'other'. This is seen particularly in *The Chronicles of Lumatere* and *The Hunger Games* series, both of which actively demonstrate the possibilities and kinds of subjectivities that are formed in dialogue with the discourse of barbarism. Other

texts, such as *The 100* are able to challenge aspects of the barbaric discourse, but appear largely unaware of how the discourse functions as a whole and thus unconsciously employ other aspects of it to signify and affirm that barbaric paradigm. There are, however, fantasy texts that fail to truly engage with and critique the discourse of barbarism, instead affirming its use in responses to the cultural other. This is demonstrated particularly in *Battle Magic* which, unlike the other texts discussed throughout this thesis, does not use a 'barbarian' focaliser and instead narrates cultural difference exclusively through the privileged and signified western medieval subject positions. The result of this choice of focalisation is that differences in cultural customs and beliefs are represented as inferior and a consequence of the barbarian 'not knowing better'. In contrast, the focalising characters' cultural background is upheld as a true representation of civility and this construction is not questioned by the text.

As fantasy is primarily concerned with representing reality through metaphor and ideology (that is, through abstract concepts), rather than in attempting to recreate the *fact* of the real world, it possesses more potential to engage with the implicit ideologies within society than other realist genres. As such, this thesis has explored the discourse of barbarism through the medium of fantasy. Given the socialising nature of fiction for children and young adults, and its intersection with the process of the formation of subjectivity, it is important to understand how the discourse of barbarism functions within these texts. If the discourse is used unquestioningly, as it is in *Battle Magic*, the result is a text that discourages the formation of a coherent intersubjectivity that values, respects, and empathises with the cultural other. Rather, the text socialises the discourse, implicitly suggesting that it is acceptable to appropriate such a paradigm of otherness into a reader's subjectivity – that is the way they perceive themselves as part of a society and in relation to other selves. Texts such as the *Chronicles of Lumatere* and *The Hunger Games*, however, particularly through their choices of focalisation, demonstrate the discourse of barbarism as damaging, hurtful, and ultimately non-conducive to creating a functional and harmonious society. These texts call attention to the implicit ideologies of barbarism and directly challenge them, arguing strongly to their audience that this method of othering and of relating to that other is not only unhelpful, but should be avoided and overturned. In its place, the texts argue for the importance of developing empathy towards the cultural other, and for the development of an intersubjectivity that not only recognises cultural difference, but also celebrates it as an equally valid expression of subjectivity. In an increasingly fractured and tribal political context it is important that the developing subjectivities of

young adults are more frequently exposed to these latter kinds of texts, which actively engage with the discourse of barbarism and condemn it.

This thesis has focussed specifically on the appearance of the discourse of barbarism within fantasy literature for young adults; however this discourse should be further studied. As stated in the introduction, the discourse of barbarism is increasingly present within political rhetoric and in the news media. This discourse should thus be studied within the context of those fields and how contemporary western society is being conditioned to respond to the cultural other. Similarly, studies in the discourse of barbarism have possible implications for the field of psychology and psycho-analysis, particularly as it regards migrant and refugee communities and their sense of self and belonging within society. Barbarism should also be studied in the Education field, with careful consideration paid to the kinds of texts that are selected for study in English programs bearing in mind the impact of globalisation on western society. Until now, barbarism almost exclusively been studied within the context of Ancient History; however the discourse created throughout the Roman period, and continued through literature and unconsciously naturalised into western thought, has far-reaching implications for the future cohesion and structuring of western society. As such it is a topic requiring much further interdisciplinary study. This is no less the case for the field of children's literature, where we must consistently continue to ask 'why, and how, do we other?'

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