

## I. Colonialism and Its Resistance

Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another. One of the difficulties in defining colonialism is that it is difficult to distinguish it from imperialism. Frequently the two concepts are treated as synonyms. Like colonialism, imperialism also involves political and economic control over a dependent territory. Turning to the etymology of the two terms, however, provides some suggestion about how they differ. The term colony comes from the Latin word *colonus*, meaning farmer. This root reminds us that the practice of colonialism usually involved the transfer of population to a new territory, where the new arrivals lived as permanent settlers while maintaining political allegiance to their country of origin. Imperialism, on the other hand, comes from the Latin term *imperium*, meaning to command. Thus, the term imperialism draws attention to the way that one country exercises power over another, whether through settlement, sovereignty, or indirect mechanisms of control.

The legitimacy of colonialism has been a longstanding concern for political and moral philosophers in the Western tradition. At least since the Crusades and the conquest of the Americas, political theorists have struggled with the difficulty of reconciling ideas about justice and natural law with the practice of European sovereignty over non-Western peoples. In the nineteenth century, the tension between liberal thought and colonial practice became particularly acute, as dominion of Europe over the rest of the world reached its zenith. Ironically, in the same period when most political philosophers began to defend the principles of universalism and equality, the same individuals still defended the legitimacy of colonialism and imperialism. One way of reconciling those apparently opposed principles was the argument known as the “civilizing mission,” which suggested that a temporary period of political

dependence or tutelage was necessary in order for “uncivilized” societies to advance to the point where they were capable of sustaining liberal institutions and self-government.

Colonialism is not a modern phenomenon. World history is full of examples of one society gradually expanding by incorporating adjacent territory and settling its people on newly conquered territory. The ancient Greeks set up colonies as did the Romans, the Moors, and the Ottomans, to name just a few of the most notorious examples. Colonialism, then, is not restricted to a specific time or place. Nevertheless, in the sixteenth century, colonialism changed decisively because of technological developments in navigation that began to connect more remote parts of the world. Fast sailing ships made it possible to reach distant ports while sustaining closer ties between the center and colonies. Thus, the modern European colonial project emerged when it became possible to move large numbers of people across the ocean and to maintain political sovereignty in spite of geographical dispersion. This entry uses the term colonialism to describe the process of European settlement and political control over the rest of the world, including Americas, Australia, and parts of Africa and Asia.

The difficulty of defining colonialism stems from the fact that the term is often used as a synonym for imperialism. Both colonialism and imperialism were forms of conquest that were expected to benefit Europe economically and strategically. The term colonialism is frequently used to describe the settlement of places such as North America, Australia, New Zealand, Algeria, and Brazil that were controlled by a large population of permanent European residents. The term imperialism often describes cases in which a foreign government administers a territory without significant settlement; typical examples include the scramble for Africa in the late nineteenth

century and the American domination of the Philippines and Puerto Rico. The distinction between the two, however, is not entirely consistent in the literature. Some scholars distinguish between colonies for settlement and colonies for economic exploitation. Others use the term colonialism to describe dependencies that are directly governed by a foreign nation and contrast this with imperialism, which involves indirect forms of domination. Robert Young writes:

... According to Lenin, imperialism was the necessary and inevitable result of the logic of accumulation in late capitalism. Thus, for Lenin and subsequent Marxists, imperialism described a historical stage of capitalism rather than a trans-historical practice of political and military domination. The lasting impact of the Marxist approach is apparent in contemporary debates about American imperialism, a term which usually means American economic hegemony, regardless of whether such power is exercised directly or indirectly. (Young 2001)

From the perspective of world-system theory, the economic exploitation of the periphery does not necessarily require direct political or military domination. In a similar vein, contemporary literary theorists have drawn attention to practices of representation that reproduce a logic of subordination that endures even after former colonies gain independence. The field of postcolonial studies was established by Edward Said in his path-breaking book *Orientalism*. In *Orientalism* Said applied Michel Foucault's technique of discourse analysis to the production of knowledge about the Middle East. The term orientalism described a structured set of concepts, assumptions, and discursive practices that were used to produce, interpret, and evaluate knowledge about non-European peoples. Said's analysis made it possible for

scholars to deconstruct literary and historical texts in order to understand how they reflected and reinforced the imperialist project. Unlike previous studies that focused on the economic or political logics of colonialism, Said drew attention to the relationship between knowledge and power. By foregrounding the cultural and epistemological work of imperialism, Said was able to undermine the ideological assumption of value-free knowledge and show that “knowing the Orient” was part of the project of dominating it. Thus, *Orientalism* can be seen as an attempt to extend the geographical and historical terrain of the poststructuralist critique of Western epistemology. Said uses the term Orientalism in several different ways. First, Orientalism is a specific field of academic study about the Middle East and Asia, albeit one that Said conceives quite expansively as including history, sociology, literature, anthropology and especially philology. He also identifies it as a practice that helps define Europe by creating a stable depiction of its other, its constitutive outside. Orientalism is a way of characterizing Europe by drawing a contrasting image or idea, based on a series of binary oppositions (rational/irrational, mind/body, order/chaos) that manage and displace European anxieties. Finally, Said emphasizes that it is also a mode of exercising authority by organizing and classifying knowledge about the Orient. This discursive approach is distinct both from a vulgar materialist assumption that knowledge is simply a reflection of economic or political interests and from an idealist conviction that scholarship is disinterested and neutral. Following Foucault, Said's concept of discourse identifies a way in which knowledge is not used instrumentally in service of power but rather is itself a form of power.

The second quasi-canonical contribution to the field of post-colonial theory is Gayatri Spivak's “Can the Subaltern Speak?” Spivak works within Said's problematic of representation but extends it to the contemporary academy. By posing the question

“Can the subaltern speak?” she asks whether the scholarly interest in non-Western cultures may unwittingly reproduce a new kind of orientalism, whereby academic theorists mine non-Western sources in order to speak authoritatively in their place. Even though the goal is to challenge the existing Eurocentrism of the academy, post-colonial studies is particularly vulnerable to the risks associated with any claim to speak authoritatively on behalf of the subaltern. Thus the field of post-colonial studies is haunted by its own impossibility. It was born out of the recognition that representation is inevitably implicated in power and domination yet struggles to reconfigure representation as an act of resistance. In order to do so, it introduces new strategies of reading and interpretation while recognizing the limitations of this endeavor. Guha and Spivak shows the problems of post-colonial theory and writes:

The core problematic of post-colonial theory is an examination of the relationship between power and knowledge in the non-Western world. [...] According to Spivak, the Subaltern Studies group developed two important challenges to the narrative of Indian colonial history as a change from semi-feudalism to capitalist domination. First, they showed that the moment of change must be pluralized as a story of multiple confrontations involving domination and resistance rather than a simple great modes-of-production narrative. Second, these epochal shifts are marked by a multidimensional change in sign-system from the religious to the militant, crime to insurgency, bondsman to worker. (Guha and Spivak)

The work of the Subaltern Studies group is emblematic of the way that post-

colonial theory often inhabits the terrain between post-structuralism and Marxism, two traditions that have many differences as well as some commonalities. Despite the fact that many practitioners of the field are sympathetic to both traditions, other scholars highlight the incompatibility of the two. For example, Aijaz Ahmad has criticized post-colonialist theory from a Marxist perspective, arguing that its infatuation with issues of representation and discourse makes it blind to the material basis and systematic structure of power relations. The use of concepts such as hybridity easily degenerates into a kind of eclecticism that gesture at radical resistance while denying the theoretical basis of any theory of revolutionary change. Ahmad also argued that the influence of Said's *Orientalism* was due not to its originality but, on the contrary, to its conventionality. According to Ahmad, *Orientalism* benefited from its affinity with two problematic intellectual fashions: the reaction against Marxism that led to the vogue for post-structuralism and the "Third-worldism" that provided academics with a veneer of radicalism. Said, for his part, also developed a sustained critique of Marxism. In *Orientalism*, Said argued that Marx's explicit defense of British colonialism was emblematic of his own implication in Orientalist discourse. Furthermore, for Said, Marx's position was not merely a personal failure but instead reflected a more general problem with totalizing theory that he felt tended to marginalize any signs of difference that undermined Marx's narrative of progress. Clintock writes:

It is worth noting that some scholars have begun to question the usefulness of the concept post-colonial theory. Like the idea of the Scottish four stages theory, a theory with which it would appear to have little in common, the very concept of post-colonialism seems to rely on a progressive understanding of history (Mc Clintock 1992).

It suggests, perhaps unwittingly, that the core concepts of hybridity, alterity, particularly, and multiplicity may lead to a kind of methodological dogmatism or developmental logic. Moreover, the term “colonial” as a marker of this domain of inquiry is also problematic in so far as it suggests historically implausible commonalities across territories that experienced very different techniques of domination. [...] “Thus, the critical impulse behind post-colonial theory has turned on itself, drawing attention to the way that it may itself be marked by the utopian desire to transcend the trauma of colonialism” (Gandhi 1998).

Some of the documents appearing in *Colonialism: Political and Historical Contexts* demonstrate that depending on time, place, and situation, the meaning of "colonialism" is unsettled and discursive. The terms "colony" and "colonialism" capture the spirit of this discursiveness because of the different vintages to which they belong. Separated, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, by some 500 years, the mid-14th century "colonye" was used to describe the Roman *colonia*, while colonialism emerged around the 19th century to reify a European practice that was becoming prevalent across the world. The description of the Roman experience of settling, creating outposts, or occupying lands outside the Roman city-state seems distant enough, however, the British appropriation of "colony" retains inflections of the Roman empire while propounding ardently on Britain's unique involvement in imperialism. Hence "colonialism" attains an historical specificity, noting particularly the impact it had and continues to have on all societies across the world.

As mentioned in *The Metaphorical Use of Colonialism and Related Terms*, colonialism only recently attained its pejorative connotation, particularly through the reaction against the exploitation of and imposition of Western culture on native populations during European imperialism. While this is certainly a valid point to

make, it is equally important to remember that for post colonialism, the term "colonialism" is a matter of political struggle. The French and British practiced different styles of colonization, had different perceptions of the colonial subjects they came to rule, yet postcolonial politics seems to have a similar take on the totalization and oppressiveness of colonialism. The issue here is not so much the necessity of establishing elemental truths about what exactly colonialism is or was. These truths are merely contingent to the larger project of creating different modes of expression, of speaking from a liminal or marginal position, and to write against the flow of imperial culture.

For post colonialism, "colonialism" revolves around a number of strategic reinterpretations. First, colonialism goes beyond the simple process of creating colonies. It is more effectively appreciated through the way it leads to the movement of peoples across the world, the ensuing sense of dispossession and displacement by large numbers of them, and the continuing legacy manifested in the way "sovereign" political communities emerged at the end of the second world war. While European colonialism first took place in the form of settlement colonies, this was enough to constitute the starting point of post colonialism. Settlement meant a number of things: the displacement of native populations and the inculcation of a European worldview on them; the exile of white settlers such as through the transportation of convicts; and the transplantation of other non-native peoples through slavery and indentured labor. These forms of diaspora hinged around cascading levels of marginality and perceptions of the relations between centre and periphery. For instance, while white settlers felt rejected and inferior to their kin in the motherland, they retained alternative hierarchical structures in their colonies based on racial, gender, and class divisions. Hence for the people affected by colonialism, the type of postcolonial



culture they produced varied markedly.

While it is important to think of colonialism as part of the experience of creating real or physical colonies, the effects of colonization have had much more profound legacies that do not go away even when the given colony has moved on to a different form. On the one hand colonialism cannot "officially" end because there can be no reversion to pre-colonial societies. In effect what passes—in a rudimentary way — as the end of colonialism has often been recognized as sovereignty or the gaining of independence. But the communities that result are already grossly distorted, forged through the transmigration into its borders as consequence of colonialism. On the other hand colonialism has also become more common, reappearing in one form as neo-colonialism, while also persisting in the discourse used in these societies. For example, critics who stress on the latter point see imagination, language, culture, and even the mind as still colonized by the West. These are important assertions to make because they raise the issue of how far a subject can truly distance himself or herself from the totalizing embrace of colonial discourse. Such arguments have been put forward by contemporary critics as well as anti-colonial writers like Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi.

However fluid and contested the definition of "colonialism," one must take into consideration the political issues that are at stake. Much of postcolonial culture mentioned in the Postcolonial Web and elsewhere stem from these implications of colonialism, capturing two competing emotions. One of these is the ability of postcolonial literature be critical about these different forms of colonialism, and to mobilize a set of strategies to write against it. The other is a lingering sadness resulting from the pervasiveness of colonialism and its continued hold on cultural production. Colonial literature, which is the writing concerned with colonial

perceptions and experiences, is written by metropolitan. About the colonial literature Ellek Boehmer writes in her book *Colonial and Post Colonial Literature*:

From the early days of colonization, therefore not only text but literature, broadly defined, under pinned efforts to interpret other lands offering home audience a way of thinking about exploration, western conquest, national valor, new colonial acquisitions. Travelers, trader administrators, settlers, ‘read’ the strange and new by drawing on familiar books such as the Bible or “Pilgrims Progress”. Empire was of course as powerfully shaped by military conflict, the unprecedented displacement of peoples, and the quest for profits. (14)

We can compare colonialism and imperialism with a delicious dinner (meal): appetizer, main course and dessert. The earlier days of colonization are appetizer for colonizers. Those days, they tasked the inferior people. In the beginning of colonialism, Europeans wanted to know the others. They started entering other countries as travelers first, then they became traders, and lastly they started ruling them.

Imperial literature gives the stereotypical images of the non-west as “the other” of Europe. Imperial literature, though it is difficult to give precise definition because of its heterogeneity, reflects imperial ethos. In general imperial literature exhibit a tinge of local imperial color, or feature of imperial motifs-example the quest beyond the frontier of civilization. They exhibit imperial experiences and perceptions, and are written from the imperial perspective. It is, as Boehmer writes “. . . informed by theories concerning the superiority of empire” (3).

In the heyday of empire, writers felt it necessary to write about new places and the people. They began writing about people who inhabited the lands they

(colonizers) claimed: the natives, the colonized. But the problem was that of truly understanding the alien people, culture, geography and the landscapes. They were dumbfounded to see the things in new surrounding, and the attitudes and the behaviors of the people entirely unreadable. Then, they began to represent these people and cultures in their own familiar vocabularies, their own metaphors and tropes and the “strangeness was made comprehensible by using everyday names dependable textural conventions, both rhetorical and syntactic” (Boehmer 14). In this process of defining and renaming the natives, they started classifying them as barbaric and degenerate, either dangerous or alluring. This notion of danger was expressed in their depiction of nest and mysterious landscape, wild jungles and swampy lands, Boehmer writes: “classifications and codes imported from Europe were matched to people, cultures and topographies that were entirely non-European. And having once done the work of interpretation, the imported symbols, even if entirely arbitrary often stack” (17). It was literature written by Europeans about non –European lands dominated by them. It embodied the imperialists’ point of view.

Imperial writing is important for revealing the ways in which that worlds system could represent the degradation of other human beings as natural, an innate part of their degenerate or barbarian state. The blacks (representing all African, Yellow, Brown and Red) were represented as less human, less civilized as child or savage or headless mass or, they were depicted as inferior only because they were different from the whites. Thus, over determined by stereotypes, the characterization of indigenous people tended to screen out their agency, diversity and resistance, during the time of high imperialism, the writers cherished the idea of white superiority; they maintained and celebrated the dichotomy between “us” and “them.” Boehmer reminds us this idea when she writes:

Stereotypes of the other as indolent malingers, shirkers good for nothings, lay about, degenerate visions of the pastoral idler, and were the stock-in-trade of colonialist writing. In contrast, the White man represented himself as the archetypal worker and provident profit-maker. (39)

The imperialist writing represented the white's as the civilizers of the world and a postal of light, and the blacks as degenerate, barbaric and in need of European master to civilize and to uplift them out of their filth. There is no fundamental difference between the earlier and today's imperialism and colonialism. The source of these early interpretations were as extensive as their knowledge and experience of stories-specifically, the source included colonized people, their oral narratives, fantasy and ancient sacred books. The subject matter of literature is either 'narratives', 'culture' or 'landscape'. Therefore, erotic and fantasy led in the native cultures. But the literary writers were dedicated to the imperialists. The form is changed but the content is almost the same. British empire was a vast communication network. Through the medium of texts writers disseminate about the entire behavior of the colonized people. Present day readers any way experience empire textually, through the medium of nineteen and twentieth century novels, periodicals and travels writings. Colonial settlement too was expressed textually. Writing in the form of treaties was used to claim territory. The text a vehicle of imperial authority, symbolized and in some cases indeed performed the act of taking possession. They transferred familiar metaphors, which are themselves already bridging devices, to unfamiliar and unlikely contexts. Strangeness was made comprehensible using everyday matches, defensible textual conventions, both rhetorical and syntactic.

Post-colonial theory is instrumental in bringing the matters of colony and empire in a prominence. It is not only the unique or inaugural in its academic concern with the subject of imperialism and its consequences, but is methodologically and conceptually indebted to variety of both earlier and more recent western theories. It is highly indebted to the intellectual tradition of Marxist, anti-imperialist thought and radical rupture of western metaphysical tradition by post-structuralism and post modernism. As Leela Gandhi writes:

Intellectual history of postcolonial theory is marked by dialectic between Marxism and post modernism on the other. So this theoretical contestation informs the academic content of postcolonial analysis, manifesting itself in an ongoing debate between the competing claims of nationalism and intellectualism, strategic essentialism and hybridity, solidarity and dispersal, the politics of structure and totality and the politics of the fragment. (vii- ix)

Former colonies share certain qualities and experiences. There is both continuity and break in the nature of government and structure of power from colonial to post colonial societies. The postcolonial governments are obviously different from the colonial regimes, but the freedom and self-rule for which the colonized fought bitterly proved to be unexpectedly illusive. New forms of domination and dependence pervaded the so called independent nations.

Semantically, post colonialism means after colonialism. The definition is too restrictive and too limiting, for it implies only political independence and suggests that colonialism has completely ended. It does take into account the continuing far reaching effects of colonialism. So, post colonial study directs its critique against the cultural hegemony of European knowledge in an attempt to assert the epistemological

value and agency of non-European world. As we know there was always an unequal distribution of power among cultures by the other. On this line, regarding post-colonial perspective Homi Bhabha in *Redrawing The Boundaries* directs our attention to “bear witness” to inequalities in various modes and process of representation. He opines:

Post colonial criticism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for social and political authority within the modern world order. Postcolonial perspectives emerged from the colonial testimony of the third world countries and the discourse of “minorities” within the geo-political divisions of east and west, north and south. They intervene in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give hegemony “normality” to the uneven development of the differential, often disadvantage, histories of nation races, communities and people. They formulate their critical revisions ground issues of cultural difference, social authority and political discriminations in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments with in the “rationalizations” of modernity. (437)

Colonialism, in fact does the mass exploitation for the native people in various spheres of their life. It remains intolerable for the native people of the colonized country. So the native people will be unable to bear the burden of colonialism and they start resisting against it in various manner. It has been seen in the history that the colonized people have resisted against it violently-using force and weapons as well as non- violently. For example Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi resisted nonviolently against the British regime which colonized the Indian for a long period of time. Similarly, Martin Luther King resisted against the colonialism in America during 1950s and 1960s.

## II. Non-Violent Resistance

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, widely known as Mahatma Gandhi, is honored as the father of the Nation, and is called an Apostle of Non-violence. He was also a major political and spiritual leader of the prudence movement. His radically different political idiom that is religio-political idiom, inaugurated the moral, ethical, and spiritual core in the resistance against the British Raj in India. He was the pioneer of *Satyagraha*— resistance of tyranny through mass civil disobedience, which has become one of the strongest philosophies in the world. He perplexed the world by using religious actions in political arena and defeated the great imperial power of Britain. His idea on non-violence and faith on truth becomes the strongest weapon used against the British Raj. He is called Mahatma; “of Mahatma, the name given to him is ‘the Great soul,’ *maha*, great; *atma*, soul. The word goes back to the Upanishads, where it is used in speaking of the Supreme Being, and, through communion of knowledge and love” (Rolland V). Mahatma Gandhi had become synonymous to non-violence; he had become an icon for many leaders all over the world. Gandhi began to influence European public life in the 1980s. As Rolland writes:

He was acknowledged by non-violent revolutionaries in Eastern Europe—Lech Walesa in Poland and Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia. In the 1990s the Dalai Lama began to invoke Gandhi in his non-violent effort to gain autonomy for Tibet. In the 1990s Nelson Mandela was in position publicly to acknowledge that ‘the Gandhian influence dominated freedom struggles on the African continent right up to the 1990s.’ At the close of 20<sup>th</sup> century, Time chose Gandhi along with

Albert Einstein and Franklin Roosevelt as the three most influential persons of the century. (34)

Besides these leaders, Mahatma Gandhi has been icon for innumerable persons all over the world. Some of Gandhi's admirers go further than making him a mere icon and opined deliberately that "we should not be surprised if one day he were to prove as influential and be placed on the same footing as Jesus Christ and the Buddha" (Parekh 112).

Mahatma Gandhi was much renowned in South Africa before his arrival in India. With his arrival to India from South Africa in 1914, Gandhi entered the national political arena. His admirers had already started praising Gandhi and when he "returned to India, he had the prestige of a leader" (Rolland 15). Within some years, "the veteran Indian leader noticed in Gandhiji", and people found on him, "an even more quality he has in him the marvelous spiritual power to turn ordinary men around him into heroes and martyrs" (Rolland 177). Religion is not only the basic foundation for Gandhi; for him the Truth is also important for his politics. Again, Roman Rolland opines that "Gandhi feels that no matter how great his love for his country may be his faith is his ideal, in Truth as expressed in religion is greater still" [...] "if it came to the point he would always set truth first before liberty and even before his country" (21).

Thus, Gandhi's faith on religion and Truth became the fundamental tools for his political career. On the basis of religion, he awakened the people of India and in pursuit of truth, he launched *satyagraha*, soul-force or truth-force. Gandhi is religious by nature, and his doctrine is essentially religious but he "believes in the religion of his people, in Hinduism" (Rolland 23). Gandhi was an extraordinary in adopting the religion. He was not a scholar of religion, attached to the punctilious interpretation of



texts, nor is he a blind believer accepting unquestioningly all the traditions of his religion. His religion must satisfy his reason and corresponds to the dictates of his conscience.

Moreover, Gandhi took the concept of *ahimsa* (non-violence), a chief political tool to his, taken from the Buddhism and the Jainism. What Gandhi believed is that every conflict can be resolved by means of rational discussion or persuasion. For his the use of violence denies “the ontological facts that all human beings [have] souls, that they [are] capable of appreciating and pursuing good, and that no one was so degenerate that he [can] not be won over by appealing to his fellow-feeling and humanity” (Patrick 65).

As non-violence is a means to get *swaraj* or self-rule for Gandhi, truth was the goal. After visiting many Indian places, Gandhi was in search of a new kind of method to resolve the problem. Such a method which would activate the soul, mobilize the individual’s latent moral energies, appeal to both the head and the heart, and create a climate conducive to peaceful resolution of conflict conducted in a spirit of mutual goodwill. And Gandhi thought all these requirements would be met in *satyagraha*. He first discovered and practiced it during his campaigns against racial discrimination in South Africa. After considering these things Gandhi vowed: “*swaraj*” can only be attained by soul-force. This is India’s real weapon the invincible weapon of love and truth” (43). This was *satyagraha*, soul-force or truth force for Gandhi.

The threefold energy of love, faith and sacrifice is expressed in the word *satyagraha*. *Satyagraha* was a ‘surgery of the soul’ a way of activating ‘soul-force’. For Gandhi ‘suffering love’ was the best way to do this, and formed the inspiring principle of his new method. And it “aimed to penetrate the barriers of prejudice, ill-

will, dogmatism, self-righteousness, and selfishness, and to reach out to and activate the soul of the opponent” (Parekh 68).

Even confronting with an injustice, the *satyagrahi* sought dialogue with his opponent and if the dialogue was denied:

The Satyagrahi took a principled stand on what he sincerely believed to be his just demands, and patiently and uncomplainingly suffered whatever violence was done to him. His opponent saw him as an enemy or a troublemaker. He refused to reciprocate, and saw him instead as a fellow human being whose temporarily eclipsed sense of humanity it was his duty to restore. (Bakshi 6)

The idea of *satyagraha* had highly affected Martin Luther King Jr. He adopted Gandhi’s methods of nonviolent civil disobedience in his leadership of the civil rights movement during the 1950s and 1960s in America. King had the great commitment to Gandhi, he said: “Gandhi was probably the first person in history to fight the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale [...]. The whole concept of *satyagraha* was profoundly significant to me” (Rudolph 34).

Indian nationalist leader Mohandas Gandhi spent his life campaigning for human rights in India. His strategy was to use a combination of passive resistance to and noncooperation with the British, who ruled India. Gandhi said his techniques were inspired by the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, by American writer Henry David Thoreau, and by the teachings of Jesus Christ. In 1947 Gandhi’s pacifist efforts brought an end to British rule in India.

Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948), Indian nationalist leader, who established his country's freedom through a nonviolent revolution, is a heroic figure in the history of

the politics of India. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, also known as Mahatma Gandhi, was born in Porbandar in the present state of Gujarat on October 2, 1869, and educated in law at University College, London. Gandhi left for England to train as a lawyer on 1888. But before his departure he assured his mother of good conducts by taking three solemn promises that he would avoid wine, women, and meat. His early days were full of western influences in England, buying himself in morning suit, atop hat, taking lessons in dancing like an English gentleman. Yet, this phase passed soon when he returned into the serious aspects of English life. Then he started to read widely about British and European law and method of political resistance that did not involve any kind of violence. In 1891, after having been admitted to the British bar, Gandhi returned to India and attempted to establish a law practice in Bombay (now Mumbai), with little success. Two years later an Indian firm with interests in South Africa retained him as legal adviser in its office in Durban. Arriving in Durban, Gandhi found himself treated as a member of an inferior race. He was appalled at the widespread denial of civil liberties and political rights to Indian immigrants to South Africa. He threw himself into the struggle for elementary rights for Indians.

While practicing law in South Africa, Mohandas Gandhi led Indians there in a struggle for equal rights. In the process Gandhi developed a policy of nonviolent resistance, which he later upheld in leading India's movement for independence from Britain.

Gandhi remained in South Africa for 20 years, suffering imprisonment many times. In 1896, after being attacked and beaten by white South Africans, Gandhi began to teach a policy of passive resistance to, and noncooperation with, the South African authorities. Part of the inspiration for this policy came from the Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, whose influence on Gandhi was profound. Gandhi also

acknowledged his debt to the teachings of Christ and to the 19th-century American writer Henry David Thoreau, especially to Thoreau's famous essay "Civil Disobedience." Gandhi considered the terms *passive resistance* and *civil disobedience* inadequate for his purposes, however, and coined another term, *Satyagraha* (Sanskrit for "truth and firmness"). During the Boer War, Gandhi organized an ambulance corps for the British army and commanded a Red Cross unit. After the war he returned to his campaign for Indian rights. In 1910, he founded Tolstoy Farm, near Johannesburg, a cooperative colony for Indians. In 1914 the government of the Union of South Africa made important concessions to Gandhi's demands, including recognition of Indian marriages and abolition of the poll tax for them. His work in South Africa complete, he returned to India.

Mahatma Gandhi's campaign of nonviolent civil resistance to British rule of India led to India's independence in 1947. A member of the merchant caste, Mohandas K. Gandhi, later called Mahatma (Sanskrit for "great soul"), studied law in London. As a lawyer, and later as a political activist, he effectively fought discrimination with his principles of truth, nonviolence, and courage.

Gandhi dedicated his life to the wider purpose of discovering truth, or *satya*. He tried to achieve this by learning from his own mistakes and conducting experiments on himself. He called his autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Gandhi stated that the most important battle to fight was overcoming his own demons, fears, and insecurities. Gandhi summarized his beliefs first when he said "God is Truth." He would later change this statement to "Truth is God." Thus, *satya* (truth) in Gandhi's philosophy is "God."

The concept of nonviolence (*ahimsa*) and nonresistance has a long history in Indian religious thought and has had many revivals in Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Jewish

and Christian contexts. Gandhi explains his philosophy and way of life in his autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. He was quoted as saying: “When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love has always won. There have been tyrants and murderers and for a time they seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall---- think of it, always” (97).

Having read and admired the work of Henry Stephens Salt, the young Mohandas met and often corresponded with the vegetarian campaigner. Gandhi spent much time advocating vegetarianism during and after his time in London. To Gandhi, a vegetarian diet would not only satisfy the requirements of the body, it would also serve an economic purpose as meat was, and still is, generally more expensive than grains, vegetables, and fruits. Also, many Indians of the time struggled with low income, thus vegetarianism was seen not only as a spiritual practice but also a practical one. He abstained from eating for long periods, using fasting as a form of political protest. He refused to eat until his death or his demands were met. It was noted in his autobiography that vegetarianism was the beginning of his deep commitment to *Brahmacharya*; without total control of the palate, his success in *Bramacharya* would likely falter.

When Gandhi was sixteen his father became very ill. Being very devoted to his parents, he attended to his father at all times during his illness. However, one night, Gandhi’s uncle came to relieve Gandhi for a while. He retired to his bedroom where his carnal desires overcame him and he made love to his wife. Shortly afterward a servant came to report that Gandhi’s father had just died. Gandhi felt tremendous guilt and could never forgive himself. He came to refer to this event as “double shame.” The incident had significant influence in Gandhi becoming totally celibate at the age of 36, while still married.

Gandhi earnestly believed that a person involved in social service should lead a simple life which he thought could lead to *Brahmacharya*. His simplicity began by renouncing the western lifestyle he was leading in South Africa. He called it “reducing himself to Zero,” which entailed giving up unnecessary expenditure, embracing a simple lifestyle and washing his own clothes. On one occasion he returned the gifts bestowed to him from the natal for his diligent service to the community.

Gandhi spent one day of each week in silence. He believed that abstaining from speaking brought him inner peace. This influence was drawn from the Hindu principles of *mauna* (silence) and *shanti* (peace). On such days he communicated with others by writing on paper. For three and a half years, from the age of 37, Gandhi refused to read newspapers, claiming that the tumultuous state of world affairs caused him more confusion than his own inner unrest.

Upon returning to India from South Africa, where he had enjoyed a successful legal practice, he gave up wearing Western-style clothing, which he associated with wealth and success. He dressed to be accepted by the poorest person in India, advocating the use of homespun cloth (*shadi*). Gandhi and his followers adopted the practice of weaving their own clothes from thread they themselves spun, and encouraged others to do so. While Indian workers were often idle due to unemployment, they had often bought their clothing from industrial manufacturers owned by British interests. It was Gandhi’s view that if Indians made their own clothes, it would deal an economic blow to the British establishment in India. Consequently, the spinning wheel was later incorporated into the flag of the Indian National Congress. He subsequently wore a *dhoti* for the rest of his life to express the simplicity of his life. Gandhi became a leader in a complex struggle, the Indian

campaign for home rule. Following World War I, in which he played an active part in recruiting campaigns, Gandhi, again advocating *satyagraha*, launched his movement of passive resistance to Britain. When, in 1919, Parliament passed the Rowlatt Acts, giving the Indian colonial authorities emergency powers to deal with so-called revolutionary activities, *satyagraha* spread through India, gaining millions of followers. A demonstration against the Rowlatt Acts resulted in a massacre of Indians at Amritsar by British soldiers in 1920, when the British government failed to make amends, Gandhi proclaimed an organized campaign of noncooperation. Indians in public office resigned, government agencies such as courts of law were boycotted, and Indian children were withdrawn from government schools. Through India, streets were blocked by squatting Indians who refused to rise even when beaten by police. Gandhi was arrested, but the British were soon forced to release him.

Economic independence for India, involving the complete boycott of British goods, was made a corollary of Gandhi's *swaraj* ("self-ruling") movement. The economic aspects of the movement were significant, for the exploitation of Indian villagers by British industrialists had resulted in extreme poverty in the country and the virtual destruction of Indian home industries. As a remedy for such poverty, Gandhi advocated revival of cottage industries; he began to use a spinning wheel as a token of the return to the simple village life he preached, and of the renewal of native Indian industries.

Gandhi also used the weapon of civil disobedience that is, refusal to obey civil laws or decrees. This refusal usually takes the form of passive resistance. People practicing civil disobedience break a law because they consider the law unjust, want to call attention to its injustice, and hope to bring about its repeal or amendment. They are also willing to accept any penalty, such as imprisonment, for breaking the law.

In perhaps his most famous essay, “Civil Disobedience” (1849), the American author Henry David Thoreau set forth the basic tenets of civil disobedience for the first time. The individual, Thoreau claimed, is “a higher and independent power,” from which the state obtains its power. Civil disobedience was later practiced by pacifists and by individuals devoted to such causes as woman suffrage and prohibition. Two notable examples of progress were achieved through the practice of civil disobedience in the mid-20th century. The first, the independence of India, was largely a result of Mohandas Gandhi's programs of *satyagraha*, which followed the principle of nonviolent resistance to British colonial laws. The second involved civil rights legislation in the United States, in which the nonmilitant efforts of Martin Luther King, Jr., played a primary role.

Gandhi became the international symbol of a free India. He lived a spiritual and ascetic life of prayer, fasting, and meditation. His union with his wife became, as he himself stated, that of brother and sister. Refusing earthly possessions, he wore the loincloth and shawl of the lowliest Indian and subsisted on vegetables, fruit juices, and goat's milk. Indians revered him as a saint and began to call him *Mahatma* “great soul”, a title reserved for the greatest sages. Gandhi's advocacy of nonviolence, known as *ahimsa* “non injury”, was the expression of a way of life implicit in the Hindu religion. By the Indian practice of nonviolence, Gandhi held, Britain too would eventually consider violence useless and would leave India. The Mahatma's political and spiritual hold on India was so great that the British authorities dared not interfere with him. In 1921 the Indian National Congress, the group that spearheaded the movement for nationhood, gave Gandhi complete executive authority, with the right of naming his own successor. The Indian population, however, could not fully comprehend the unworldly *ahimsa*. A series of armed revolts against Britain broke



out, culminating in such violence that Gandhi confessed the failure of the civil-disobedience campaign he had called, and ended it. The British government again seized and imprisoned him in 1922. After his release from prison in 1924, Gandhi withdrew from active politics and devoted himself to propagating communal unity. Unavoidably, however, he was again drawn into the vortex of the struggle for independence. In 1930 the Mahatma proclaimed a new campaign of civil disobedience, calling upon the Indian population to refuse to pay taxes, particularly the tax on salt. The campaign was a march to the sea, in which thousands of Indians followed Gandhi from Ahmadabad to the Arabian Sea, where they made salt by evaporating sea water. Once more the Indian leader was arrested, but he was released in 1931, halting the campaign after the British made concessions to his demands. In the same year Gandhi represented the Indian National Congress at a conference in London.

In 1932, Gandhi began new civil-disobedience campaigns against the British. Arrested twice, the Mahatma fasted for long periods several times; these fasts were effective measures against the British, because revolution might well have broken out in India if he had died. In September 1932, while in jail, Gandhi undertook a “fast unto death” to improve the status of the Hindu Untouchables. The British, by permitting the Untouchables to be considered as a separate part of the Indian electorate, were, according to Gandhi, countenancing an injustice. Although he was himself a member of the *vaisya* (merchant) caste, Gandhi was the great leader of the movement in India dedicated to eradicating the unjust social and economic aspects of the caste system.

In 1934 Gandhi formally resigned from politics, being replaced as leader of the Congress Party by Jawaharlal Nehru. Gandhi traveled through India, teaching

*ahimsa* and demanding eradication of “untouchability.” The esteem in which he was held was the measure of his political power. So great was this power that the limited home rule granted by the British in 1935 could not be implemented until Gandhi approved it. A few years later, in 1939, he again returned to active political life because of the pending federation of Indian principalities with the rest of India. His first act was a fast, designed to force the ruler of the state of Rajkot to modify his autocratic rule. Public unrest caused by the fast was so great that the colonial government intervened; the demands were granted. The Mahatma again became the most important political figure in India.

When World War II broke out, the Congress Party and Gandhi demanded a declaration of war aims and their application to India. As a reaction to the unsatisfactory response from the British, the party decided not to support Britain in the war unless the country were granted complete and immediate independence. The British refused, offering compromises that were rejected. When Japan entered the war, Gandhi still refused to agree to Indian participation. He was interned in 1942 but was released two years later because of failing health.

The great man Gandhi, whose fame has spread through out the world, did not appear in his early life to have any ambition for power and fame. But his deep faith in truth spiritually and humanity made him Mahatma Gandhi or a great soul. The symbol of India, as a great follower of Bhagbat Geeta, he had deep faith in action particularly selfless action.

Undoubtedly, Gandhi was very much impressed by the traditional Hindu religion and also Buddhism from the time Gandhi started his public life, he showed great concern for Hindu-Muslim unity and harmony. He had the perceptions that everything would be meaningless unit there was a religious harmony among different

religious groups like Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. Religion was a core agency for Gandhi who believed that it could only bring the people together.

Gandhian philosophy of political independence rests on religious moral. He asserts his affinity to religion as “I call myself a Sanatanist Hindu, because I believe in the Vedas, Upanishads and Purans...” (Gill13). As the politics of Gandhi was saturated with religious and religious beliefs, most of the Indian masses appreciated Gandhi as an avatar. The aura of Gandhi was not only the outcome of his political sagacity but also the product of his saintly persona. For Gandhi, the nation of ahimsa represented not merely a political tactic but a moral way of life. Reading Indian tradition of non-violence through a lens colored by his western education, Gandhi considered ahimsa a mode of being and action consistent with a deeper ontological truth that points to the unity of all being. Taking help of Christian and Tolstolian notion of active love to his understanding of non-violence Gandhi departed significantly from orthodox Hindu interpretation “belief in nonviolence is based on the assumption that human nature in its essence is one and therefore unfailingly responds to the advance of love” (quoted in Mukherjee 2). He emerges using non-violent revolutionary weapons, love and truth for waging war. The truth emerges from the concept of ‘Satyagraha’, which in Sanskrit means truth force. According to Gandhi, the three moderns have left a deep impression on his life namely Tolstoy, Raychandbhai and Ruskin. Reading Tolstoy’s book *The Kingdom of God*, Mahatma Gandhi is supposed to have changed. He gives his credit to Tolstoy’s book as he says “... cured me of my skepticism and made me a firm believer in Ahimsa. Further he says “Ruskin’s emphasis on the dignity of manual labor and aversion to industrialism marked a turning point in my Life” (Gill13).

Along with the non-violence campaign of Mahatma Gandhi, there are other

subsequent strategies- Quit India Movement, Satyagraha, Peasants Resistance etc. Gandhi used so many ideological tools for India's struggle for independence from British rule. One of the major tools is *swaraj* that has reinterpreted as a greater freedom. Gandhi explained the concept of *swaraj* that is emerged since the beginning of nationalize movement:

The root meaning of *swaraj* is self-rule. *Swaraj* may therefore, be rendered as disciplined rule from within. Independence has no such limitation. Independence may mean licenses to do as you like. *Swaraj* is positive, independence is negative. The word *Swaraj* is a sacred word, a Vedic word meaning self rule and self resistant and not freedom all restraint which independence often means. (Dalton 2)

Gandhi's use of *swaraj* for Indian national independence draws the parallel lines with the norms of freedom in Upanishad and Gita. Transcendental meaning of *swaraj* for Gandhi is strict political sense, a sovereign kingdom's freedom from external control. Gandhi's first and foremost emphasis of Hinduism saw the liberated individual as one "who acts without carving possessiveness and finds peace in an awareness of infinite spirit" (Dalton 3). Similarly, the Chaddogya Upanished defined freedom in a spiritual sense "self governing autonomy" and "unlimited freedom in all worlds". Hence Gandhi's concept of *swaraj* came in effect which is closer with the major ancient religious ideologies.

On the other hand, Gandhi advocates for *satyagraha* the unique and greatest measurement to correct the erring human race and bring about change in the socio-economic and politico-religious spheres to usher in a non-violence peaceful order. Gandhi advocates *satyagraha* as the practical application of non-violence and truth. It is rooted in the inward strength of the soul. *satyagraha* is a method evolved by the

Gandhi for resolving or minimizing the social conflicts. It is a weapon of conducting a non-violent war against civil and injustice. It is a technique of action of bringing about a state of affairs where the ideal of love would reign in place of hatred and killings. Gandhi with comparatively successful stance likes to use *satyagraha* as weapon. He asserts:

*Satyagraha* has been designed as an effective rubricate for violence that is to wage non-violent conflict... The fast became the most potent of all ways [...] a last resort when all other avenues of redress have been explored and have failed. (Dalton 242)

Further more, Non-violence and non-cooperation are supposed to be universal themes in Gandhi's ideology. Gandhi's hope for communal harmony rested not with government or law enforcement agencies but with the "better elements of society willing to assert themselves in the interests of peace and normality" (Dalton 244). In principle, non co-operation is a protest against an unwitting and unwilling participation in evil. It may include strikes hatred, boycott of offices meetings and procession. Gandhi's pervasive lines on goodness and non-violence reasserts this theme:

Non-violent, non-cooperation is a universal remedy. Good is self existent, evil is not. It is like a parasite living on and around good it will die of itself when the support that good gives is withdrawn. The hearth of the anti-social elements may or may not be changed: it will be enough if they are made to feel that the better elements of society are asserting themselves in the interests of peace and in the interests of normality. (244)

Besides this, Gandhi further practices the creed of civil disobedience. Civil disobedience for him is a form of non-violent rebellion against unjust laws of the state. The civil register regards the dictates of conscience as superior to the command of the states. He violates the important law of the state in order to bend the government to the will of the people.

The method of fasting, which Gandhi gave a great value is adopted to appeal to the good sense of the person or to evoke the best in him against whom it is intended on several occasions. Gandhi restored to the methods of fasting and regarded that “fasting under proper circumstance in such an appeal or excellence” fasting on to death is the last and most potent weapon in the armory of *satyagraha*. Since fasting unto death often leads to violence, Gandhi repeatedly said that it could be used only with its most discretion. He observed, “Fasting unto death is an integral part of *satyagraha* programme and it is the greatest and most effective weapon in its armory under given circumstances” (quoted in Gandhi Prasanga 75).

To build up cursory idea, Gandhi’s nexus of values: non-violence and tolerance, truth and truthfulness, trust and openness are all connected to both personal and political life. His focus is that we become liberated from any physical or mental dictatorship only when we are empowered by truthfulness and non-violent action, that freedom is not merely license because it also means a social awareness and responsibility that comes with a sense of human connectedness. Thus, Gandhi’s thought and action for revolution and independence movement totally rest upon the same premise of exclusivity, that non -violent, truthfulness and *satyagraha* path is the one and ultimate.

The weapon of non-violent was a supreme force to fight against the colonial rule of British. After the long and incessant struggle against British imperialism on 15

August 1947, Gandhi, who was responsible for this process could not celebrate it because of its unhappy ending. The great wave of Hindu-Muslim strife was hovering all around, especially in northern part of India after the partition. It showed that although India gained independence, it has not achieved *swaraj* as many people hoped. However, these stark realities could not upset Gandhi and his non-violent movement to fight against those inhuman cruelties.

Towards the last month of his life, Gandhi showed his heroic nature and fought against the corybantic wave of violence that had gripped most of the north India. The civil war and partition were creating the worst period of Gandhi's life but he was preparing his non-violent power to put in action. As Dalton writes:

He took partition as a verdict of failure, not that non-violence had failed but he had fallen short in his practices of it. Yet it was then, when this verdict seemed so clear that he proceeded to demonstrate for one late time the power of Satyagraha and the true meaning of *swaraj*. (140)

In order to fight with violence, Gandhi had only one weapon left, namely his well calculated fast, designed to awake the consciences of morally misguided people. He began his pilgrimage of peace to the Noakhali district of Bengal, the scene of worst Hindu-Muslim violence. If there was any hope then that was only Gandhi. He restlessly walked through riot-affected areas with his same commitment and power as in his young days. In the words of Bhikhu Parekh:

He stayed there from 1946 to February 1947, walking from village, living in the hearts of those willing to part him, listening to their stories of atrocities, calming passions, and consoling the distressed and bereaved. He walked 18 hours a day and covered 49 villages.

Sometimes his path was strewn filth and crumbles and since as a pilgrim of peace we often walked barefoot, his feet became sore and developed chilblains.[...] There were also several threats on his life and a couple of violent scuffles. Undeterred, he continued his work, summoned up immense physical energy in his disintegrating body, and by the sheer force of his personality succeeded in restoring peace in Bengal and elsewhere. (29)

Towards the end of his life, Gandhi was more successful in his mission of peace. From his past experience, he had learned many things with Hindu-Muslim conflict the inclusive method that he developed in dealing it, and his theory of fasting which he increasingly applied to its resolution. As Nicholas Mansergh observe:

In this, the last year of his life, Gandhi's influence was transcendental. The people of India treated him with the awareness given to the great prophets and religious teachers of the past. Indeed he was already numbered with them. It was his preaching of the doctrine of non-violence more than another single factor that stood between India and blood shed on the frightful scale. (Dalton 159)

Undoubtedly where all the other leaders were celebrating country's independence in Delhi on 15 August 1947, Gandhi remained busy fighting against violence several hundred miles away. Soon after independence when Calcutta became the theater of mass violence Gandhi saw no reason in celebration. Gandhi rushed to the city. When all his appeals failed he began a fast unto death on 2 September 1947. Within few days Gandhi had got unexpected success. He was notably able to maintain communal harmony in Calcutta. Highlighting this success as a Calcutta miracle Bhikhu Parekh says:



... within three days he had performed a miracle. Many who had been killing arrived at his bedside, wept at this tormented body, surrendered their weapons, and gave him a written undertaking that they would allow no more violence to occur, if need be at the cost of their lives, [...] Gandhi saw no miracle, for it only confirmed his life long conviction that 'soul force' was infinitely more powerful than the physical. (31)

After restoring peace in Calcutta, Gandhi rushed to Delhi where riots were raging. He had determined to fast again from 13 January 1948, once more communal peace and once again after six days the fast ended in success. This was his last fast and he was able to create real peace in place of deadly calm imposed by the troops. And the heroic acts of self sacrifice made difference which civilian military police could not. Therefore he was admired by all people of all community. As Parekh writes:

Gandhi's repeated triumphs against human savagery stunned his awe struck country men and made him a sublime and sacrificing figure, an object of deepest pride and reverence even to those who hear otherwise critical of his fasts and religious appeals. It was almost as if they felt that he had atoned to redeem them and lightened the burden for their shame guilt. (32)

Along with it, there had been many threats to Gandhi's life. A bomb had been dropped at his prayer meeting just ten days before his death. But Gandhi had refused to be frightened of mere bombing. He knew that violence was drawing to him and he might be killed one day, but he rejected all kinds of protection. Indeed he wanted to die a violent death in the hope of that his death might achieve what his life had not.

By 1944 the Indian struggle for independence was in its final stages, the British government having agreed to independence on condition that the two contending nationalist groups, the Muslim League and the Congress Party, should resolve their differences. Gandhi stood steadfastly against the partition of India but ultimately had to agree, in the hope that internal peace would be achieved after the Muslim demand for separation had been satisfied. India and Pakistan became separate states when the British granted India its independence in 1947. During the riots that followed the partition of India, Gandhi pleaded with Hindus and Muslims to live together peacefully. Riots engulfed Calcutta (now Kolkata), one of the largest cities in India, and the Mahatma fasted until disturbances ceased. On January 13, 1948, he undertook another successful fast in New Delhi to bring about peace. But on January 30, 12 days after the termination of that fast, as he was on his way to his evening prayer meeting, he was assassinated by Nathuram Godse, a Hindu fanatic.

Gandhi's death was regarded as an international catastrophe. His place in humanity was measured not in terms of the 20th century but in terms of history. A period of mourning was set aside in the United Nations General Assembly, and condolences to India were expressed by all countries. Religious violence soon waned in India and Pakistan, and the teachings of Gandhi came to inspire nonviolent movements elsewhere, notably in the U.S. under the civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.

Gandhi's assassination on 30 January 1948 had a cathartic effect in Indian history. It discredited Hindu extremists' shocks to all people for their crimes, reassured the minorities, and pulled the mourning nation. As it said, in the eloquent words of a prominent Muslim politician:

His assassination had a cathartic effect throughout India. Men realized with a shock the depth to which hatred and discord had dragged them.

The Indian nation turned back from the brink of abyss and millions beside the memory of a man who had made redemption possible.

(Dalton 167)

Certainly there was no higher honor to his life than the impact of his death, his final statement for *swaraj*. In this sense Gandhi entered into the deep realm of non-violence in his pursuit of political goal. His main aim was not only to bring national freedom but to bring spiritual freedom as well. Therefore, Gandhi took non-violence as a supreme means and cognizable standard by which truthful action can be determined.

### III. Urge for Freedom from Colonialism

The vision of resistance against the colonial forces is discernible in the acclaimed novel of Coetzee, *Life and Times of Michael K*, which won the Booker prize in 1983. J.M Coetzee deals with the lived experiences of central character, Michael K, and exposes his resistance against the several colonial forces throughout his life. The lucid manifestation of the socio-economic, and political reality in the texture of the text exposes the hardships and sufferings faced by the south- African individuals who are distant from the air of freedom due to the prevalence of colonial elements and its encroachment upon their life in their own land. Coetzee depicts the pathetic situation of civil war due to apartheid in south Africa, which reflect the hostile socio-economic , political and cultural conditions in which Michael K is embroiled in the turmoil of restrictions, confinements, oppression, suppression , injustice, domination, exploitation and so on.

Coetzee has created an imaginary character to represent entire colonized individuals and has given the knowledge to fight against the colonial agents enduring the pains and suffering like Michael K. Despite being young, energetic and bold, Michael K does not use any physical means to struggle against the colonial elements and agents. He is suppressed, oppressed and exploited throughout the novel even then he does not wish to fall in the cruel grip of colonial elements. So, he constantly resists against all these forces non-violently. In true sense of the word, the central character, Michael K, strongly denies to be colonized, and moves constantly on his own pace to fight against the colonial forces in order to breathe the fresh air of freedom in the future. In this type of suffocating climate Michael K does not refrain from enduring the troubles imposed by the colonial forces, rather he fights against it painstakingly. Michael K's only wish is not to be the life long prey of colonization but to spring out

from the circle of colonial agents and to live the life in ecstasy in an infinite universe outside. So, in order to achieve freedom Michael K strengthens his spirit to struggle against the encroachment of colonial forces upon his life.

The chronological development of the plot in the texture of the text clearly dramatizes the suppression, oppression and exploitation imposed by the colonial agents in every pace of the central character's life. Nevertheless the novelist has not forgotten to depict the resistance done by the central character Michael K in order to procure freedom. Michael K is confined in the camps where he strongly resists to take food, clothing, medicine etc. provided by the colonial authorities. Instead of accepting food, he remains fasting even when he is hunger stricken. "He felt hungry but did nothing about it. Instead of listening to the crying of his body he tried to listen to the great silence about him" (66). He also denies to wear the clothes and take medicines given by them despite the crucial need of his body and health. In fact, it is an attempt of Michael K to refrain from the chaos and remain in silence. This sort of attempt shows the subtle way of resistance to the encroachment of opposing forces that try to ruin him. It is just for his freedom that he tolerated the unbearable situation painstakingly.

State of being free from any physical or mental restrictions is regarded as freedom. To be free and act freely is the basic necessity of human beings. Human beings achieve his or her goal only by remaining in the free atmosphere because one can have the complete mental gymnastic in free environment. Any knowledge, idea or happiness achieved by human beings is the result of freedom. A person cannot progress or gain happiness when s/he is perfectly engulfed and ruled by any external agents. To oppose eventual attacks of external forces and sprout the intention of independence is freedom. What makes an individual search for the freedom? What

encourages him/her to gain it? What are the obstacles that oppose and obstruct an individual from gaining it? J.M. Coetzee vividly answers these questions through the act of imaginary central character Michael K who fights against the colonial forces constantly in order to live the life of his choice. Coetzee succeeded to portray the imposition of colonial forces upon the individual life and its resistance through Michael K, who also represent the entire colonized group. In fact Coetzee wishes to highlight that freedom is our basic necessity. So, we all quest for free floating life devoid from any type of external encroachment. For instance, Michael K's mother Anna K in this novel dreams of returning back to the Prince Albert and enjoying the freedom from burden of work and bondage of city of Cape Town. Coetzee mentions:

Lying in bed in her airless room through the winter afternoons with rain dripping from the steps outside, she dreamed of escaping from the careless violence, the packed buses, the food queues, arrogant shopkeepers, thieves and beggars, sirens in the night, the curfew, the cold and wet, and returning to a country side where, if she was going to die, he would at least die under blue skies. (8)

Here the exposition of careless violence, the packed buses; thieves and beggars; sirens in night the curfew; the cold and wet is suggestive of unfavorable external conditions in an alien place that compel an individual to search for freedom. In fact Anna K intends at least to die under the blue sky. Blue sky galvanizes the urge for freedom, independence and act of own choice without imposition of any external forces that instigates her to return back to Prince Albert- her birth place. Realization of safety and security of an individual from hostile environment is freedom. It is therefore Coetzee has shown Anna K dreaming of returning to a country side in order to rejoice the sweetness and freedom of countryside life.

Coetzee intends to prove the fact that sense of freedom is inherent in each individual. That's why urge for freedom is very strong in the texture of this text. For instance Michael K is fully determined and confident enough to reach the goal of his vehemence to continue the search. .Therefore he says, "We will try again, but next time we will go by the back roads .They can't block every road out" (23). The fact is quite discernible about why he dares say so. He dares to go by the back roads because he has been guided by passion to exist in the realm of freedom.

Furthermore, Coetzee makes quite clear about the origin of Michael K and Anna K, where lies complete freedom and independence. That's why they are intensely intended to reach in the realm of peace and freedom. By making it blatant Coetzee intends to lead the readers to a free floating paradigm. For instance, Anna K knows that her health is worsening and may be she can't reach her destination. Therefore she reveals everything about her village, a dream land of freedom. She says, "I forget the actual name of the farm, but we can ask, people will know. There was a chicken-run against one wall of the wagon house, a long chicken-run, and a pump up on the hill, we had a house on the hill side. There was prickly pear outside the back door That is the place you must look for" (27). The vivid description of 'the place' which he had to look for is in fact the place of freedom, independence and rejoice. In such a place lies celebration of survival. It is in this way Coetzee magnifies an indigenous native soil in South Africa which quench the quest for freedom. That is the place you must look for is in fact Coetzee's assertion that is free and independent life which every body should look for.

Similarly, Coetzee treats Michael K as an instrumental figure emboldened with the vigorous passion in the quest for freedom. He shows Michael K as an ambitious intensive person. To fulfill his ambition of retaining the freedom and

happiness, Michael K continues this struggle carrying his mother's ashes even after her death, despite a lot of troubles he faces during the quest. Coetzee shows vigour of survival and passion of freedom in an artistic way. For instance, he tells that Michael K realizes the bliss of his native atmosphere with full of freedom. Coetzee makes the impact of passion for freedom upon Michael K clear in the following lines:

I could live here forever, he thought, or till I die. Nothing would happen everyday would be the same as the day before, there would be nothing to say. The anxiety that belonged to the time on the road began to leave him. Sometimes, as he walked, he did not know whether he was awake or asleep. (46-47)

This sort of presentation pinpoints the fact that happiness and rejoice bloom among the thorn of absurdities. That's why continuous effort should be made despite hardships and sufferings. Only then freedom is possible. "The shutters were closed and a rock- pigeon flew in at a hole where on the gables had crumbled, leaving timbers exposed and galvanized roof-plates buckled" (51).

Here 'pigeon' is symbol of peace, freedom and affluence. When Michael K steps Prince Albert, pigeons fly in the sky. It signifies that when Michael K reaches the origin of his quest, the passion for freedom, independence and enjoyment galvanizes him. And finally he becomes optimistic to the future. In the land of his quest he senses complete freedom. Coetzee mentions "There was a pleasure in abandoning himself to sickness. He opened all the windows and lay listening to the doves, or to the stillness" (57). Here listening to the doves or to the stillness signifies the freedom and independence. It was in fact the quest of Michael K's heart.



But Michael K's life in the hills remains in freedom and independence until the arrival of Visagie's grandson, who later tries to enslave Michael K. Grandson orders Michael K as:

You should plant potatoes, said the grandson. Potatoes, onions, mealies- anything will grow here if you give it enough water. This is good soil. I'm surprised you don't grow a few things for yourself down by the dam. A pang of disappointment cut through K: even the dam was known about. My grandparents were lucky to find you, the grandson went on. People have a hard time finding good farm servants nowadays. (62)

In fact, Visagie's grandson tries to colonize Michael K. Michael K is not free from the grip of colonization wherever he goes. Grandson treats him as his body servant. But when the Visagie's grandson starts encroaching upon his freedom and independence, Michael K lives the place in order to resist it. On the way he meets the police who takes him to the prison. In the prison he is given every thing but he does not remain happy. He intends to escape from the prison. He says, "If I could find my clothes, I would leave. But the cupboard beside his bed was empty" (72).

Above lines prove that Michael K never becomes happy wherever he is taken and provided with everything. His strong desire is to live the life independently and freely without any kind of imposition from the external forces. In the prison he is given clothes to wear but he denies to wear it. He searches his own clothes before aiming to run away. It shows that he loves his native clothes very much and discards the clothes supplied by the colonial forces.

Inside the Jakkalsdrif Relocation Camp Michael K's life is miserable. His only aim is how to challenge the colonial agents. There he has a suffocating life. His every

cells of the body are tired of staying in such a place. His desire is to have the complete freedom outside. In this regard Coetzee mentions: “He retreated to the back fence of the camp and stared out over the empty veld” (76). Here empty veld signifies the spacious land of freedom.

The policeman in the camp seizes Michael K’s freedom. He says “Who do you think you are that I should give you a free living?” (77). And Michael K thinks that freedom may not be here but is outside the camp and he feels:

It was better in the mountains. It was better on the farm, it was better on the road. It was better in Cape Town. He thought of the hot dark hut, of strangers lying packed about him on their bunks, of air thick with derision. It is like going back to childhood, he thought: it is like a nightmare. (77)

This kind of expression of the character highlights the points that colonial agents confiscate the freedom of an individual inside the camps. Freedom that is outside the camp is incomparable with the freedom elsewhere. Michael K thinks that there is abundant freedom in the mountains, on the road and in the Cape Town but is not inside the camp. Michael K’s urge is not the fragmented type of freedom and independence but the absolute one- a perfect one.

The main objective of the Jakkalsdrif Relocation Camp is to make the prisoners work. They are not given freedom to come outside the camp to act in their own choice. They are kept in the camp as if animals are kept in the shed. The prisoners are made to do any kind of activity using commands, orders, threat etc. Coetzee mentions the threat given by the captain of the camp to the prisoners as:

Do you hear me? I want everyone to hear me! You ask for war, you get war! I’m putting my own men on guard here – fuck the Army!- I’m

putting my own men on guard, and I'm locking the gates, and if my men see any of you, man, woman or child, outside the wire, they have orders to shoot, no questions asked! No one leaves the camp except on labour calls. No visits, no outings, no picnics. Roll-calls morning and evening, with everyone present to answer. We've been kind to you long enough. (92)

Threat is one of the weapons used by colonial agents in order to colonize and to keep the people under their control. They even use filthy words to show their real conduct. By doing so they seize the freedom of the individuals. The prisoners are kept there to work for the colonial agents. Prisoners are not given freedom to go outside the camp.

Michael K challenges the colonial authorities by escaping from the camp. This is his subtle way of protest against the colonial forces. He then comes back to the home of Visagie's grandson. Reaching the farm he starts cultivating as he is a gardener. He enjoys to be a farmer and thinks:

All that remains is to live here quietly for the rest of my life, eating the food that my own labour has made the earth to yield. All that remains is to be a tender of the soil. He lifted the first strip to his mouth. Beneath the crisply charred skin the flesh was soft and juicy. He chewed with tears of joy in his eyes. The best, he thought, the very best pumpkin I have tasted. For the first time since he had arrived in the country he found pleasure in eating. (113)

Above lines expose the fact that Michael K enjoys to eat the fruit that has been grown by his own hard work. He is much pleased to eat this fruit. In fact he is eating the fruit of freedom and independence. There was flow of tears of joy in his eyes when he

achieved his freedom. Coetzee clearly depicts the importance of freedom through the act of Michael K.

Michael K enjoys freedom in the farm until he is discovered by the soldiers. He is captured by them and put blame upon him that he is an arsonist, that he is feeding the guerillas in his farm. The soldiers capture him and send him to hospital as he was growing too weak. Noel, one of the soldiers says, "Michaels is an arsonist. He is also an escapee from a labour camp. He was running a flourishing garden on an abandoned farm and feeding the guerrilla population when he was captured. That is the story of Michaels" (131). This kind of unnecessary blame upon an individual is an attack upon their freedom to live in their own choice. Even in this situation, Michael K endures blow of the blames upon his innocence shot by the colonial agents.

When Michael K is kept in the hospital, one of the soldiers forces him to reveal the secret of remaining in the mountains and feeding the guerillas. The only person to understand the philosophy of Michael K is the doctor. The doctor realizes the truth about Michael K. Doctor says:

I am the only one who can save you. I am the only one who sees you for the original soul you are. I am the only one who cares for you. I alone see you as neither a soft case for a soft camp nor a hard case for a hard camp but a human soul above and beneath classification, a soul blessedly untouched by doctrine, untouched by history, a soul stirring its wings within that stiff sarcophagus, murmuring behind that clownish mask. You are precious, Michaels, in your way; you are the last of your kind, a creature left over from an earlier age, like the coelacanth or the last man to speak Yagui. (151)

Above lines prove that the doctor is also the victim of the colonial rule. He is also seeking freedom in the hospital. The doctor penetrates in the feelings of Michael K so as to understand the principles of Michael K, and he also understands the importance of freedom and independence.

Even in his pathetic condition Michael K manages to escape from the home of colonization. It shows that instead of raising physical means to protest against the colonial rule he goes away from the net of colonial rule without raising any force in order to seek freedom and peace. Before leaving that place he leaves behind the pyjamas given by hospital. He wears his own old clothes. The doctor realizes the escape of Michael K and says, “ In half an hour I was back where I had started, a little surprised at how small a camp can seem from the outside that is, to those who dwell within, an entire universe” (156). This is in fact the universal thought of doctor who is working under the colonial rule. Indeed he also does not wish to fall in the grip of colonial authority being devoid from freedom and independence. He expresses his feelings as:

Then as I sat at the nurse’s table in the evening, with nothing to do and the ward in darkness and the south-easter beginning to stir outside and the concussion case breathing away quietly, it came to me with great force that I was wasting my life, that I was wasting it by living from day to day in a state of waiting that I had in effect given myself up as a prisoner to this war. I went outside and stood on the empty racetrack staring up into a sky swept clean by the wind, hoping that the spirit of restlessness would pass and the old calm return. (157)

It shows the monotonous feelings of the doctor to remain in the hospital without any freedom and independence. He becomes nostalgic about the freedom and

independence that he enjoyed before joining the hospital. He looks up at the sky and finds that it is very much clean. It signifies the greater freedom outside the hospital.

The doctor regrets of his mistreatment towards Michael K when he was admitted in the hospital in miserable condition. The doctor asks pardon for this act and says:

Michaels, forgive me for the way I treated you, I did not appreciate who you were till the last days. Forgive me too for following you like this. I promise not to be a burden. [...] My need is very simple one. Though this is a large country, so large that you would think there would be space for everyone, what I have learned of life tells me that it is hard to keep out of the camps. Yet I am convinced there are areas that lie between the camps and belong to no camp, not even to the catchment areas of the camps. (162)

After understanding the reality of life and freedom, doctor asks excuse with Michael K for his mistreatment in the beginning. Now he also understands that there is greater areas that do not belong to the camps. This sort of expression proves the fact that there is no freedom at all inside the camps. That is why Michael K is running away from it. Doctor again expresses his feelings as “As time passed, however, I slowly began to see the originality of the resistance you offered” (163). Coetzee clearly mentions the subtle kind of resistance offered by Michael K towards the imposition of the colonial agents.

The quest of Michael K is the freedom and independence. His urge for it was so strong that he managed to escape from the claws of colonial forces by any means without applying any violent actions. About this J.M. Coetzee lucidly exposes the pains and sufferings confronted by Michael K to get freedom. Coetzee manages to

highlight the quest of Michael K through the voice of the doctor who is also in the grip of colonial authority. Doctor's views regarding the garden that Michael K is searching is expressed in the following lines:

The garden for which you are presently heading is nowhere and everywhere except in the camps. It is another name for the only place where you belong, Michaels, where you do not feel homeless. It is off every map, no road leads to it that is merely a road, and only you know the way. (166)

Indeed, the garden where we get happiness, peace and harmony is not the ordinary garden, but it is the garden of freedom and independence. This sort of garden is not found inside the camps. In fact the camp is hell for the prisoners who are seeking freedom and independence. Michael K's inner spirit was so very strong that he struggled against the colonial forces constantly and non-violently to reach this garden of freedom. Only the person having the nature like that of the Michael K will have the access to the road that leads to the garden of freedom and independence.

As J.M. Coetzee's novels are regarded to be the counter discourse of colonialism and imperialism, *Life and Times of Michael K* also stands against the opposing forces like restrictions, confinements, injustice, suppression, oppression, exploitation, servility, enslavement, domination and so on that try to encroach on the ground of personal freedom to exist the life of ones choice with complete freedom and independence. Through this novel, Coetzee has justified the strength of an individual spirit and vigor to resist against the act of colonial elements non-violently. Coetzee vividly dramatizes the encroachment of colonial authorities upon the life of individual and its non-violent resistance done by an individual to exist the life of his own choice through the central character Michael K who represents an entire mass of colonized

population. Of course, resistances are of different sorts but throughout this novel Coetzee intends to highlight the act of non-violent resistance done by Michael K which exactly resembles the non-violent movement principled and adopted by Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi to free India from the strong hold of British regime which was deeply rooted in the soil of India. The vivid description of colonial imposition upon the life of individuals in South Africa and its non-violent resistance by the central character Michael K has been clearly justified by J.M. Coetzee. The development of the plot has been accelerated with the imposition of colonial forces like domination, suppression, oppression, exploitation, enslavement etc. and the struggle confronted by Michael K to challenge these imposition so as to achieve freedom and independence. Since freedom is the inherent and basic necessity of human beings, Coetzee has made Michael K to fight against it non-violently.

Coetzee has highlighted the prevalence of colonial elements in the start of the novel due to which war has afflicted the life of working class people like Michael K and his mother Anna K. Anna K feels uncomfortable to remain in this type of atmosphere and wishes to return back to her birth place- Prince Albert wishing to enjoy freedom and independence. They are not allowed to move out without the permit by the colonial forces. Michael K goes to the permit office and requests the police woman telling her about the ill health of his mother. But the police woman scolds and dominates him with these words:

Don't waste my time. I am telling you for the last time, if the permit is granted the permit will come! Don't you see all these people waiting? Don't you understand? Are you an idiot? Next! She brace herself against the counter and glared pointedly over K's shoulder: 'Yes, you, next!' (20)



It shows the colonial domination upon the individual. Instead of using harsh words she could have used polite expression. It is none other than the absolute domination upon an individual. “But K did not budge. He was breathing fast, his eyes stared” (20). It shows his patience not to raise physical means. When Michael K does not get permit after several approach to office, he determines to take his mother by any means. So he tries to take her from several ways.

Michael K fully determines to continue his journey to Prince Albert to fulfill the wishes of his mother that is to get freedom and independence. Despite the curfew on the ways he puts his life on risk. On the way they are warned by the policemen who are the agents of colonial regime as:

You can't travel outside the Peninsula without a permit. Go to the check point and show them your permit and your papers. And listen to me: you want to stop on the express way, you pull fifty metres off the roadside. That's the regulation: fifty metres either side. Anything nearer, you can get shot, no warning, no questions asked. Understand?  
(22)

Above lines prove the fact that how the colonial forces encroaches upon the freedom of the individuals. The threat given by them is the way of imposing their authorial rule upon the freedom of the individuals.

The utterance of the corporal in command “I don't care who you are, who your mother is, if you haven't got a permit you can't leave the area, finished” (23) shows that they lack humanity and possess the authorial orders, rules and regulation from their heads. On the way Anna K becomes too sick and Michael K takes her to the hospital in Stellenbosch. She dies there after few days. One of the nurses of the hospital gives him his mother's ash. Michael K still determines to continue his

journey toward Prince Albert to fulfill the desire of Anna K. The policeman stops him and asks several questions. Coetzee mentions how Michael K's freedom of movement is encroached upon by the colonial forces with the following lines:

Once the convoy was behind him K relaxed, thinking he was free; but at the next bend in the road a soldier in camouflage uniform stepped from behind the bushes pointing an automatic rifle at his heart. K stopped in his tracks. The soldier lowered his rifle, lit a cigarette, took a puff, and raised the rifle again. (36)

Michael K does not reply anything. Here also Coetzee highlights the patience or enduring capacity of Michael K. He sincerely opens his suitcase and shows whatever is contained in it. The expression of the soldier as "Where did you steal this?" (36) clearly shows the domination and humiliation done by the soldier upon Michael K. On the way he is again found by another group of policemen and asked him about his whereabouts. After a while K is taken to the railway station with fifty other strangers. There he is made to work. It shows that colonial agents enslave the individual without any benevolent feelings.

Michael K eventually reaches Prince Albert and sighs the breathe of success. He thinks that he has fulfilled the desire of his mother and his own. He enjoys the air of freedom in Prince Albert. But there too Visagie's grandson tries to enslave him. He says:

You should plant potatoes, said the grandson. Potatoes, onions, mealies- anything will grow here if you give it enough water. This is good soil. I'm surprised you don't grow a few things for yourself down by the dam. A pang of disappointment cut through K: even the dam was known about. My grandparents were lucky to find you, the

grandson went on. People have a hard time finding good farm servants nowadays. (62)

With the above lines, Coetzee intends to highlight that Michael K's life is completely encroached upon by the opposing forces. However, he does not raise any physical force to resist it but he follows the peaceful process. The masterly behavior of the Visagie's grandson shows that he is going to make Michael K his servant and to dominate as much as he can.

The lines "The story of his life had never been an interesting one; there had usually been someone to tell him what to do next; now there was no one, and the best thing seemed to be to wait" (67) proves that Michael K is not given chance to exercise his freedom and independence. He is guided by someone or the other thinking that he is an idiot and simpleton. But in fact he is not of that kind. In fact Michael K is a great figure who is always in search of his freedom and independence.

Michael K is again picked up by the police van. At this Coetzee writes, "Understanding nothing, repelled by his smell, they pushed him into their van, took him back to the station, and locked him in a cell with five other men, where he resumed his shivering and his delirious sleep" (70). Coetzee's mentioning of these lines shows that Michael K is harassed again and again by the colonial forces. His freedom and independence is encroached frequently. His fundamental right of living freely is attacked. He is treated not like a human being but like an animal. In the prison he resists to wear the clothes provided by them and aims to escape. He says "If I could find my clothes I would leave. But the cupboard beside his bed was empty" (72). It shows that Michael K does not become ready to accept the things despite his need from the colonial agents. It is the non-violent resistance adopted by him, disobeying to participate with them.

Michael K wishes to go away from the camp. The guard who is there to inspect does not allow him and tells him to stay in the camp compulsorily. The guard questions him as “Why do you want to run away? You’ve got a home here, you’ve got food, you’ve got a bed. You’ve got a job. People are having a hard time out there in the world, you’ve seen it, I don’t need to tell you. For what do you want to join them?” (85). And he answers, “I don’t want to be in a camp, that’s all” (85). This clearly shows that he does not want to fall in the cruel claws of the colonial forces, remaining away from his free and independent life outside the camp. Michael K also disobeys to do the work. Coetzee writes, “The next morning K lay in bed while the other men went to work” (85-86). Disobedience to the orders given by the colonial agents is one of the ways of resisting against them non-violently.

Coetzee mentions the escape of Michael K as “He walked all night, feeling no fatigue trembling sometimes with the thrill of being free” (97). In fact Michael K had a profound thrill of getting freedom and independence that’s why he walked all night feeling no fatigue despite his pathetic conditions. He then reaches again to Prince Albert and says “I want to live here, he thought: I want to live here forever, where my mother and my grandmother lived” (99). In this place he finds complete freedom and independence that’s why he says so. Coetzee clearly describes Michael K’s feelings in his field with the following lines:

After the hardships of the mountains and the camp there was nothing but bone and muscle on his body. His clothes, tattered already, hung on him without shape. Yet as he moved about his field he felt a deep joy in his physical being. His step was so light that he barely touched the earth. It seemed possible to fly; it seemed possible to be both body and spirit. (101-102)

Above lines prove that in order to get freedom and independence Michael K has become too weak even then he rejoices extremely to walk in the field. His step was so light that he barely touched the earth signifies his happiness after getting to move freely without any obstacles from the external forces in his own soil of freedom and independence.

Michael K enjoys his freedom in this field and wishes to remain there forever.

Coetzee has highlighted his feelings as:

All that remains is to live here quietly for the rest of my life, eating the food that my own labour has made the earth to yield. All that remains is to be a tender of the soil. He lifted the first strip to his mouth. Beneath the crisply charred skin the flesh was soft and juicy. He chewed with tears of joy in his eyes. The best, he thought, the very best pumpkin I have tasted. For the first time since he had arrived in the country he found pleasure in eating. The after taste of the first slice left his mouth aching with sensual delight. [...] Such a pumpkin, he thought, such pumpkin I could eat every day of my life and never want anything else. (113-114)

This shows that he never becomes happy to take the things given by the colonial authorities because that has been exchanged with the freedom and independence which is the basic need of the life. Howsoever the taste of the food provided by the colonial force, he gets complete sensual delight while taking the food grown by his own hands with labour. Here he gets absolute satisfaction. He also feels not to have anything else other than these kinds of food. It is in fact his vigorous desire to have freedom and independence.

Unfortunately Michael is again discovered by some soldiers who came to his field. They found him in miserable condition. So they provided him a sandwich and forced him to take. But he vomited all and gave it back the remaining slice. It is done so in order to resist against colonization. It is in fact non-violent resistance. Coetzee mentions the exploitation done by the soldiers upon Michael K with the following lines:

The soldier who was holding K gripped the nape of his neck between thumb and forefinger and guided him down till he was kneeling, till his face was touching the earth. He flicked the beret away and pressed K's face hard into the earth. With the nose and lips squashed flat, K tasted the damp soil. He sighed. They lifted him and held him up. He did not open his eyes. 'So tell us about your friends,' the soldier said. K shook his head. He was hit a terrific blow in the pit of the stomach and fainted. (122)

With these lines Coetzee means to assert that how the colonial agents exploit the life of individuals. They lack the kind heart to help such a miserable person. It clearly depicts their brutality upon the life of an individual. In such a situation Michael K does not do any physical revolt but he keeps unspoken.

Noel, one of the soldiers puts false accusation over Michael K who is now brought into the hospital. Noel says, "Michael is an arsonist. He is also an escapee from a labour camp. He was running a flourishing garden on an abandoned farm and feeding the local guerrilla population when he was captured. That is the story of Michaels" (131). It is the domination and exploitation done upon Michael K who is a freedom fighter.

J.M. Coetzee clearly mentions the non-violent protest done by the central character Michael K. He writes:

Michaels is conscious again. His first act was to pull the tube out of his nose, felicity coming too late to stop him. Now he lies near the door under his heap of blankets living like a corpse, refusing to eat. With his stick-arm he pushes away the feed bottle. 'It's not my kind of food' is all he will say. (145)

Above lines lucidly exposes the fact of Michael K's non-violent protest against the act of colonial agents. He even pulls out the tube out of his nose refusing to eat food supplied to him through the pipe. The doctor says "Why? Are you fasting? Is this a protest fast? Is that what it is? What are you protesting against? Do you want your freedom?" (145). Of course, it is a protest fast, otherwise why would he refuse to eat when he is hunger stricken? He is really disobeying to accept the things provided by the colonial agents in order to get freedom and independence. When felicity tries to do treatment Michael K says, "I never asked for special treatment" (145). It proves the fact that he only wants his freedom and independence but not the food, clothes, treatment from the colonial agents. His determination towards the freedom and independence is so strong and constant. The doctor also asserts that Michael K does not want to eat camp food; he does not want to die. The doctor says, "It's not that he wants to die. He just doesn't like the food here. Profoundly does not like it. He won't even take baby food. Maybe he only eats the bread of freedom" (146). In fact the opinion of the doctor is absolutely right. Michael K truly urges to eat the bread of freedom and independence.

Michael K had very much suffocating life in the hospital. He was growing too lean and thin due to the lack of food in his body. Even in this sort of conditions he

managed to escape from the hospital in order to enjoy the free life in the greater universe outside the hospital. At his escape Noel, one of the soldiers says “The poor simpleton has gone off like a sick dog to die in a corner. Let him be, don’t haul him back and force him to die here under a spotlight with strangers looking on” (155). But the doctor who has rightly understood the broad feelings of the Michael K responses as “You smile, I said, ‘but what I say is true: people like Michaels are in touch with things you and I don’t understand. They hear the call of the great good master and they obey. Haven’t you heard of elephants?’” (155). The doctor only realizes the truth about Michael K that he is determined to achieve freedom and independence.

Michael K’s non-violent protest is so very strong that he even leaves back the pyjamas provided by the hospital and wears his own old clothes. Coetzee mentions this as “He was not wearing pyjamas I replied. What he found to wear I don’t yet know, but he left his pyjamas behind” (155). It clearly supports the idea that Michael’s protest against the opposing forces is so strong and is perfectly non-violent protest.

In fact, the strong determination of Michael K to achieve freedom and independence gives a great lesson to the doctor who is also one of the victims of the colonial rule. It can be noticed from his utterance of the following lines “In an half an hour I was back where I had started, a little surprised at how small a camp can seem from the outside that is , to those who dwell within, an entire universe” (156). Indeed, a camp is a negligible unit of the entire universe. Certainly the freedom outside the camp is infinite in comparison to the monotonous life inside a small hole.

The doctor is very much tired of the monotonous life without freedom and independence. He too hates to stay in the camp and wants to follow the track lead by Michael K. He thinks as:



I suspect that Noel is drinking more than usual. Perhaps now would be a good time, for him as for me, to quit the fortress for that is what the Peninsula is clearly to become- leaving behind the prisoners to guard the prisoners, the sick to cure the sick. Perhaps the two of us should take a leaf out of Michaels' book and go on a trip to one of the quieter parts of the country, [...] Perhaps we could make a start by discarding our uniforms and getting dirt under our fingernails and walking a little closer to the earth; though I doubt we will ever look as nondescript as Michaels, or as Michaels must have looked in the days before he turned into a skeleton. (160)

Through non-violent protest Michael K is very much successful to change and divert the mentality of the doctor who was working in the hospital inside the camp. In fact Michael K enlightens him and gives him profuse knowledge of freedom and independence through the act of non-violent resistance against the imposition of the colonial elements. He is now ready to go to the quieter parts of the country where there is the beautiful garden of freedom and independence. The doctor regrets of missing an opportunity and says, "The truth is that the only chance I had is gone, and gone before I knew. The night that Michaels made his break, I should have followed. It is vain to plead that I was not ready" (161). This type of regret that haunted the mind of doctor proves the fact that he and others too were completely engulfed by the colonial authorities and were tried of it. The doctor finally asks excuse with Michael K for his mistreatment and says, "Michaels, forgive me for the way I treated you, I did not appreciate who you were till the last days. Forgive me too for following you like this I promise not to be a burden" (162). After knowing the reality about Michael K, the doctor begs excuse with Michael K for his wrong act he had imposed upon Michael K remaining under the guidance of colonial authorities.

Coetzee puts down the following lines to support his idea that the protest done by Michael K is of subtle type and not the violent one. He asserts:

As time passed, however, I slowly began to see the originality of the resistance you offered. You were not a hero and did not pretend to be, not even a hero of fasting. In fact you did not resist at all. When we told you to jump, you jumped. When we told you to jump again, you jumped again. When we told you to jump a third time, however, you did not respond but collapsed in a heap; and we could all see, even the most unwilling of us, that you had failed because you had exhausted your resources in obeying us.[...]Your body rejected the food we fed you and you grew even thinner. Why? I asked myself: why will this man not eat when he is plainly starving? Then as I watched you day after day I slowly began to understand the truth; that you were crying secretly, unknown to your conscious self, for a different kind of food, food that no camp could supply. Your will remained pliant but your body was crying to be fed its own food, and only that. (163-164)

Above lines shows that Michael K's refusal to eat food in spite of the intense demand of his body is the disobedience done by him to protest against the opposing forces who have snatched his freedom and independence. Here the doctor says that he watched Michael K day after day and finally understood the fact that Michael K was crying secretly for different kind of food, food that no camp could supply. In fact the true food of Michael K is freedom and independence that could only quench his hunger.

Coetzee highlights the fact that the individual do not get freedom and independence in the camps run by the colonizers but it is found outside the camps. He writes:

Let me tell you the meaning of the sacred and alluring garden that blooms in the heart of the desert and produces the food of life. The garden for which you are presently heading is nowhere and everywhere except in the camps. It is another name for the only place where you belong, Michaels, where you do not feel homeless. It is off every map, no road leads to it that is merely a road, and only you know the way.

(166)

Through the voice of the doctor Coetzee has highlighted the meaning and importance of freedom. He says that it is the food of life. Here the garden symbolizes the freedom which is everywhere except in the camps. Of course it is the camps of the colonizers. The doctor heartily praises Michael K for the non-violent protest done by him so as to obtain freedom and independence. Coetzee in fact has made Michael K the pioneer of freedom fighter through the voice of the imaginary character, the doctor. The assertion of the doctor that no road leads to it but only you know the way signifies that Michael K who fought non-violently enduring the pains and sufferings for the freedom, only knows how to achieve freedom and independence.

In this way, J.M. Coetzee has illuminated the strong desire of Michael K to resist against the colonial forces non-violently in order to obtain freedom and independence which is the basic necessity of all the human beings throughout the text. By creating the background of the civil war due to apartheid in South Africa to create convincing atmosphere in the novel, he intends to magnify the strength of non-violent protest that always succeeds to resist the encroachment of all the opposing forces of colonialism. Almost all the chapters of this novel highlight the same dominant idea in detail.

#### IV. Conclusion

J.M. Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K* which was published in 1983 A.D. has become a superb novel in the history of literature in South Africa. This tour de force has widely covered the range of geographical, historical, socio-political and cultural issues rampantly burning during the post-colonial movement in South Africa. In the novel, Coetzee has reflected the site of colonial and imperial attack in South African grain on the one hand, and the non-violent counter attack by the imaginary central character Michael K to resist the encroachment of colonial and imperial forces that try to ruin the South African individuality, culture, nationality, political and social identity. Throughout the novel Coetzee has lucidly visualized the power and success of non-violent protest over all the opposing forces such as colonial restrictions, confinements, suppression, oppression, domination, exploitation and so on. Coetzee has successfully demonstrated the vitality of the non-violent protest against the colonial domination.

For instance, the disobedience of the central character Michael K to refuse to eat food, wear clothes, take medicines, to work in the camps, to participate and cooperate with the orders given by the colonial agents are some of the characteristic features of the non-violent protest against the colonialism that try to ruin the life by confiscating the freedom and independence of an individual.

Similarly, the resistance to the encroachment of all the opposing forces is also shown triggered by the determination of Michael K to achieve freedom and independence through non-violent protest. Michael K does never relent his confidence during the hard struggle. It shows that the strength to continue the struggle against all the opposing forces is in fact sprouted from the strength of Michael to obtain freedom and independence and to live the life of one's own choice. Therefore, Coetzee makes

Michael K an epitome of success to escape all restrictions and confinements imposed upon him by the colonial elements.

Likewise, the originality of resistance has been shown triggered by the passion of Michael K to procure freedom and independence and to live the life in complete harmony and peace. Michael K never surrenders before any sort of opposing forces that try not only to destroy his individuality but also to ruin his life. He does never give up his desire to attain his goals even when he undergoes the metamorphosis of his experience during the struggle. This sort of originality of resistance has been stimulated by the profound sense of individuality, freedom and independence that is deeply rooted in the mind of Michael K. Therefore, Michael K succeeds to escape from the imposition of colonial restrictions and confinements in order to maintain his autonomous identity as a successful gardener. Coetzee in this sense, highlights the strong urge of an individual to free himself from the clutch of any kind of opposing forces that try to destroy the life.

Throughout the novel Coetzee has presented the young, energetic and bold central character Michael K as a sole figure to resist against the colonial imposition non-violently. Despite the pains and sufferings, Michael K confronts all the imposition upon him in a subtle manner and finally becomes a successful figure to attain his goals. In order to resist the colonial imposition he raises the weapons like disobedience, fasting, non-cooperation and the vision of truth and non-violent activities. He raises all these weapons not due to the lack of his physical strength and violent activities but because he finds these weapons more powerful and effective than the violent ones. It shows that J.M. Coetzee has been much influenced by the non-violent movement lead by Mahatma Gandhi to free India from the strong hold of

British rule. The non-violent protest against the colonial imposition can be seen throughout the novel.

Thus, J.M. Coetzee the prolific writer of South Africa has lucidly illuminated the power of non-violent protest to fight against the colonial imposition upon the life of an individual throughout the novel. By showing the spirit and vitality of an individual in human beings in the text, Coetzee suggests that human beings are not only the victims of the opposing forces but they are also capable of resisting the encroachment of all the opposing forces with the sole weapon of constant non-violent protest. To illustrate this major ideology, Coetzee has explored an imaginative figure named Michael K and presented him before us who constantly fights against the colonial suppression, domination, exploitation, enslavement and so on non-violently, and ultimately secures his goal of living in a free, independent and favorable atmosphere.

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