

Chapter 1

J.M. Coetzee's *The Childhood of Jesus*: Issues and Context

This research deals with how immigrants suffer from crisis of atrocity, injustice and whimsical aggression in the island. It studies how the outsiders suffer from identity crisis in the new island. The sole objective of this thesis is to search the motherland where they have lost their culture and identity. Divide and rule is the strategy which colonizers often use to get their selfish interest fulfilled.

Although all these critics have examined the novel, *The Childhood of Jesus*, from different perspectives, none of them has concentrated upon how much the diasporic situation that outsiders face in the new island. In an unknown territory, a few outsiders come to do trade and commerce. To hoodwink the indigenous people, they distributed the gospel of Christianity. Under the banner of imperialistic glory and power, the majority of the native people are dulled and brainwashed. They are given just the bare means to live. All the resources of the outsider land go to the grip of the supporters of imperialism. The subjects of the colonized land are told that they are the members of the empire and they have thus the responsibility towards the imperial glory and glamour. The other inhabitants of the island come to realize that they are cheated and robbed by the outsiders whom they had mistakenly believed.

***The Childhood of Jesus* as a Postcolonial Text**

The Childhood of Jesus is somewhat Coetzee's distinct novel. Various subjects are interwoven in this novel. It is possible to apply various theoretical perspectives to analyze this novel. But the postcolonial perspective is the most dominant and suitable perspective. A middle aged man and a boy face a disaster on their voyage. Neither the man nor the boy knows each other. Due to the disaster, the boy's mother disappears and both the boy and the middle aged man undergo a shipwreck. Luckily they arrive

at an island where all the inhabitants speak Spanish language. The castaways are left on their own terms to carve out their fate and future. In the alien land of the island, what touches the man is the miserable lamentation of the boy for his mother whom he lost in the sea disaster. They take on different name; the man takes the new name, Simon, and the boy takes another name, David.

In the early days of their wanderings on this island, Simon and David are concerned with how to maintain their daily bread. Simon works in a sea port, and with his wage, both of them survive. He does not have any kind of outer as well as inner pressures to take care of the boy. He is totally strange to the boy. He can eschew taking care of the boy. But he is inwardly moved by the zeal to take care of the boy, look after him and save him from hunger and cold. He is surprised to know what has moved him to think about the safety of the boy. With the help of the people of this island, they live in an apartment. With David's earning, they live happily. The boy befriends Fidel and Simon befriends Elena. Days pass comfortably. But the boy's loneliness and agony of being deprived of mother's love overpower and weaken him. The next undertakes the task of tracking down the missing mother of the boy.

In this novel, there is a clear reference to how an island is intruded and conquered by outsiders. The writer does not say in clear terms that this island is South Africa and the outsiders who intrude and conquer the island are British colonizers. It is subtly hinted that Simon and David are shipwrecked and they are heading towards an island where they probably find shelter and food to eat. The conditions of the inhabitants of this island are no less than the conditions of the colonized people. All the inhabitants of this island act as if they have no right to do anything important. They appear as though they are machines that can be made to function at the tip of the fingers of the boss. There are some clues and signals to indicate that these people have

become slaves in their own country. Various doctrines and creeds are imposed by the outsiders on the mindsets of the native people.

There is no incentive to the people of this island. The native people of this island are neither happy nor sad. They are moderately happy. They think that it is useless to raise their voice as they know that they are fated to remain in the same problematic condition.

David is a boy who is separated from his mother. Simon is touched by the pathetic longing of David for his mother. David narrates that he accidentally got separated from his mother as the boat, in which they were travelling, shipwrecked. The small boy is not sure if his mother is alive or not. Simon also has not seen David's mother. Touched by the plight of the boy, Simon decides to take the boy under his control till he tracks down the missing mother of the boy. Though the boy is not confident that his mother is still alive, Simon's intuition dictates him to believe that David's mother is still alive, and one day the boy and his mother will get united.

The idea of searching for the missing mother is colonial exploitation in the text. The search for missing mother is actually a search for motherland. Motherland on country or a nation is missing as outsiders. Within outside world, the outsider people like Simon, David and other characters, are motherless, insecure and unprotected. But what enables Simon to track down the missing mother of David is his intuitive trust that mother can be found. The idea of freeing motherland from the foreign occupation and conquest is the most viable idea that is hidden in the subtext of the novel.

In the novel the diasporic situation is overshadowed by the compassionate act of Simon who leaves no stone unturned in assisting David to find out his mother whom David thinks is lost in the shipwreck. In the novel, Simon, David and Digo

have become outsiders. Alvaro exploits Simon by giving less money. Simon is an outsider person and he works hard to sustain his life. His main duty is to carry the grain coal into the ship. Elena finds sexual pleasure with Simon and she exploits him sexually. Scnorlenor is a ruler of the island who wants to spread his culture of outsiders. David is removed from the school when he cannot learn the English culture. In the name of civilization or culture, colonizers exploit the native people. The main target of colonizers is to dampen the economic benefit. The natural resources are in the grip of European colonizers.

Simon knows that by helping David, he is not going to get anything. In a way, it is a futile task. Rather he is facing many hassles and nuisance for protecting the child and looking after him. But he does not allow these feelings to hinder his compassionate nature. He thinks that the presence of his mother makes the boy's life normal and meaningful, and that the happy and harmonious life of the boy makes Simon's life meaningful. Simon thinks that he can live meaningfully only in the respectful existence of the boy. It is the boy in the light of whose existence Simon finds his meaning whole and selfhood.

Colonizers' greed for wealth and the gems of the island is so limitless that finally they meet their own doom. In their mission to capture materialistic objects, they develop insanity and callousness. Besides seeking to exploit resources rapaciously, the whites do not hesitate to dominate and dismantle the politico-cultural system of the island. The foundational basis of western colonialism is not to boost and buttress the living standards of the natives of any nonwestern countries. But the underlying force behind colonialism is to dampen the economic resources of the island.

Coetzee dramatizes the lingering effect of colonial legacy. Many years ago

South Africa achieved independence from the colonial rule. It would be quite irrelevant to discuss and dramatize the effect of colonialism directly in the era of globalizing tendency. That is why the author took the soft, veiled and subtle mode of hinting at the lingering fatal effect of colonialism. The plight of David and Simon is indicative and representative of the plight of all the outsider people who go to another country of South Africa during the colonial rule. David is deprived of enjoying motherly affection. The deprivation of David is almost analogous to the deprivation faced by all the people of the people who are outsiders. Simon is also in a difficult predicament, as he is shipwrecked. Allegorically, his shipwrecked condition is reflective of the shipwrecked condition of other people who are estranged and alienated. They are homeless and hopeless no matter what occurs in their lives.

J.M. Coetzee and His Works

J. M. Coetzee is the popular South African novelist of the twentieth century. He writes copiously on the subject of race, colony, empire, apartheid and independence movement. In addition, he also writes on issues that have universal importance; the conflict between the good and the evil and the ultimate victory of the good over the evil is expressed in most of his important novels. Coetzee passed a great deal of his childhood in his homeland, South Africa and closely observed the lives of South Africans. The actual problems of South Africa are directly or indirectly represented in his novels.

Majority of Coetzee's works are instructive. *Duskland* is one of his most representative works. In this novel, Coetzee depicts realistically the horrible effects of war on the psyche of soldiers. This novel describes how soldiers on war are increasingly empty of pity, love, sympathy and humanity as the duration of the war increases. *Waiting for Barbarians* is an incomparably superb novel by him. In this

novel, the author tests the issue of colonialism and Christian ethics is questioned.

What makes this novel unique is deconstructive perspective on the traditional ethics.

The Life and Times of Michael K is his another mature fiction. This novel moves around the life of a simple gardener who happens to be captured in civil war and then imprisoned. In prison, he longs for liberation. Despite the utter lack of liberation from this confinement, he continues to yearn for freedom. His longing for freedom is extraordinarily appealing. *Foe* is his another powerful novel, which is a product of the novelist's revisionist belief. He dwells upon the misery of a slave after his tongue is cut. It has both the characteristics of adventure narrative and slave narrative.

Age of Iron, one of Coetzee's the most distinguished novels exploits the theme of empathy. In this novel, Coetzee tells the story of an African lady who dies of cancer. Sickness and disease appear to be vested with symbol. They refer to the diseases and sicknesses in South African culture. *Master of Petersburg* is based on the life of Russian novelist, Dostoevsky. By the same token, *Disgrace* is about how an individual's attempt to cross the liminal line brings risk like ostracism or excommunication.

All these novels are written in high narrative mode. Problems like colonialism, legacy of imperialism, humanity and Christian ideals are reexamined and reviewed from different angles. *Slow Man* is somewhat different from other works. It shows how the colonized subjects feel emasculated despite their freedom. The very idea of recollecting history of African past is itself the source of torture and guilt. African masculinity is questioned in this work. Apart from novels, narrative accounts and literary works of commercial values, Coetzee has also tried his pen in memoir.

Boyhood is Coetzee's memoir which is full of his personal experiences.

Coetzee is a popular South African novelist of the twentieth century. The brutality of colonizer is a major theme of his novels. He also writes about the racism and independence movement. In addition, he writes about hypocrisy of human being toward animal and nature, the miserable condition of South African people and the origin of morality and possibility of equality in postcolonial society.

Review of Literature

Coetzee's *The Childhood of Jesus* has been interpreted and analyzed from different perspective by many critics. Obi Maduakor points out various aspects Commenting of the novel in the following words:

Coetzee's *The Childhood of Jesus* is a thought-provoking novel. It is noted for its moral preoccupation and dark political realities. The emerging solidarity amidst Simon, David and a woman is striking enough to yield plenty of interpretive possibility. But that does not mean, it is brimful of ambiguity and dubiety. The imagination that conceived it is nurtured by the same moral outrage that occasioned the *Life and Time of Michael K.* and most of the elegies in *Iron bar*. (85)

Maduakor's perspective gives a religious picture along with the moral values and norms in the post-independence South Africa. The genius of Coetzee is matchless. His creative talent knows no dimension. Versatility is the hallmark of Coetzee. In the veil of obscurity, he succeeds in injecting profound philosophical wisdom. Some of the ethical suggestions are vague while others are fruitful to human beings beyond race and culture.

Aisha Karim, the leading critic of Coetzee, is of the opinion that the mythological references to the shipwrecked explorers serve the structural frame of the novel; It is difficult to guess if the shipwrecked persons can stand for universal fear of

being self-dissolution or not. The following lines convey Karim's viewpoint on the core content of *The Childhood of Jesus*:

Speaking of Coetzee's *The Childhood of Jesus*'s deployment of premonition as a central trope in his work, the tormented and shipwrecked figures seem appropriate to the trouble-torn personality of the writer, and that it is also eminently apposite to a trouble-wracked, post-independence Africa. Whether the analogy between popular South African deity and the writer works is viable or not, it is extremely suggestive for our reading of Coetzee's *The Childhood of Jesus* as the very novel that the mythographer singles out for harsh criticism. (11)

It would be fair to say that to revive the myth is to assert the implication of the role of individuality via communal practice and plan. In terms of its nuance of presentation, this novel is drastically different from Coetzee's earlier novel. It should go without saying that the novel is certainly uncharacteristic of Coetzee's oeuvre.

Jane Tammy, views that individual will is celebrated by the author as the agent of social transformation. He adds that Coetzee writes for the sake of affecting certain stroke of transformation in society and that both *The Childhood of Jesus* and *The Life and Time of Michael K* aim at highlighting individual forces. He expresses the following view regarding Coetzee's nuance and tact as an author:

Indeed, both of Coetzee's novels, *Life and Time of Michael K* and the later *The Childhood of Jesus* tend toward questioning of this role of individual will as the agent of social transformation — a role that is generally affirmed in Coetzee's prolific dramatic output. In following the lives of a group of friends, their drunken bouts, their individual love affairs, and their idiosyncrasies, *The Childhood of Jesus* launches

a supremely witty critique of African society, steered by corrupt, laughable, and self-hating elite. On one hand, the novel preempts any possibility of social transformation as coming from these elite. (27)

Tammy maintains that the novel deliberately avoids the need to reflect on the problems of society. Coetzee is more interested in the probable methods of social transformation. Whatever methods he discusses are no longer efficacious and viable. He mistrusts collective activity. *The Childhood of Jesus* is a case in point. As advised by the novelist, it is tough and challenging to reform society via philosophical model. No viable solution is propounded by the author.

The values propagated and embodied by the protagonist are worth considering. Simon's model of handling the fear generated by warfare and his vehement sense of resistance are two facets of the same coin. His unwavering trust in the power of unity is forced to disintegrate as his plan fails. The following lines clarify Nicholas Smithson's view about it:

An exploration of power in the wake of the psychic enervation of Simon is the foremost theme of the novel. It is about the power to rule that is fought for in escape route, or the power that is exerted in prejudice against a group of people who are considered less than human. It is about the power of the mind to conceptualize how to demean a nation of people; how to propagandize one's beliefs; or how to rationalize one's horrible and disgraceful actions. And it is about the power of survival. But power is not the only theme. (54)

Smithson's view is that *The Childhood of Jesus* is not only about the power of rational administration of society or the dominance exhibited by white supremacy or the exploitation of colonization is undoubtedly apt and appropriate. It is also about the

sometimes deadly consequences of self's struggle to subjugate the other, the disintegration of the human spirit, and the complete destruction of a way of life.

Simon wants the rest of the world to partake of that mysterious substance. He has the vision of reforming society through pacifism.

Dominating nature of power is partly hinted at and partly exposed in the novel, from the observation of protagonist's predicament. It is easier to catch the glimpse of this sort of thematic substance. Abdulrazk Gurnah comments on this fiction in somehow similar way and analyzes the discursive aspect of the way power operates and percolates. He says:

Whether it is real or perceived supremacy, whether it is inherent or artificial authority, the theme of power dominates both the novellas in Coetzee *The Childhood of Jesus*. In the first novella, there is the authority of Simon over David. But this authority is parental. It is nurturing and safeguarding. Simon, because of subservient position in the alien land, has the authority as well as the obligation to make sure that his employees' work matches the criteria of the position or fulfills the needs of the department. (68)

Gurnah suggests that Simon has full authority over David. He wants to save David from every difficulty. He is superior to David. He makes his life meaningful by helping him.

Emily Cappel expressed the difference between Western culture and Asian culture. She is determined to demystify the conscious choice of the title for this novel. Her view is expressed in the following excerpt:

The middle part of *The Childhood of Jesus* contains excerpts from Simon's report. In it, he discusses the aims and achievements of

propaganda and the difference between its affect on people from Western cultures and those from Asian cultures. One theory that Simon pays special attention to is that of the father-voice and how it works to control the common citizen as well as how it fails as a device of propaganda. (34)

Intermixed with the narrative of the report are Simon's interior monologues. His comments tend to exaggerate his position, such as when he refers to himself as a hero of resistance. Bleak vision of life is reflected in this novel. This vision is provocative of fear of life. Actually, unknown and unfamiliar beings employed to keep an eye on Simon and David. The very title of this novel evokes the sense of divine innocence which is redemptive in orientation. A kind of lingering anthropomorphic pride is entirely accountable for the inception of negative vision almost verging on despair and fatalism.

Annie Gagiano traces stylistic elements in the novel, *The Childhood of Jesus*.

About stylistic element he asserts:

Coetzee's many fictions, his autobiographies, essays, direct political statements and his other writings are probably all better known for their lucid presentation. Though lucidity is obviously present in these works, certain degree of obscurity is present. Relative obscurity is an index of absence of admiration-more highly rated. The richness of this text is nevertheless in one way measurable. It is one of the few African Anglophone novels which brought irresistibly to mind when so disparate and wide-ranging a list of topics as bodies' identities, subcultures and repression is mentioned. (76)

As claimed by Gagiano, it is a sustained, complex and intensely dramatic evocation of

the ancient and urgent question of how violent political and social repression is to be opposed. The entire novel is replete with disparate social and political identities as well as the presentation of one main subculture. Sometimes, it aims at projecting insistent power of ruthless repression.

Thomas Benton contends that *The Childhood of Jesus* is the product of Coetzee's attempt to cope with hatred and cruelty which are implanted in the consciousness of every South African citizen, following the time in which western colonizers made up their minds to shift power to the native inhabitants of South Africa. Benton puts forward his views in the following words:

Fiction has few characters as utterly loathsome as Simon. Coetzee takes on envy, hatred, and iniquity, bringing the reader to identify with a character so despicable that they shudder to recognize their own empathy. The opening chapters create an atmosphere that promise to be a much-needed deviation from typical narratives of heroism and goodness. David's character can also be read as a version of the author's younger self; some experiences seem too vivid to be imagined. (41)

The loathsomeness and wild passion of African citizens worried by the haunting experiences of war are kept in the novel with a huge sense of dedication on the part of the novelist. Benton is more interested in the analysis of the inner malaises of the characters like Simon and David. Though outer challenges, which arose out of the inhabitants' suspicious nature, are inner psychological conditions of characters, are of utmost importance.

Wylie Henderson does not hesitate to give credit to Coetzee for humanizing the entire region of Africa via allegorical mode of representation. According to

Henderson, Coetzee is the first South African author who is conscious of the culture of empathy. As an author, he seeks to expose and externalize some of promising and pessimistic plight of South Africans to the world of Western Hemisphere. Coetzee is the first writer to rely on textual strength to project the power and plight of South African to the Western world. Henderson puts forwards the following view with respect to the possibility of interaction between the dilapidated African community and the liberal Western world:

Coetzee may have achieved a political goal by humanizing a region still obscure in Western thought. He describes historical world of South Africa at the time of the end of colonialism. This issue is implicitly embedded in the subtext of *The Childhood of Jesus*.

However, war and political conflict take the back seat to the human dramas that occur because of and — more importantly — despite of such events. The author's simple language is surprisingly effective in explaining the complexity of emotions, characters and dynamics which could exist in any culture. (76)

Henderson maintains that the driving force behind the creation of *The Childhood of Jesus* is undoubtedly political and historical. Without doubt, this novel can hardly survive on its own. Prior to the publication of this novel, Postcolonial culture of South Africa remained a mystery which haunted the world of readership of Western Europe. When this novel circulated to the Western world, many facts about the culture and geographical oddities of South Africa became accessible to the western world.

Mark Seltzer holds the view that characters in Coetzee's fictions are guided and governed by the environmental pull and tug. Factors found in the local surrounding produce quirky effect in those who dwell in it. Coetzee is acutely aware

of this condition. Characters in his novels are expressive of the effect of environment.

The Childhood of Jesus is a case in point:

Whilst there is always a confusion in Coetzee's *The Childhood of Jesus* about to what extent the characters are mere manifestations of their environment and as such, powerless ciphers, unable to perform any act of agency, or whether they are to some extent morality tales, with protagonists attempting to work with and against their environments to achieve some sort of epiphany or new mode of living, *The Childhood of Jesus* can certainly be read in a more positive fashion, and as both evidence of a death of affect and a railing against it. (75)

Seltzer is too naïve to believe that *The Childhood of Jesus* is concerned with the way readers have come to understand characters' feeling and their role in emotional behavior.

This thesis is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, the researcher introduces diasporic situation in the novel elaborates the hypothesis, and quotes different critics' views regarding the novel. Coetzee's autobiographical experience is also slightly hinted to examine the issue of diasporic. In the second chapter the researcher discusses the postcolonial theory which examines the spectrum of diasporic experience from non-western perspective. This theory gives the researcher an insight into how to dismantle Euro-centric assumptions. The third chapter consists of the thorough analysis of the text from diasporic perspective. In this chapter, pertinent examples and evidences are taken from the text and then presented in this research logically. The last chapter contains the important findings of the research.

Chapter 2

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial criticism is a type of cultural studies that includes the cultural groups, practices and discourses in the literary form in the colonized worlds. It tends to raise the omnipotent voice against colonialism, imitates or explores marginalization, suffocation, alienation, mimicry and identity crisis of the colonized people. Postcolonial theory becomes an apt and appropriate tool to examine the issue of colonial exploitation in Coetzee's *The Childhood of Jesus*.

The idea of conquering other people's country, culture and civilization serves as the stepping stone on the way to colonialism and imperialism. After the eighteenth century, Europeans went to different countries of the third world: African and Indian continent, and Latin American countries to make a conquest and dominion. In this course, they set up control over the culture and resources of many nonwestern countries. Western people's adventure began from colonialism and then to the imperialism. By borrowing appropriate insight from the postcolonial theory to imperialism, the present research tests the proposed hypothesis.

After the eighteenth century, European people went to different continents in search of raw materials and new resources. They had also other motive, that is, to explore new markets for the goods and commodities that were produced abundantly in the factories of their countries. They came to the third world countries with bullet, the Bible and business. With bullet, they conquered those who rebelled against them. With the Bible, they converted non Christians and pagans into pious and docile followers of Christianity. At first those Europeans distributed the rhetoric that they were civilized white people who had the responsibility to educate, uplift and enlighten the nonwhite. But it was just a hoax to hoodwink the innocent people of the third

world countries. Contrary to their promise, the white began to establish control over the native inhabitants of the third world. Finally, the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized took the form of the relationship of domination.

Colonialism is a form of oppression. It is style of domination. Its range and scope is indescribably huge. When the process of colonialism takes the organized form and can operate from center, it takes the form of imperialism.

Complicity of Capitalism with Colonialism

Capitalism is a particular form of commodity production. It is a production of goods for sale in the market. This form of economy exists where there are many independent producers who produce goods for sale rather than for their own use. The use value of a commodity and its exchange value are different concepts. The production of use values is “absolutely essential to the survival of any society, but in a commodity-producing system this is obscured by the fact that the producer is interested only in the exchange value of the product” (Brewer 26). Capitalism is the product of ongoing growth of colonialism and imperialism. In Capitalism the men of productions are in the hand of capitalism. They get more profit by exploiting poor people. The rapid growth of capitalism takes the form of imperialism.

Anthony Brewer makes the following remarks about the feature of capitalism:

Labor-power has a single price, governed by the value of labor-power, and, when prices of production are introduced (in the third volume), there is a single general rate of profit which accrues to all capitals. This is an abstraction, of course, and throughout the three volumes Marx used examples to link the abstract theory to a far more complex reality. Within the theory, though, there is no space for any differences in economic conditions between different countries. Marx’s conception of

the capitalist mode of production is diametrically opposed to that of dependency theorists like Frank, for whom the center–periphery relation is an essential feature of capitalism. (26)

Brewer also opines that the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is the relationship of domination. The colonizers dominate, exploit and exclude the colonized people by means of production. The business is motto whereby the Colonizer seeks to establish dominion over the colonized. The conflict takes place between two classes.

Capitalism has a logic which can be captured by abstract theory. But its origins are a once-for-all process that must be explained in terms of specific historical circumstances. Since the defining feature of capitalism is the relation between a class of propertyless free workers, and a class of private owners of the means of production, the essence of the problem is to explain how these two classes come into being. Brewer makes the following view on the evolution of capitalism and its subsequent effect:

The decay of the feudal mode of production created a fertile environment for the growth of capitalism, while the Asiatic mode did not, because feudalism involved a form of private property in land (the main means of production in a principally agrarian society), while the Asiatic mode of production was based on communal ownership of land. This is the real key even to the Oriental. (37)

Thus, during the evolution period of capitalism through feudal mode, the Asiatic mode became an obstacle on the way for the capitalist. However, the waves of capitalism moved ahead unobstructed.

Usury has a revolutionary effect in all pre-capitalist modes of production. It

destroys and dissolves those forms of property on whose solid foundation and continual reproduction in the same form the political organization is based. Capital, machinery, mines, factories etc. are the key productive factors and these are owned and controlled by capitalists. In a capitalist society capitalists own and control the productive resources, workers own only their labor and work for capitalists, who then own the product and sell it at a profit. The key to understanding a society at any point in history is to focus first on the mode of production. In feudal society, land was the crucial productive factor and the feudal lords owned and controlled it.

In a capitalist society capitalists own society's productive resources and employ workers to operate these for a wage when the owners focus on profits. The relations of production take a form in which control over the application of productive forces is in the hands of capitalists. However, as time goes on the situation becomes less and less beneficial. The new social relations of production begin to hinder the full development and application of the new forces of production. For example, in the late feudal era, it was not in the interests of the lords to allow land to be sold or laborers to sell their labor freely to any employer. These practices were inhibited although they eventually became essential in the capitalist mode of production, and therefore in the increase in production and benefits that capitalism brought.

The relation between the forces and the social relations of production and the consequences this generates is the major dynamic factor in history which is the primary cause of social change. This is a major contradiction in contemporary capitalist society. Such contradictions have been intrinsic in all class societies. Each has developed its contradictions that have become more and more glaring, to the point where they led to revolutionary change. In a capitalist society, the capitalist class benefits most. Capitalists are those who own and control the means of production and

receive a disproportionate share of wealth, power, privileges and status. History is basically about the struggle between classes for dominance.

The history of all existing societies is the history of class struggles. In any historical era, the inherent contradictions or class conflicts come to a head in some sort of revolution and are resolved when a new social order stabilizes. The thesis of capitalism and the antithesis of the proletariat will issue into a synthesis which will eventually see the achievement of a classless society because it has been the existence of class conflict which has generated change. In a classless society, the dialectical process will come to an end. This does not mean that there can be no further change or progress, but it does seem to mean that there will be no further political change.

Labor power is the worker's capacity to produce goods and services. The long-run wage workers receive will depend on the number of labor hours it takes to produce a person who is fit for work. Capitalists must enjoy a privileged and powerful position as owners of the means of production and are therefore able to ruthlessly exploit workers. Colonial exploitation knows no bound if capitalism and capitalism induced colonial practice gain ground rapidly. Marx in Communist Manifesto insists that the development of the forces of production was the essential historical function of capitalism:

The bourgeoisie cannot exist without constantly revolutionizing the instruments of production, and thereby the relations of production, and with them the whole relations of society. The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. (37)

Capitalism expands, and draws all other societies into its orbit. Marx argued that, this

outward expansion was driven by a need for markets. Capitalist economies progress through a sequence of booms and slumps, so there are always periods of glut in which sellers search desperately for markets.

The realm of culture – of reading, writing and representation – does not exist fully beyond the social, historical and material matters of the globe. John MacCleod has suggested that, culture may help to normalize and encourage European colonialism:

Neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition. Both are supported and perhaps even impelled by impressive ideological formations that include notions that certain territories and people require and beseech domination, as well as forms of knowledge affiliated with domination: the vocabulary of classic nineteenth-century imperial culture is plentiful with such words and concepts as ‘inferior’ or ‘subject races’, ‘subordinate peoples’, ‘dependency’, ‘expansion’, and ‘authority’. (8)

At one level – not the only one, of course, but an important one nonetheless – colonialism was a matter of representation. The production of culture could also reproduce imperial ideological values, and cultural creativity contributed greatly to lubricating the machine of colonization.

In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said captures the basic thought behind colonization and imperialism. This line “They’re not like us, and for that reason deserve to be ruled” (36). Shows the basis on which the project of imperialism is constructed. “The colonized,” Said maintains, “becomes the other, the not me. Hence, the established binary opposition of ‘the West’ ‘the OTHER’ must be abolished along with its intricate web of racial and religious prejudices” (Cultural and Imperialism

64). This erroneous view of humanity creates a simplistic interpretation of human experience. It must be replaced by one based on narrative, a historical view that emphasizes the variety of human experiences in all cultures.

This narrative view does not deny differences, but presents them in an objective way. “Scholarship”, asserts Said, “must be derived from firsthand experience of a particular region, giving voice and presence to the critics who live and write in these regions, not scholarship from afar or secondhand representation” (73). Postcolonial theory moves beyond the bounds of traditional literary studies. It investigates social, political, and economic concerns of the colonized and the colonizer. No matter which methodology a postcolonial critic may choose, it matters greatly whether or not the theorist/critic has been a colonial subject.

Cultural imperialism is the part and parcel of the thorough system of economic exploitation and political oppression of the colonized peoples. Western literature is an integral part of that system of oppression and genocide. No less so than postcolonial theory, moreover the African tradition proposes that criticism is a practice. It can play an important role in the ongoing struggle for the political and economic, as well as cultural liberation of the Third World. These practices of cultural resistance take a number of forms. Many of these have their analogue in postcolonial theory. To begin with, there is a long tradition of what has now come to be known as colonial discourse analysis in African criticism. The simple truth is glossed over in Western criticism of his work is due to the fact that white racism against Africa is such a normal way of thinking.

Anthony Brewer points out some of the important clues as to how representation of culture takes place in a discourse and how the process of interpreting culture turns out to be problematical. Brewer works out some sorts of plan to narrow

down the gap between cultures as such and the textually represented culture. Brewer's ideas are reflected below:

As people who belong to same culture must share a broadly similar conceptual map, so they must also share the same way of interpreting the signs of a language. In order to interpret them, we must have access to the two systems of representation: to a conceptual map which correlates the sheep in the field with the concept of a sheep: and a language system which is visual language, bear some resemblance to the real thing of looks like it in some way. The relationship in the system of representation between sign, the concept and the object to which they might be used to refer is entirely arbitrary. (72)

As claimed by Brewer, the meaning is constructed by the system of representation. It is constructed and fixed by the code, which sets up the correlation between our conceptual system and our language system.

One way of thinking about culture is in terms of these shared conceptual maps, shared language systems and the codes which govern the relationships of translation between them. Not because such knowledge is imprinted in their genes, but because they learn its conventions and so gradually become culture persons. They unconsciously internalize the codes which allow them to express certain concepts and ideas through their systems of representation. But of our social, cultural and linguistic conventions, then meaning can never be finally fixed.

The Concept of Colonial Mentality

Edward Said puts an end to the difference between East and West, as orientalist put in discourse of orientalism. He says that with the start of European colonization, the Europeans came in contact with the lesser developed countries of the

East. They found their civilization and culture very exotic, and established the science of orientalism. Orientalism is the study of the orientals or the people from these exotic civilization. Edward Said argues that the Europeans divided the world into two parts; the East and the West or the Occident and the Orient or the civilized and the uncivilized. This was totally an artificial boundary. And it was laid on the basis of the concept of them and us or theirs and ours.

Said's ideas, which constitute the theoretical framework, are presented below in his own words:

The Europeans used orientalism to define themselves. Some particular attributes were associated with the orientals, and whatever the orientals weren't the occidentals were. The Europeans defined themselves as the superior race compared to the orientals; and they justified their colonization by this concept. They said that it was their duty towards the world to civilize the uncivilized world. The main problem, however, arose when the Europeans started generalizing the attributes they associated with orientals, and started portraying these artificial characteristics associated with orientals in their western world through their scientific reports, literary work, and other media sources. (87)

The trend to divide geography, culture and civilization takes root in the discourses of orientalism. The Europeans see their advantage in drawing boundary between the culture of the West and the culture of the East. By so doing they intend to make their culture acceptable universal. On the strength of the universality of their culture, the westerners intend to take economic and political benefit. As claimed by Said, orientalism generates those truths regarding to the cultures and history of orientals. Those truths are political truths. The truths and knowledge that arise from the

discourse of orientalism are politically charged. They are unable to give exact reality regarding how the oriental culture really is. The truths that are commonly found in the discourses of orientalism favor the colonial interest.

Orientalism, the discourse of the West about the East propounded by Edward Said, a radical Palestinian American critic, is the outcome of the extended form of Michael Foucault's theory of discourse. The very concept has become the foundation stone for setting up the root of postcolonialism. The truth created by the western writers is a so called truth, for this truth is created in terms of binary opposition: for example, westerners are civilized, educated and rational, whereas, easterners are barbaric, uncivilized and spiritual. About the crisis in the oriental world and orientalist, Said in *Crisis (in Orientalism)* says:

As a judge of the Orient, the modern Orientalist does not, a believe and even says, stand apart from its objectives. His human detachment, whose sign is the absence of sympathy covered by professional knowledge, is weighted heavily with all the orthodox attitudes, perspectives, and moods of Orientalism that I have been Orientalized. An unbroken arc of knowledge and power connects the European or Western statesman and the Western Orientalists; it forms the rim of the stage containing the Orient. (304).

Edward Said also opines that it is very challenging and so seems impossible to go totally against the colonial foundations as they are set up by one side's purpose that dominates the subalterns. It is also true that the colonial practitioners were well aware of the fact that the eastern world governed by them would not be under their control forever.

John MacCleod observes if the postcolonial denotes the closure of a previous

condition. The postcolonial critique celebrates globalism for the volatility of the cultural flows it brings about. The problem can be located even further, in the failure to engage with the prior terms, colonialism and imperialism. The addition of postcolonial to the critical vocabulary remains controversial. The formal independence won by colonial populations does not automatically imply decolonization and independence, since an active colonialism continues to operate in the form of transnational corporatism. Postcolonial preoccupation is with the representational systems of colonialism and imperialism. Those pursuing a postcolonial critique are able to hail the vigorous contestation of ideologically contrived knowledge. This knowledge is tantamount to sounding the death-knell of the West's continuing power. It also marks the end of the need to examine the political economy and international social relationships of neo-colonialism.

Reflection on Subaltern Theory

Subaltern theory is a literary theory which provides a systematic discussion of oppressed class of society. 'Subaltern,' meaning inferior rank, is a term adopted by Antonio Gramsci to refer to those people in society who are subjected to the hegemony of ruling class. Subaltern people may include peasants, workers and other groups of society.

Gyatri Chakravorty Spivak proposes a theory of subalternity in her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" In this essay, she vindicated the limitations of the subalterns, asking "Can the subaltern speak?" (283). By the term 'subaltern', Spivak means the oppressed subjects or more generally those "of inferior rank" (283). She goes on to add that "In the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (287). Spivak concludes the essay by reiterating her standpoint that "the subaltern cannot speak"

(308). Her statement “subaltern cannot speak” has litigated flames of controversy in the post-colonial context.

Spivak’s statement is actually an answer for all the questions. It is an outcome of her lifelong search for truth, and it is being formulated on the basis of socio-cultural backgrounds. The theory formulates that the subaltern can speak but others do not have the patience to listen to them. The message conveyed by the sender does not reach the receiver as it is hindered by the element of noise. Articulation is an involuntary act by the human beings but to interpret things in the real sense takes conscious effort on the part of the listeners.

The subalterns are made to believe that they belong to an inferior race. They are indoctrinated to believe that they are not fit for making any real contribution to the society. They are exhorted to make dreadful comparison. Such type of comparisons subjugates the will and aspirations of these inferior people.

The social dogmas have not only made illusions of the illiterate and lower class women but also the educated and economically sound. "They are to be called hegemonized if readers take the words of Antonio Gramsci" (6). Gramsci comparatively familiarizes the history of the subaltern groups as being as complex as the history of the dominated class and their struggles. Even when they raised their voices against the complacent elite group, the subaltern were still subject to the activities of the elites. He opines that the history of subaltern class has less access to the means and social and cultural institutions by which they can construct their representation.

The use of the term subaltern is drawn from Gramsci’s writings referring to “subordination in terms of class, caste, gender, race, language and culture, and was used to signify the centrality of the dominant/dominated relationships in history” (5).

Subaltern studies develop a major critique against Euro-centric narratives of history and their influence on the production of knowledge in the social sciences. It dwells on an aspect that cognitively feeds into creating/sustaining particular forms of power relations. Rather than omitting the history of the dominant, the Subaltern project aims to “reify and celebrate the writing of history from a non-elitist worldly lens; history from the margins” (84).

In order to gain power the colonizers who are in center control the subaltern people by means of cultural and moral persecution and as a result the people who are marginalized in the society think that colonizers are superior and they are inferior people thus colonizer rule over them and ruthlessly exploit. Gramsci writes:

The supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as domination and as intellectual and moral leadership. Coercive social control, or domination, typically operates through the State.

Consensual social control manifests itself as intellectual and moral leadership. It derives from those institutions and practices associated with civil society. It should be stressed that State and civil society do not always operate exclusively, and coercive and consensual forms of social control can be found in both spheres. (37)

Religious practices and coercive authority operate along a spiritual dimension. It is not therefore physically violent. To a dissenting individual, the threat of excommunication or social exclusion may be just debilitating. However, the term hegemony is essentially used to refer to the intellectual, moral and cultural unity.

Ranjit Guha is a leading post colonial theorist who continues to identify marginalized people of Indian society. His later contributions to the project reflect the internal shift as well. He advocates, “Those interested in questions of subalternity

should alter their methods of inquiry by hearing the small voices of history as a way to further challenge the dominant statist discourses” (76). He proposes that turning to oral traditions is a way to write about women and their experiences in colonial and postcolonial India for the next stage of the project.

He also argues:

"By making such a methodological shift within Subaltern Studies, new opportunities for further study would immediately become apparent. Perhaps such a statement was an acknowledgement of the silences within the project and a claim for theoretical and methodological openness on subaltern themes that remained to be written” (102). The internal plurality is encouraged and celebrated. Guha continues to identify the subaltern as subordinated and marginalized within Indian society.

Guha argues that the politics of subaltern classes in colonial India did not exhibit the characteristics of the rural groups described by Gramsci. Specifically, he disagrees with one of Gramsci’s central claims that “Subaltern groups are always subject to the activity of ruling groups, even when they rebel and rise up”(10). Guha states that the domain of subaltern politics autonomous from elite politics. He says “It neither originated from elite politics nor did its existence depend on the latter” (11). He claims that subaltern politics tends to be violent because subaltern classes are forced to resist “the conditions of elite domination and extra-economic coercion in their everyday lives” (16). Guha explains that factors of domination and coercion were not simply based or determined by the class dynamics in Indian society. He points out that British colonialism leaves an uneven impact on economic and developments in India.

Therefore, it is necessary to understand how different sections of society are affected from area to area. Within Indian historiography, “the emphasis on understanding politics on the basis of class structures had obscured the fact that one group which is dominant in one region or locality of India, was actually dominated in another” (21). Guha claims that it is imperative for the historian to understand the heterogeneity and ambiguity within society. By so doing they must sort out these tensions on the basis of a close and judicious reading of evidence.

Chapter 3

Reflection of Diasporic Situation in *The Childhood of Jesus*

This research examines how diasporic situation is reflected in the novel colonial politics and domination are projected in the novel. Two different brands of colonial realities coexist, one foiling the other. The reality of violence during the transitional period of South Africa is put beside the reality regarding how people, tormented by violence, affirm their hope and struggle and create a secure horizon of future. Despair and hope, negation and affirmation, violence and emerging pacifism and various other contradictory fragments of reality are juxtaposed in the novel. The entire generation of Simon is caught up in the complex maelstrom of violence, murder, agony and pessimism. The transitional society of Africa offers despair, unexpected death and series of pain and pathos.

Simon is made homeless and helpless due to the terrific pressure of the ruler who lives in island. Even in the midst of pessimism and alienation, characters like Simon and David cherish secure future which brings stability, order, peace and progress. The present reality of diasporic feeling stands face to face with the reality of hope and struggle for the establishment of peace, order and hope. The notion that human beings are always more than a number of problems they face is the driving force behind the struggle of shipwrecked characters like Simon and David. In the very beginning of the novel, the reality of violence that sporadically occurs in the transitional society of Africa is presented.

The inhabitants of the island are separated from their parents due to the forceful presence of outsiders. In the novel, a middle aged man and a child of six or thereabout are shipwrecked while travelling by boat. Neither the middle aged man nor the child is familiar to each other. They quit their country for reasons which are not

mentioned in the book. They are heading towards a new land where they could carve out their fate and future in a constructive way. They are hopeful that they would reach a place which furnishes food, shelter, settlement and opportunities to go ahead in their lives. But they are now fearful because the boat whereby they traveled is wrecked. It is difficult for them to reach the destination. But they get assistance from other people who are travelling on the same sea. With the help of the men, the middle aged man and the child reach Navilla, an imaginary island.

In the island people are forced to endure hunger and thirst, there. The moment they enter this island, they allow themselves to be baptized. The middle aged man takes on the name, Simon and the child, David. With two different names, they enter the island which they assume could furnish the things that they need to proceed ahead prosperously and peacefully in their lives. Ever since Simon and David land on the island, He is driven by the nonreciprocal sense of responsibility and the Later is a total stranger another. But Simon is ethically induced to think about the other. Simon is moved and motivated by the idea of being philanthropically concerned with the plight and predicament of David.

The problems which David faces on the island are identical with the problems Simon undergoes. One's condition is no less than of the other. But instead of reflecting on his own problematical situation, Simon is inwardly induced to think and act with a view to uplift the condition of David. Simon's approach to the child, David, is so unique that utilitarian and pragmatic concern is totally absent in it. Simon acts honestly to raise the confidence and conscience of David. Prior to coming to the island, Simon used to think about David as the other with whom he has nothing to do. But after they land on the island and struggle to survive, Simon begins to think that for his smooth survival and existence, the presence of David is a must.

In the novel, Simon is altruistic in his regard and love for the boy. On the island David is helpless. He is six years old. He has faced the problem of hunger. He is in homeless situation has no food, shelter and clothes. He is compelled to spend the life of animal. In the island, the native people are guided by the selfish nature, they are Elena, Anu and Alvaro. When he requests for the food they do not give him food and clothes. He is deprived of the natural right. His natural rights are in peril. He is badly exploited by the European Colonizers. They exploit them. He is living in plight able condition so, Simon helps him. They have no feeling of humanity.

Simon's Problem of Hunger

Simon increasingly comes to know what is to become of him only in relation with the boy. Simon is not driven his survival by the idea of ethics and humanitarian assistance. But he is guided by the ethics of ethics. His humanitarian support is not guided by reciprocal sense of cooperation. It is a fine example of the accomplishment of the nonreciprocal sense of responsibility which is higher than the commonplace notion of responsibility.

When an inhabitant of the island acts disdainfully and ignores the hunger faced by both Simon and David, Simon gives the reasoning which is expressive of how much concerned he is with the problem of the boy. The following extract exemplifies Simon's real compassion for the boy's hunger:

We are hungry, this child and I. Forcefully he draws the boy to him.

We are hungry all the time. You tell me our hungry is something outlandish that we have brought with us, that it does not belong here, that we must starve it into submission. When we have annihilated our hunger, you say, we will have proved we can adapt, and we can then be happy for ever after. But I do not want to starve the dog of hunger! I

want to feed it! Do not you agree? He shakes the boy. The boy burrows in under his armpit, smiling, nodding. Do not you agree, my boy? (30)

The inhabitants of the island are indoctrinated into the socialistic line of thinking. They impose condition on the outsiders if they want to survive on the island. Extreme hunger is a precondition for the outsiders to survive on the island. Unless and until the outsiders like Simon and David endure extreme hunger, they would not be ready to adapt to the peculiar socialistic atmosphere of the island. To the extent to which an individual can endure the hunger, Simon endures. But when he sees the dwindling conditions of the boy, he argues with the socialist inhabitant vehemently.

J.M. Coetzee shows the inhuman activity of economic exploitations of outsider through the characters of Alvaro and Simon. He does hard work for his survival. He does all work every day. He wants to obey the command of his owner. He teaches many things to him. Simon is like a worker or free worker. Alvaro gives low pay to Simon, who wants to do work by forgetting himself. The narrator describes:

The break lasts only ten minutes than the work of unloading resumes by the time the foreman blows his whistle for the end of the day. He has carried thirty-one sacks out of the hold on to wharf. In a full day he could carry fifty. Fifty sacks a day two tons more or less not a great deal. He had no money. He was hungry and thrust. (44)

From the above lines one can surmise how Simon has become the victim of Alvaro. Simon has not leisure time to rest from his heavy work. Alvaro also gives less money to Simon. This shows the economic exploitation of outsider upon outsider people.

Quest for Cultural Root in the Novel

Coetzee is assured that Simon and David have been burnt in the conflagration of English culture. They are blindly accepting English culture. They are losing their own native culture and marginalized by British people. The novelist shows the exploitation of culture by presenting the two characters Senor Lenor and David: the former an English teacher and David is a student who wants to learn English culture because he feels proud of it. The teacher wants to remove him from school when he cannot learn his culture. It is the narrator who reports about the teacher and David.

The following extract proves this point:

Our experience is that it works best if the child is in residence. He has no longer prepared to have David in his class and after making my own enquires I can see why? It is better to remove from school and turn in to home environment. Which he clearly finds unsettling cannot be the solution therefore we must take some alternative bolder step. He is no longer prepared David once to continual challenge with me. (210)

The above line shows the alienated experience of David in the school. He cannot learn the lesson in school. His teacher insults him. This shows the cultural alienation of outsiders.

Furthermore, David in the School wants to learn the culture which is related with his myth. But, he does not make progress in education Senor Lenor wants to teach his culture. In this context, the narrator report:

He clings to the book because it has pictures. It is generally not good practice to learn to read from books with pictures. The picture distract the mind from the words and Don Quiaxote whatever else may be said about it is not a book for beginner readers. David's spoken language is

not bad but he cannot read. He cannot even sound the letter of alphabet. I have never come across such extreme case. I would like to propose that we call in a specialist a therapist. (212)

The above line shows the cultural dislocation of David. He can not learn foreign culture. Neither he learns his own culture nor he learns foreign culture.

Novilla is an island filled with tenta-mount natural resources. The main target of western people is to exploit natural resources. The main duty of Simon is to carry the loads of the food and coal into the ship. The following extract highlights this point.

I help to load and unload in the ship like this one I am sorry I cannot take you on board but it is a dangerous. One day when you are older is it galleon it does not qualify as a galleon it is what we call a coal fired ship that means it burns coal to work the engine tomorrow they will be loading coal for the return voyage. That will be done at wharf. It is a nasty job because coal leaves black dust all over me. (95).

Simon carries the load of the coal into the ship. Novilla is a place of natural resources having food or coal, silver, etc. He is spending painful life. It is very difficult to handle his life.

Simon wants to uplift his life by working hard. It is very difficult to handle his life. He works near the sea port. The tons of grains are taken to European country by enslaving the African people. He says that it is nothing to work there. In this context he says:

“The idea of justice, for instance, we all desire to live under a just dispensation, a dispensation in which honest toil brings due reward.

And that is a good desire, good and admirable. But what we are doing

here at the docks will not help to bring about that dispensation. What we do here amounts to no more than a pageant of heroic labour. And that pageant depends on an army of rats to keep it going - rats who will work night and day gobbling down these tons of grain we unload.

(115)

The above lines show the exploitation of natural resources in which African native people have not got the chance to utilize them. They are compelled to spend miserable life. They are living in illusion. They have worked for other.

Novillians are temperamentally volatile. They cannot understand the complicated characteristic of the case under consideration. Thus, instead of trying to understand the case seriously, the police inspector tries to demonstrate his irritation and anger without any rational cause. He hardly reveals the sense of responsibility and sobriety while exercising state power. The following extract illustrates the point:

Novillians are harassed psychologically. They are brainwashed. They had read through the files conscientiously, but at the end of it he was still unable to understand why the case was so important. To him it seemed a thoroughly trivial affair. There appeared to be no rational grounds to substantiate the principal source's belief that a retired school master in his village was being used by a foreign – trained agent of some kind, disguised as a weaver, to run a network of extremists.

(137)

Novillians has reveal the brutish temperament while dealing with the controversial case of investigating the terrorist case. There is the danger of using state power and mechanism to terrorize innocent people. Coetzee shows the psychological alienation of the outsider by presenting two characters Simon and David. When the boat is

crashed, they come to island. David loses his letter of his mother. All the time he searches mother. He is anxious about his mother. Simon and David search the mother whom David lost in the shipwreck. David says “we want to search the mother (45). It shows that psychologically they have lost their motherland, their identity. All the native people of South Africa are psychologically exploited by the brutality of colonizer.

Altruistic sense and belief in the power of collective conscience are totally absent. Survivors move from here to there, but they find no sign of change and hope. The following extract highlights this sort of predicament faced by the survivors of the disaster:

The blackness he woke to on those nights was sightless and impenetrable. Blackness is there to hurt your ears with listening. Often he had to get up. No sound but the wind in the bare and blackened tree. He rose and stood tottering in that cold autistic dark with his arms out held for balance while the vestibular calculations in his skull cranked out their reckonings. An old chronicle is there seek out the upright. No fall but proceeded by a declination. He took great marching steps into the nothingness, counting them against his return. (114)

Living conditions are extremely detrimental. Survivors like Simon struggle hard to maintain their bare lives. They have nothing except their bare lives. They do not have things to eat and place to sleep. Struggles for the crude sense of survival continue. Survivors are totally fragmented. They are divided into gangs. The sole concern of each gang is to seek daily food which they collect by plundering the remnant of resources and by killing their own brethren for human flesh. A few survivors like the son put emphasis on the idea of moral uprightness. The father and other old people are

amazed at the son's rhetoric of moral uprightness. He reiterates that he along with his father should not adopt cannibalistic practice, no matter how hungry they might be.

To avoid the terrific and torturous surveillance of Alvaro, the fugitive Simon and David go to the Novillian regions. To track Simon's mother down, Simon disguises himself in the form of a bird watching man. The following extract is suggestive of how much terror the state has created in Alvaro:

Alvaro began to run again. His whole mind went blank except for the rhythm of his pounding feet. He saw a figure standing on the path ahead of him, but the familiar bandy legs meant no more than an obstacle blocking his way, and instinctively he turned his shoulder and threw himself at it. But Bolai-da sidestepped deftly and pinned to his chest in a wrestler's lock. (160)

Extreme fear and terror were provoked by the suspicious and discomforting activities of the colonial agents. The growing restlessness and agony on the part of Simon is an exemplary case of state sponsoring terroristic act.

Hunger and thirst overpower Simon and the boy. There is minimal chance to find a chunk of food and water to drink. When dearth of food and water surrounds them, they turn too weak to do anything. All the time they are worried about food. Search for food becomes extreme concern for them. Nine time out of ten, they are worried about food. Through ethical commitment and humanitarian ideal, both the son and the father try to transcend the post-apocalyptic malaises. The following extract exemplifies the point:

Mostly he worried about their shoes. That and food. Always food. In an old bat board smokehouse, they found a ham gambrel up in a high corner. It looked like something fetched from a tomb, so dried and

drawn. He cut into it with his knife. They fried it that night over their fire, thick slices of it, and put the slices to simmer with a tin of beans. Later he woke in the dark and he thought that he had bull drums beating somewhere in the low dark hills. Then the wind shifted and there was just the silence. (16)

Instinctual urges and impulses dominate the struggles of survivors. There is no use of rational consciousness and philanthropic virtue. When human struggles are limited in maintaining daily bread and shelter, humanitarian conscience and concern can hardly be seen. Humanness of human beings dwindles down and only the instinctual passions and beastly rapacity mushroom. This is exactly what happened in the novel. The father and the son are startled by the inability of survivors to think about saving the distinguishing hallmarks of mankind.

Cultural codes, normative norms, philanthropic ideals and other ethical principles are no longer exercised. Only the hunger and horror, chaos and cannibalism, instinctual uproar and rapacity dominate the thinking of the survivors. In this condition, there is no chance for the redemption of survivors who are trapped in the death and dearth of civilizing forces. In the course of justifying the rights of a child to food, security and protection, Simon argues "I am not angry, I am hungry! Tell me: What is wrong with satisfying an ordinary appetite? Why our ordinary impulses and hungers and desires must be beaten down" (30). Simon argues forcefully to vindicate the rights of the child. He does not say that he needs food since his hunger has crossed the limit. But he does not lose the ground to convince the administrative inhabitant that the child deserves the right to food, clothes and shelter.

Simon does hardly give an atom of attention to his self nature. He is solely driven by the idea of fighting for the shelter, security and food of the boy. It is not the

politically motivated vindication of child's right to food. On the contrary, it is the unconditional affirmation of self's nonreciprocal sense of responsibility towards the other. The following extract dramatizes how the narrator acts out of the nonreciprocal sense of self's responsibility towards the others:

Are you sure you want to carry on like this in front of the child? I am not ashamed of what I am saying. There is nothing in it that a child needs to be protected from. If a child can sleep outdoors on the bare earth, then surely he can hear a robust exchange between adults. Very well, I will give you robust exchange back. What you want from me is something I do not do. He stares in puzzlement. What I want from you? Yes. You want me to let you embrace me. We both know what that means: embrace I do not permit it. (30)

Simon defends the right of the child vehemently and vociferously. He knows that people of the island are helpful and cooperative. But they are not genuinely and unconditionally helpful. It appears that the helpful nature of the people of the island is the effect of their indoctrination into the socialistic principles and agenda. Their cooperative and helpful disposition is conditional. They are not above the ethics. They seem to be ethical and politically brainwashed. Simon contends forcefully the cause of the child's needs and necessities. The boy intends to embrace Simon. Embracing brings him closer to the self of Simon. Passing through various odds and adversities, both the middle aged man and the child share such a bond of attachment that one becomes incomplete in the absence of the other.

It can be reiterated that European colonialism in Novillians robs and cheats the native people of that fictitious country. Resources of this country are plundered aggressively. By creating political instability, the agents and representatives of

colonialism try to take advantage. How the colonizer colonized the land, language and other things of any nation, similarly Alvaro is taken with treacherous agents of European colonialism and asked to do domestic works.

Alvaro is now the most famous man in the Occidental Republic, and does not care. In its engagement with politics and imperialism, Novilla is a logical bridge between search and silence. It is set within the realms of overseas empire, but Novilla is post-colonial, and the key players are, by culture if not always by birth, English, French, Italian, and Spanish, so the situation resembles in some ways the European turmoil. As in earlier work, the plot is told largely from the point of view of the powerful, though Alvaro's deepening engagement with the revolutionary mindset is betokened by Simon himself, who is transformed from an ignorant servant of the capitalists into a Marxist.

Simon stands for affective ethics which is the ethics of ethics. It is an example of dynamic humanism. None of the pragmatic and prudential basis underpins such ethics. It is empathetic and ennobling. Affective notion of ethics arises from the chain of choices and activities undertaken by Simon. He thinks that the first chapter of his life is to create secure ground for both him and the boy. Simon works regularly so that his wage could sufficiently enable both to get settled. When Simon has free time, he comes out along with the boy to explore the new village sites. "He and the boy have already explored there, as they have explored its twin estate, west village. The blocks making up the village are of identical pattern, four floors high" (51). Both of them explore the neighboring area of the place where they live temporarily. The second purpose of the exploration is to find out the missing mother of the boy. Simon works hard to meet the needs and necessities of both of them. He needs relaxation and rest. So they come out in search for recreation and the newness of exploratory experience.

Simon takes relief and talks to himself that he has at least got a job with the earning of which he could feed himself and the boy. He talks to himself loudly in a solitary mood and says that now it is his urgent responsibility to track the boy's mother. The narrator reports Simon's monologue in the following words: "I am girding my loins, he tells himself. I am girding my loins for the next chapter in this enterprise. By the next chapter he means the quest for the boy's mother, the quest that he does not yet know where to commence" (52). Simon's determination to act altruistically for the boy undoubtedly uplifts him.

In the new area where Simon and the boy shift, life is comfortable comparatively. The boy befriends Fidel who is of his age. Fidel and the boy are soon friendly terms. Both join the same school. Fidel occasionally comes to the boy's apartment. The budding intimacy between Fidel and the boy makes Simon and Elena, Fidel's mother, familiar. One day, Elena asks Simon if the boy is his son. Simon replies that the boy is not his son. Moreover, he says that he is soon going to track down the boy's missing mother. Elena is puzzled to know why Simon behaves affectionately towards the boy as if the boy is his own son. The friendship between the boy and Fidel brings Elena and Simon close together.

Nature poses one catastrophe after another. But those who survive this catastrophe are trapped in the immobile moments. That is why, they are not able to take any proper initiative. The growing rapacity and callousness have fragmented human beings. The growing distance amidst the survivors has intensified misery of survivors. Earthquake worsens to the misery of the survivors. Even the last hope of survival dwindles down as earthquake horrifies. Human beings do not support the survival strategy of both the father and the son. Nature too does not help them. Nature acts callously towards them. The horrible living condition and terror created by

Nature are described in the following citation:

He lay with his hands at either side of him. The ground was trembling. It was coming toward them. Simon? The boy said. Simon? Shh. It's okay. What is it, Simon? It neared, growing louder. Everything is trembling. Then it passed beneath them like an underground train and drew away into the night and was gone. The boy clung to him crying, his head buried against his chest. Shh. It is all right. I am so scared. I know. It is all right. It is gone. What was it, Papa? It was an earthquake. It is gone now. We are all right. Shh. (28)

Not only the shipwrecked, but also other survivors are equally frightened. One after the other, Nature poses disasters to the survivors who are already hassled and handicapped by the thirst, hunger, mass starvation, pestilence and other malaises. There is hardly any chance of eradication of all these malaises and maladies.

David's Search for his Mother

In the novel, Elena exploits Simon sexually. The familiarity between Elena and Simon takes different turn. At night on his bed, Simon's mind is overwhelmed by sexual fantasies. In absence the boys', Simon and Elena meet in the former's apartment and make love. But the love that Simon offers is somewhat different. He concludes that Elena's body is withering due to the lack of the fulfillment of sexual urges. Even in the moment of heightened romance, she hardly demonstrates passionate inclination towards sexual relation. Thinking that establishing sexual relation will enable her body to undergo resuscitation and renewal, Simon allows himself to sleep with her.

The following extract illustrates the peculiar nature of Simon's selfless submersion in the act of his sexual relation with Elena:

He begins to grow used to her body; with its jutting hipbones and tiny breasts. She has little sexual feeling for him, that is clear; but he likes to think of his lovemaking as a patient and prolonged act of resuscitation, of bringing back to life a female body that for all practical purposes has died. When she invites him to make love to her, it is without the slightest coquetry. If you like, we can do it now, she will say, and close the door and take off her clothes. What she offers he will accept, as readily and as gratefully as he can. (61)

Simon applies the same principle even in his romantic sphere. He inculcates the sense of dubbing more contribution to Elena while sleeping with her.

Fidel and Simon are already friends. Fidel's mother too sometimes offers motherly affection to the boy. But Simon is not happy with it. He is bent upon finding out the mother of the boy. He takes the necessity to find out the boy's mother as the most decisive responsibility in his life. From the accomplishment of this responsibility, none of the concrete achievement comes. But this reality does not hinder him from lavishing compassion and affection on the boy.

One day he sees a lady on the port. He knows that the lady is not the real mother of the boy. But he goes to the lady and pleads her to be the mother of the boy. The lady is startled to face a man who persistently tells her to be the boy's mother. It is difficult to guess why Simon does not request Elena to be the boy's mother. If he had told Elena, she might have treated the boy as her son. But Simon does not do this. Rather he displays the audacity to face an unknown lady and pleads her to be the boy's mother.

Simon's approach and initiative does not sound reasonable and sensible. But his overwhelming compassion and concern for the boy compels him to act in this

anomalous way. The following extract describes how rashly and bluntly Simon pleads with the lady to be the boy's mother:

Let me be more precise, he says, speaking softly and rapidly. The boy has no mother. Ever since we got off the boat we have been searching for her. Will you consider taking him? Taking him? Yes, being a mother to him. Being his mother. Will you take him as your son? I do not understand. In fact I understand nothing at all. Are you suggesting that I adopt your boy? Not adopt. Be his mother, his full mother. We have only one mother, each of us. Will you be that one and only mother to him? Up to this point she has been listening attentively. (75)

In the text, it is not conformed if the lady whom Simon meets on port is the real mother of David or not. But Simon confidently says that she is the mother of the child. He says that he has been seeking the mother of David. Now he has found her. Simon does not have evidence to prove that the lady is the mother of the boy. He puts forward his own line of reasoning. His manner of telling the lady to take on the child can be wrong and unacceptable. But he is too confident to assure others that the lady is the boy's mother.

The plea of Simon influences the lady. If Simon's estimation is right or his confident style of persuasion is right, it is pretty puzzling to fix. But the lady comes back to Simon's apartment with her brother, Diego. Diego warns Simon that he is wrong and it would be troublesome for him to impose compulsion on his sister. To dispel the doubts from Diego's heart, Simon says "We, David and I, came here, as everyone does, for the sake of a new life, a new beginning. What I want for David, what David wants too is a normal life like any other youngsters" (79). In a persuasive tone, he convinces Diego that his sister, the lady, whom he meets and pleads on port,

is the mother of the child.

Simon affirms that some unknown forces have been guiding him to find out the boy's mother. It is due to the grace of this unknown and unidentified force that he finally succeeded in tracking down the mother of the boy. Simon claims that he can identify the boy's mother without having any evidence. This sort of crazy presumptions of Simon irritates Diego. Simon argues thus:

I have always been sure- do not ask me why-that I would know David's mother when I saw her; and now that I have met you I know I was right. It could not have been chance that led us to La Residencia. Some had must have been guiding us. It is Diego, he can see, who s going to be the hard nut to crack: Diego, not the woman, whose name he does not know and does not want to ask. The woman would not be here if she were not ready to be swayed. Some unseen hand, he repeats. Truly Diego's gaze bores into him. Liar! It says. (79)

It is difficult to ascertain if what Simon says is the manifestation of his premonition or the projection of Para-psychological forces. On the one hand he says that he has never seen the boy's mother. On the other hand he claims confidently that the lady, who is Diego's sister, is the real mother. Simon tries his best to convince Diego. But Diego dismisses Simon's assurance and authority as crazy fantasy. To allay the fear of doubt, Simon tells Diego to put his hand on his heart and listen to the call of heart.

Not the rational power but the momentary projection of intuition that Simon uses as the medium to adapt to the alien land where he is shipwrecked. Simon says "I plead with you: put doubt aside, listen instead to what your heart says. Look at him. Look at the boy. What does your heart say? The young woman gives no answer, does not look at the boy at all, but turns to her brother" (79). The lady is moved and in the

midst of the quarrel between the sister and her brother, Diego, Simon ponders upon the situation. He speaks as though he knows that the lady is the real mother of the boy. It is the intuition and impact of his compassionate concern with the boy that enables Simon to say that the lady is the real mother of the boy. Or it can be coincidence. But it is confounding to say that premonition guides him rightly. The following extract dramatizes how Simon develops authority and power to speak and act surely due to his empathetic and enlightened state of mind:

Your sister- I am sorry, I do not know her name-is his mother, his natural mother. I cannot explain how that happens, but it is so, it is as simple as that. And in her heart she knows it. Why else do you think she is here today? On the surface she may seem calm, but beneath the surface I can see it thrills her, this great gift, the gift of a child. Diego's sister is kneeling on the bed with her back to them, straddling the boy-who lies flat on his back beneath her-her dress hoisted up to allow a glimpse of solid, rather heavy thighs. Where is the spider, where is the spider. We are back, the boy announces. Ines and I are playing a game, says the boy. (81)

Even the over-skeptical man, Diego, is silenced by the moment of revelation. As the lady sits beside the boy and gazes on his face, something happens enables the boy to announce that his mother Ines has come. The lady too admits the truth. Before the mother identifies her son, Simon has already identified her. Simon discloses that he had already recognized her as the boy's missing mother by the time he sees her on port.

Simon is not governed by the predestined force. He is not dominated by the law of divine providence. The notion of life-death-rebirth cycle is dismissed by him

flatly. Simon maximizes the power of his conviction. While fulfilling his selfless sense of responsibility towards the other, he cares hardly for the pragmatic and reciprocal demand.

One day, Elena says “well, in my opinion you are out of your mind, handing over your child to a stranger who for all you know has a dubious past” (97). In response to this question of Elena, he says “That is nonsense, Elena. Ines has no past, none that counts. None of us has a past. We start anew here. We start with a blank slate, a virgin slate. And Ines is not a stranger” (97). He reiterates his conviction by saying that “I recognized her as soon as I set eyes on her, which means I must have some kind of prior knowledge. You arrive here with no memories, with a blank slate, yet you claim to recognize faces from the past. It makes no sense” (98). With the persisting image and shades of images, he aimed at figuring out who the boy’s real mother is.

Thus, it can be reiterated that realities of diasporic situation in the novel, *The Childhood of Jesus*. In the novel Simon and David are replica of diasporic people in the island, they are alienated from their identity, culture, way of life. They want to search their identity in turmoil world.

Chapter 4

Search for Cultural Adjustment in *The Childhood of Jesus*

In the novel Coetzee wants to show the lingering effect of diasporic situation. Many years ago South Africa achieved independence from colonial rule, yet there is still colonial domination. Simon and David are representative of diasporic people who indicate South African people. They want to secure their future. David is deprived from the motherly affection. They are feeling alienation in their own land. They are exploited economically and culturally by Alvaro and senior lenor. They are wondering here and there to search their identity.

Constant roaming and loitering along the road becomes a ritual. This ritual is unavoidable. Simon and David have no option other than abiding by this ritual. So long no breakthrough is found in the arid surrounding, they are bound to follow this ritual. Journey on the road becomes ritual. It is arid ritual out of which survivors hardly escape. Simon is habituated to see emptiness and no sign of life on the mazy road. He often finds no living soul on the uninhabited side of the island. That is why journey does not make him optimistic and hopeful. But he is prone to hope against hope. One day he is amazed that he sees a few survivors making temporary huts and igniting fire to warm up. But this scene hardly ignites an ember of hope and redemption in him.

No matter how vigorously he makes journey, he sees no chance of redemption and success in his private mission. David need not ask for favor. Simon begins to care for him. He works hard to make wages with which he and the boy could live comfortably. Simon helps the boy not because he sees the possibility of gaining profit from his present act of helping David. Simon is touched by the languishing condition of the boy. The boy says that his mother disappeared during

the time of disaster. He does not have any kind of proof to identify his mother. The boy pines for his mother's affection.

Simon understands empathetically how important mother's love is for the boy. That is why he determines to make the boy united with his mother. He has not seen the boy's mother either. But his conviction to the boy is so strong he finally tracks her down. Simon rises himself above the constraints and chaos of selfishness and self-centrism. The power to penetrate other's woe and agony is his distinguishing feature. One day while visiting port, Simon happens to see a lady. His intuition and conviction assure him in such a powerful way that he concludes that the lady is the real mother of the boy.

Without having any evidence, he relies on the dictation of his intuition and finally tracks her down. Though the lady's brother denies any relationship of her sister to the boy, situation compels her to admit the fact. Finally the mother and the boy are united. According to one passer-by whom the father strikes familiarity, it is unpredictable to say who comes to attack whom and which direction thugs come to launch assault. Simon raises a question to the passer-by that it is the duty of state to protect the lives of people. But the passer-by laments that there is no state. Lawlessness, statelessness, anarchy and threat of assault are the accompanying elements of journey along planned settlement of the island. Coetzee shows the brutality of colonial exploitation in which African people became the victim of European colonizer.

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