

## Chapter-One: Introduction

### 1.1 J. M. Coetzee as a Post-Colonial Writer

J. M. Coetzee was born in South Africa in 1940. He studied at the University of Cape Town and the University of Texas, after which he taught at the University of New York, in Buffalo. He returned home to South Africa to take up a series of positions at the University of Cape Town, the last being distinguished professor of literature. His first published book was *Duskland* (1974), and this was followed by several further novels including, *In the Heart of the Country* (1977), Winner of Central News Agency (CAN) literary award and filmed as *Dust* in 1985. *Life and Times of Michael K.* (1983) and *Disgrace* (1999), both are winners of the Booker Prize for fiction and more recent novels are *Slow Man* (2005) and *Diary of a Bad year* (2007).

The violent history and politics of his native country, especially apartheid has provided Coetzee much raw materials for his work. He has examined the effects of oppression within the framework derived from post modernist thought. But Coetzee's works cannot be classified as belonging to any specific post modernist intellectual current. In 1971, Coetzee sought permanent residence in the United States, but it was denied due to his involvement in anti-Vietnam war protest.

Coetzee's works deal with the post-colonial` issues like allegory, sense of dislocation, anti-apartheid, anti- imperialism, marginality, post colonial state, othering etc. J.M. Coetzee is a post-colonial writer. He writes his literary works in English. His every work deals with post-colonial issues. He is categorized in the group of Commonwealth literary writers. It is so because South Africa was once colonized by British Empire. The term 'Commonwealth literature' has been generally used to refer to

the literature written in English by the non-British writers of territories once occupied by British Empire.

Othering is also one of the key features of the post-colonial literature. This term was coined by Gayatri Spivak in her essay *In Other World: Essays on Cultural Politics* for the process by which imperial discourse creates its 'Others'. She asserts:

Othering describes the various ways in which the colonial discourse produces its subjects. The process of othering can occur in all kinds of colonialist narrative. Othering can take on more material and violent form in Coetzee's *Waiting for Barbarians*. Coetzee demonstrates the ways in which discourse constructs its others in order to confirm its own reality. Coetzee takes up the complex discursive field surrounding Robinson Crusoe and unlocks these apparent closures (qtd in *Key Concepts in Postcolonial Studies* Helen Tiffin et al, p.173).

Allegory is one of the key features in Post colonial writing. M. L. Pratt in his *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transcultural* points out allegory in *Waiting for Barbarians*. He remarks:

Allegory is employed to expose the ways in which the allegorical form is used in the colonizing process. Thus in the Coetzee text for example, the life of a magistrate isolated on the border of an unnamed empire, and his peaceful relations with the people beyond the boundary is disrupted when they are re-classified as 'barbarians' by the visit of an egregious secret policeman. This causes the magistrate to realize for the first time the full truth about the

society in which they lives. (qtd in *Key Concepts in Postcolonial Studies*  
Helen Tiffin et al, p.10)

J.M. Coetzee's famous novel *Duskland* was published in 1974 when Vietnam war was on the brutal state and race supremacist government of South Africa seemed invincible and Coetzee shows such a thing in this novel. *Duskland* is also about relation; Coetzee exposes the imperial encounter between America and Vietnam in terms of the concept relationship between subject and object, self and other. Coetzee exposes the relationship of domination that exists between, the Doer, the Hottentott and the Bushman in the colonial encounter of eighteenth century South Africa. *Duskland* also deals with the theme of exploitation by the white over black. In this novel White owner kills Black worker and grabs his property.

Another important issue in Post colonial studies is counter discourse. Counter – discourse is a term coined by Richard Terdiman to characterize the theory and practice of symbolic resistance. *Foe* (1986) is also one of the famous novels written by J.M. Coetzee and H.M. Tiffin in his book *Contemporary Novelists* criticizes on this novel from the perspective of post-colonialism as counter discursive text. He further remarks:

It is a rewriting of the archetypical myth of Robinson Crusoe. In order to comment in the nature of imperialism and colonialism, Coetzee has restructured the earlier myth in typically in a different manner. *Foe* explores the problem of white South African settlers' literature in relation to the continuing oppression by whites of the black majority" (198).

J. M. Coetzee's many works also deal with the issue of apartheid. Apartheid is an Africans term meaning separation used in South Africa for the policy initiated by the

Nationalist Government after 1948. In Coetzee's novel *Waiting for the Barbarians* Lush Hills and other main areas of the city are reserved for the whites and its barren valley is for the black natives in *Life and Times of Michel K* and it is about the racial conflict between Black and White. Guerrillas were fighting against the apartheid. J.M. Coetzee chooses Post Colonial state for setting his work. Here, 'post colonial state' means synonyms for 'post independence state'.

Commenting on Coetzee's presentation of heroes, Elleke Boehner in his *Colonial and Postcolonial literature* says "Coetzee's heroes are marginalized from the main stream society. They are kept away from the society by creating the binary. Coetzee's heroes are those who ignore history, not make it"(198). Coetzee brought his heroes from the Subaltern. Here, Subaltern, means inferior rank and it also refer to those group in society who are subject to the hegemony of the ruling classes. In *Life and Times of Michael K*, Michael belongs to a subaltern group or we can say he is a subaltern hero. Michael K is hegemonized by the ruling classes and he is also deprived of the power.

Apartheid is one of important issues in postcolonial studies. J.M. Coetzee's famous novel *In the Heart of the Country* was published in 1977 a remarkable novel in the South African apartheid consciousness. A Woman narrates her life, captured by language of European Empire in South Africa and also by the language of patriarchy in her novel. This novel is also about the ethical problem. In this work, Coetzee explored the ethical problem and shows that characters are accounted for variation in terms of culture, tradition, language, social patterns and ancestry. Characters neither can forget their culture nor can they assimilate themselves in new environment.

In 1999, the South African Human right commission named *Disgrace* as a novel exploiting racist stereotypes. It has been argued that Coetzee's 1999 novel *Disgrace* allegorizes South Africa's Truth and reconciliation commission. Coetzee himself views that in a state of no official religion, truth and Reconciliation commission was some what anomalous, a court of certain kind based to a large degree on Christian teaching and on a stand of Christian.

Imperialism is one of the main features in postcolonial literature. In Coetzee's famous novel *Elizabeth Costello*, imperialism tries to impose various forms of restrictions. Coetzee's every work tries to resist stereotypical images of the non-west. *The Master of Petersburg* (1994) tells a story of Dostoevsky returning from exile to Petersburg to reclaim effects of adopted son. The son was part of an anarchist movement, dedicated to total freedom. The son was said to have committed suicide but have been murdered for insufficient dedication. The main character in Coetzee's *Diary of a Bad year* (2007) which has been described as blending memoir with fiction academic criticism with novelists narration and refusing to recognize the border that has traditionally separated political theory from fictional narrative, Coetzee's novel *Age of Iron* (1990), Coetzee points a picture of social and political tragedy unfolding a country ravaged by racism and violence. In this play, Mrs. Curren lives in the cape town of the Apartheid era. In her whole life she hates or opposes Apartheid regime, but never takes an active stance against it. As the story progresses, she constructs the relationship with Blacks. Coetzee brings together important themes in this book: aging, the confessor as hero, narrative representation, the meaning of freedom and the position of the white liberal in Apartheid

South Africa. He has written many books supporting animal rights like *Lives of Animals*, *Disgrace* and *Elizabeth Costello*.

Coetzee was a supporter of anti-apartheid movement. He showed his anti-apartheid attitude in his essay *Eight Lesson*. He remarks:

South African literature is literature in bondage; it is a less than fully human literature. South African government should abandon its apartheid policy. Contemporary anti-terrorism laws as resembling those employed by apartheid regime South Africa. Coetzee thinks that people who created South Africa's laws that effectively suspended the law of law were moral barbarians. (128-140)

Coetzee deconstructs western hegemony and the desperate ideological agendas. However, he is a figure who focuses us to evaluate the limitation of empire colonialism and so on. There are other features which are worth-noting and praiseworthy in Coetzee's writing such as his presentation of South African landscape in much of his fiction. The land is alien and unfamiliar, personal and foreign, hostile and safe. Coetzee's writings maintain significance in addition to South African context. He explores urgent social problems into more universal topics –the nature of colonialism, the relation of blacks and whites or between cultures and tradition.

In this way, J. M. Coetzee is a post-colonial writer. His literary works are about post colonial issues.

### **1.2 J. M. Coetzee and *Life and Times of Michael K***

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. *Life and Times of*

*Michael K* won Britain's Booker Prize in 1983. This novel has beautifully presented the historical, socio-political and cultural issues of South-African history. In the novel, Coetzee has presented an imaginary character named Michael K. Michael K was born with harelip which distorts his speech. From his birth, he was deprived of the seed of freedom. His mother Anna K felt ashamed while taking Michael to her work. Michael K was also slow witted and he grew unschooled until his mother admitted him in Huis Norenius, a state school for variously afflicted and unfortunate children. After the school, he worked as a gardener for Municipality. But his life takes another turn when his mother Anna K wishes to return to her village to enjoy freedom.

The birth place of Anna K was Prince Albert. But the country was in the war. British colonization was in it's exceed. Guerrillas are fighting for their right and they were against the apartheid. Natives are deprived of their rights in their own land. Michael K has to get permit from the authority for travelling. Unfortunately, they are not able to get permit, so they starts their journey without permit from the authority. On the way, they face restrictions, injustice, domination, exploitation and so on. But Michael K continued his journey. He resists against the colonial agents for his freedom. His mother dies on the way and he is given her ashes. Then he continued his journey alone. He is arrested on the way. He is kept in a labour camp. But Michael K runs away from the camp because he feels uncomfortable and suffocating inside that camp. He is given food and clothes but they have exchanged all those things with his freedom.

He reaches Prince Albert to pour his mother's ashes. In this way, Michael completes his mother's wishes. Then, he stays lonely and grows vegetable but his freedom is interrupted by authority as well as guerrillas. One day, Michael is picked up

by soldiers and put into Rehabilitation Camp. But he escapes from there and he enjoys his life freely until his death.

He resists against the colonial forces that try to ruin the South African culture, nationality, political and social identify. Natives are not able to move freely in their own country. Through his novel, Coetzee shows power of non-violent protest against those colonial forces. Michael K never surrenders before any sort of opposing forces. He denies eating food given by authority because that was exchanged with his freedom. Throughout his life Michael K resists against opposing forces that tries to entrap his freedom.

The 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 their goal only by remaining in the free atmosphere because one can have the complete mental gymnastic in a 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 freedom? What encourages him/her to gain it? What are the obstacles 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 succeeds to portray the imposition of colonial forces upon the individual life and its resistance through Michael K, who also represents 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 Prince Albert and enjoying the freedom from burden of work and bondage of city of Cape Town.

*Life and Times of Michael K* is one of Coetzee's most acclaimed novels, which depicts the situation of civil war due to apartheid in South Africa that won Booker Prize in 1983. After its publication in 1983, many critics have commented differently on different issues with various perspectives like Marxist, New Historicist, Cultural and Existentialism among others. However, the major concern of this novel is Michael K. and Anna K's resistance against colonial agents and its hegemony. While commenting on Coetzee's novels, H.M. Tiffin has acclaimed all Coetzee's novels as the opposition of Eurocentric Myths and stereotypes in allegorical manners. H.M. Tiffin has termed Coetzee's novels as 'counter discourse' in his '*Post Colonial Literature and Counter Discourse*' including *Life and Times of Michael K*, Tiffin asserts:

Only for Michael K of *Life and Times of Michael K* does the desert briefly bloom. More a persecuted Friday than a Crusoe imperialist, he has little time, however to enjoy the fruits of his isolation before society attacks his peace. Coetzee writes the archetypal myth of Robinson Crusoe to comment on the nature of imperialism and colonialism, the conquest of the Virgin territory. (198)

This comment hints Michael K as an imperialist and colonialist. But Michael K is a freedom fighter who resists against colonial agents and hegemony. Michael K is a representative of entire colonized group. In fact, Coetzee wishes to highlight that freedom is our basic need. So, all we quest for free floating life devoid from any type of external encroachment.

Another criticism of this novel is remarkably highlighted in *Merriam Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature*. In this Encyclopedia, Coetzee's novel *Life and Times of Michael K* has been mentioned as follows:

*Life and Times of Michael K* (1983) which won the Booker prize, concerns the dilemma of a limited intelligence beset by conditions he can neither comprehend nor control during the civil war in an unnamed country. (225)

This comment hints at the trauma of a common man, Michael K who suffers from the predicament of life due to the lack of broad knowledge and inability. Despite these things, Michael K resists against the colonial elements throughout his life for freedom which is the basic need of human life.

Anthony Vital criticizes Coetzee's novel *Life and Times of Michael K* from the perspectives of eco-criticism in his *The Tragic Vision of Twentieth Century Literature*, Anthony Vital Asserts:

Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K*, set in South Africa, can be read eco-critically from and for South Africa. It poses African questions and finds African answers, will need to be rooted in local concerns for social life and its natural environment. It will need too, to work from an understanding of the complexity of African pasts, taking into account the variety in African pasts, asking into account the variety in African responses to currents of modernity that reached Africa from Europe, initially, but that now influence from multiple centres, Europe, America and now Asian, in the present form of globalizing economy. (99-105)

What Anthony Vital intends to say is that colonization tries to exercise power over another, whether through settlement sovereignty or indirect mechanism of control. But colonized people like Michael K when colonized people start to resist against those colonial impositions these colonizers will be washed out. Freedom is inherent in every human being that compel them to resist against colonial imposition.

Similarly, another critic Stephen Watson has referred to the motto of life long struggle of the central character Michael K in Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K*. He states, "K continues to flee from the camp where he is held. We follow his struggle to live life the way he wants to free and as one to nature" (370-392). What Watson intends to say is that Michael K continues to struggle throughout his life in order to live life of own choice. The motto of K's life is to live a free and independent life from restrictions and confinements. Therefore, he resists against the colonial imposition and restriction to achieve freedom.

Michael Zeitlin has regarded Michael K as the anti-hero of the novel. He has conceived Michael K to be an anti-hero who is the voice of sanity in a world full of hatred and confusion. He remarks:

Each sentence uttered by Michael K, the anti-hero of this book, is the voice of hate and confusion. Of course, it's Michael K who is alleged to be the idiot, the simpleton. He is the only one who has chosen to listen the voice inside each of us. (105-109)

Zeitlin does not penetrate the obscure fact that Michael K has an insight that compels him to resist for freedom against society. So, he calls him an anti-hero. But, K

is, in fact, infatuated with freedom and therefore struggles to get it. Therefore, he is the hero who can resist against society for freedom.

Helienda M. Krenn, a post colonial literary scholar, compares and contrast Michael K with a character from Kafka, in her essay, "*The Interior Colonies: Reflections of colonial issues in Coetzee's Novel.*" In particular, she states:

Like a character from Kafka, we never learn Michael K's last name. However, unlike Kafka's characters he chooses a different response to the oppressive society in which he finds himself. He chooses dissertation rather than take on the system, he flees it and tries to construct a life of dignity. (106)

It is obvious in the text that Michael K struggles very hard to live a life of his own. He succeeds to escape each and every obstacle to achieve the goal. It is Michael K's desire for freedom that compels him to resist against colonial imposition despite his suffering.

Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K* has been analyzed from different perspectives. Therefore, the present researcher is going to analyze this text from the perspectives of resistance for freedom applying Post Colonialism as a theoretical tool. The next chapter will have an elaborate concern with how the protagonist Michael K and his mother Anna K who are the representative of common South Africa people who were suffering from the colonial agents. Moreover, the thesis shows how does Michael K resist against colonial agent for freedom to live a life of own choice.

This study makes significant contribution, mainly in three areas of concern. First, this study brings Michael K's resistance for freedom within the purview of critical

analysis. Second this research makes a significant theoretical connection between post colonial critiques of postcolonial literature and resistance literature. At last, the study shows Michael K's non-violent resistance for freedom.

## Chapter: Two Post-Colonialism and its Resistance

### 2.1 Meaning and Definition of Post colonialism

Post colonialism is an attempt to understand the problems created by European colonization and its aftermath. In other words, post colonialism deals with the effect of colonization on culture and society. As originally used by the historians after the second world war in terms such as the post-colonial state, 'post colonial' had a chronological meaning, designating the post-independence period. Post colonialism is "the critical analysis of the history, culture, literature and modes of discourse that are specific to the former colonies of England, Spain, France and other European imperial power"(245), says M .H. Abraham in his *Glossary of the Literary Terms*. However, from the late 1970s, the term has been used by the literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization especially on Third World Countries in Asia, Africa, Caribbean Islands, and South America. On the emergence of postcolonial theory John Hawley says, "The genesis of postcolonial theory-or postcolonial studies, post colonial discourse analysis, or simply post-colonialism is usually dated to the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978"( 359). Another critic Dennis Walder defines Post colonialism as:

Post colonialism is an area of literary and cultural study that has come into being as part of decentring tendency of post 1960s thought in the west. But it was also part of a metropolitan, left-wing response to the increasingly visible and successful struggle for independence of colonized peoples worldwide from the 1960s onwards". (59)

Some scholars, however, extend the scope of such analysis also to discourse and cultural production of countries such as Australia, Canada and Newzeland which achieved independence much earlier than the Third World Countries. It can be used to imply a body of theory or an attitude towards European essentialism.

"The term 'post colonial' is used to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to present day"(65), say Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin and Gareth Griffins in *Key Concepts in Post Colonial Studies*. This is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by imperial agencies. This is a term for the new cross-cultural criticism, which has emerged in recent years mainly since 1970's and for the discourse through which this is constituted. Critics like Homi K. Bhabha, Salman Rushdie, and Chinua Achebe have emphasized this discipline as a burning discourse. So, the literature from African countries, Caribbean countries, India etc is post colonial literature. What each of these literature has in common beyond their special and distinctive regional characteristics is that they emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tensions with the imperial power, and by emphasizing their references from the assumptions of the imperial centre.

"The idea of post colonial literary theory emerges from the inability of European theory to deal with the complexities and varied cultural provenance of post colonial writing (246)", says Bill Ashcroft. European theories themselves emerge from particular cultural traditions, which are hidden by false notions of the "Universal".

In the 1980s and 1990s post colonialism has risen with theories such as post-structuralism, psychoanalysis and feminism as a major critical discourse on the

humanities. As a consequence of its diverse and interdisciplinary usage, this body of thought has generated an enormous corpus of specialized academic writings. Post-colonialism has helped the post colonial writer to defend their writings. On the emergence of post colonialism, Leela Gandhi, in *Post Colonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*, observes:

Over the last decade, a post colonial study has emerged both as a meeting point and battle ground for a variety of discipline and theories.....Whereas some critics invoke hyphenated form 'post colonialism' as a decisive temporal marker of the decolonizing process, others fiercely query the implied chronological separation between colonialism and its aftermath-on the onset rather than the end of colonial occupation. (3)

The emergence of anti-colonial and 'independent' nation-states after colonialism is frequently accompanied by a desire to reconstruct, reinterpret and reinvent the shameful interaction of the colonial past. Leela Gandhi believes, "the postcolonial amnesia is symptomatic of the urge for historical self invention or the need to make a new start to erase painful memories of colonial subordination" (4).

Colonialism does not end with the end of colonial occupation. The psychological resistance to colonialism begins with the onset of colonialism. Many former colonies may fondly remember the colonial rules but it is only because of the dilemma, whether to go back to traditionalism or to follow the Westernism. Since its development in the 1980, post colonialism has found itself in the company of disciplines such as women studies, cultural studies and gay lesbian studies. These new fields of knowledge have endeavoured to foreground the exclusions, which confirm privileges and authority of



canonical knowledge systems and to recover those marginalized knowledge which have been silenced.

*Orientalism* (1978) by the Palestinian-American scholar Edward Said is regarded as the catalyst and reference point for post colonial study, represents the first phase of post colonial theory. It directs attention to the discursive and textual production of colonial meanings and to the consolidation of colonial hegemony. Orientalism can be discussed as the corporate institution for dealing with orient by making statements and authorizing view about it. In other words, Orientalism is Western style of domination, restructuring and having authority over it. John Hawley remarks:

Post colonialism can be said to have been inaugurated with the publication of Edward Said's *Orientalism* in 1978. This seminal work heralded as a revolution in the field of literary studies. It shows how a form of intellectual or cultural activity is innocent of power Hierarchies, highlighting the collusion between literary representation and colonial power. *Orientalism* demonstrates how every branch of knowledge, scientific as well as that proudly denoted 'the humanities', is not merely tingled with, but part and parcel of, establishment of European political hegemony through the process of colonial conquest and domination. However, it is the stress on the literary text that has marked out and at the same time circumscribed the field of post-colonial studies. (237)

East-west relationship is the relationship of power and domination. *Orientalism* is not only political subject matter or field that is reflected passively by culture, scholarship or institutions but also distribution of geographical awareness into aesthetic scholarly,

economical, sociological, historical and philological distinction. Said's *Orientalism* treats European colonialism as discourse or as the project of representing, imagining, translating containing and managing the intransigent and incomprehensible 'Orient' through textual codes and conventions.

The Westerners believe that they know the Orient more intimately and the Orient is what they know. The world is made of the unequal halves: big Orient and small Occident. This idea has given birth to hegemonies like Orient/Occident, margin/centre, poor/rich, them/us, east/west, unprivileged/civilized, passive/active etc.

In the 1980s and 1990s post-colonialism has developed as a powerful academic discipline. Its purview has expanded and its examination of the power/knowledge nexus. Post colonialism has ranged over a variety of subjects, including the history of colonial conquests, anti-colonial struggles and the politics of cultural domination. Geographically, it covers the whole world, examining the cultural ramifications of political and economic domination. Post-colonialism is a deeply discoursed discipline.

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. 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 attempt 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. Post colonial 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 revision ground issues of cultural difference, social authority and political discriminations in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments within the rationalizations" of modernity. (437)

Post colonialism 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-structuralist and post modernism. As Leela Gandini in her *Post Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*, writes:

Intellectual history of post colonial theory is marked by dialectic between Marxism and post modernism on the other. So this theoretical contestation informs the academic content of post colonial analysis, manifesting itself in an arguing debate between the competing claims of nationalism and

intellectualism, strategic essentialism and hybridity, solidarity and diaspora, 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 post colonial 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.

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 subaltern speak?" She asks whether the scholarly interest in non-western cultures may unwittingly reproduce a new kind of Orientalism, where by academic theorists mine non-western sources in order to speak authoritatively their 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 limitation of this endeavour. Guha and Spivak show the problems of post-colonial theory in *Selected Subaltern Studies* and write:

The core problematic of post-colonial theory is an examination of the relationship between. ...According to Spivak, the subaltern studies group

develops 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 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. (42-46)

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 tradition, other scholars highlight the incompatibility of the two. For example, Aijaz Ahmad has criticized post colonial theory from a Marxist perspective, arguing that its infatuation with issues of representation and discourses 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 question 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 intellectuals fashions. The reaction *against* Marxism that lead 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 defence and British colonialism was emblematic of his own implication in orient list 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 at 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. (84-98)

It suggests, perhaps unwittingly, that the core concepts of hybridity, alterity, particularity and multiplicity may lead to a kind of methodological dogmatism or development 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. About it Leela Gandhi says, "Thus the critical impulses behind postcolonial 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"(48).

Post-colonialism is now used in wide and diverse way to include the study and analysis of European territorial, conquests, various institutions of European colonialisms, the discursive operations of empire, the subtleties of subject constructions in colonial discourse and the resistance of these subjects. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffins and Helen Tiffin in *Key Concepts in Post Colonial Studies* argue:

Most importantly, the differing responses to such incursions and their contemporary colonial legacies in both pre-and post-independence nations and communities while its use has tended to focus on the cultural production of such communities, it is becoming widely used in historical political, sociological and economic analyses as these disciplines continue to engage with the impact of European imperialism upon world societies. (187)

Post-colonialism deals with the issues like neo-colonialism hybridity, diaspora, nationalism, resistance, mimicry and so on. In other words, post colonialism relates itself to the postcolonial issues of hybridity, diaspora, migrancy, slavery, suppression, resistance, race multiculturalism etc. Mimicry is an increasingly important term in post colonial theory, because it has come to describe the ambivalent relationship between colonizers and colonized. "When colonial discourses encourages the colonized subjects to 'mimic' the colonized, by adopting the colonizer's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, the result is never a simple production of those traits"(139-140" says Bill Ashcroft. He further argues "Rather, the result is a 'blurred copy 'of the colonizer that can be very far from mockery, since it can appear a crack in the certainty of colonial dominance, an uncertainty in its control of the behaviour of colonized"(140). Mimicry has often been an overt goal of imperial policy. For instance Lord Macaulay's *1835 Minute to Parliament* derided Oriental learning and advocated the reproduction of English art and learning in India. However, the method by which was to be achieved and indicated the underlying weakness of imperialism. For Macaulay suggested that richness of imperialism learning should be imparted by a class of interpreters between us and the

millions whom we govern a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes ,opinion in morals and in intellect. In other words, not only was the mimicry of European learning to be hybridized and therefore ambivalent , but Macaulay seems to suggest that imperial discourses is compelled to make it so in order for it to work.

Mimicry is a weapon of anti-colonial civility, an ambivalent mixture of difference and disobedience. It inherits in the necessary and multiple acts of translations, which oversee the passages from colonial vocabulary to its anti-colonial usage. Mimicry inaugurates the process of anti-colonial self differentiation. V. S. Naipaul's novel *Mimic Men* deals with the postcolonial literary trope of mimicry in Caribbean literature. In other word, the novel exposes the tendency of formerly colonized people to mimic the western values which they consider to be superior to their own culture. The novel shows these mimic men disown their own culture and mimic western culture but fail miserably to become a part of the culture and they mimic. Mimicry is one the most important issue in postcolonial studies.

Another important issue in post colonialism is apartheid. Apartheid is a policy initiated by South African government. Apartheid institutionalises the racism and it segregates the country for blacks and whites. Post colonialism used to examine the effects of apartheid from postcolonial perspectives. J. M.Coetzee's play *Life and Times of Michael K* deals with the issue of apartheid. Likewise, Alan Paton's play *Cry, the Beloved Country* deals with the issue of apartheid.

Anti-colonialism is another important issue of post colonialism and it also examines anti-colonial movement. "Anti-colonialism is the political struggle of colonized people against the specific ideology and practice of colonialism (Bill Ashcroft et al p.52). Anti



colonialism takes different in different colonial situation: it is sometimes associated with an ideology of racial liberation. Anti-colonialism emphasizes the need to reject colonial power and restore local control. It also signifies the point at which the various forms of opposition become articulated as a resistance to the operations of colonialism in political economic and cultural institutions.

In this way, post colonial theory is needed because it has a subversive posture towards canon, in celebrating the neglected or marginalized bringing with it a particular politics, history and geography. It is anti-colonial in its nature. So, it may look back as far as first moment of colonization by west and it also cover all parts of the world touched by empire.

## **2.2 Postcolonial Literature**

Post colonial literature is a body of literary writings that reacts to the discourse of colonization. Post-colonial literature often involves writings that deal with the issues of de-colonization or the political and cultural independence of the people formerly subjugated to colonial rule. It is also a literary critique the texts that carry racist or colonial undertones.

Postcolonial literature, finally in its most recent form, also attempts to critique the contemporary postcolonial discourse that has been shaped over recent times. In other words, Post colonial literature is a category devised to replace and expand upon what was once called Commonwealth Literature. As a label, it thus covers a very wide range of writings from countries that were once colonies or dependencies of the European powers. There has been much debate about the scope of the term: should predominantly white ex-colonies like Ireland, Canada, and Australia be included? Why the United States are

exempted both from the accepted list of former colonies and from the category of colonizing powers? In practice, the term is applied most often to writings from Africa, the Indian sub-continent, the Caribbean, and other regions whose histories during the 20th century are marked by colonialism, anti-colonial movements, and subsequent transitions to post-Independence society. Postcolonial literature can be literature written after colonialism or written during colonial period. It covers both periods' literature. Critical attention to this large body of work in academic contexts is often influenced by a distinct school of postcolonial theory which developed in the 1980s and 1990s, under the influence of Edward W. Said's landmark study *Orientalism* (1978). Postcolonial theory considers vexed cultural-political questions of national and ethnic identity, 'otherness', race, imperialism, and language, during and after the colonial periods. It draws upon post-structuralist theories such as those of deconstruction in order to unravel the complex relations between imperial 'centre' and colonial 'periphery', often in ways that have been criticized for being excessively abstruse.

Postcolonial literature is the process of dialogue and necessary correction of misconceptions concerning colonialism, then a comparative study of colonial and postcolonial works is essential for attaining a full understanding of the far-reaching effects of European imperialism. Reading colonial literature in dialogue with postcolonial literature engenders a most complete interpretation of the effects of imperialism by creating a point of reference from which to begin the revelation and the healing of cultural wounds resultant from European colonialism. Postcolonial literature reveals the lie of imperialism by suggesting that colonization was unsolicited by and unjustly administered to indigenous peoples; it seeks to assert that the "help" these cultures

received from European nations during the colonial period had far-reaching and detrimental affects on the language and identity.

At the time of 1960s, the former colonies were busy producing literature of their own, the idea that English literature was mutating into literature in English in which the literary production of English was only important. English critics interested in the writing that comes out of the former colonies developed the idea of a common wealth literature. It creates hierarchy between other literature and put at the centre at literature of Great Britain. Common wealth literature is traditionally humanistic; its critical focuses on characters as free on characters as free moral agents and on character s development and mostly ignored the historical and cultural contexts within their creators. The perspective of this liberal humanism was specifically English, a writer like Chinua Achebe is not primarily as Nigerian but as contributing to the English literary tradition and as an output of the humanistic European civilization on which that tradition is based. Common wealth writers are working within the English tradition that gave hopelessly heterogenous field of common wealth studies. No matter how different writers for say, New Zeland and Trinidad might, what they were supposed to have in common was the heritage of English literature. The rank of English literature might for writers from former colonies like Australia or Canada still has counted as an official stamp of approval. However, Asia and African writers were not happy with the western or Eurocentric perspective of common wealth criticism. In the course of 1970s Achebe's colonialist criticism and other critiques began to find a serious echo of a number of British literary academics who had begun universal validity of humanist values. The writers most have common seen within specific context of culture. Culture is inferior but only different form. But separate

models of 'common wealth literature 'or New writing in English' which implicitly or explicitly invoke notions of 'British literature, consciously or unconsciously reinvoke those very hegemonic assumption against which the postcolonial text has, from its inception, been directed. Undoubtedly, then it has become the project of post colonial literatures to investigate the European textual capture and containment of colonial and postcolonial space and to intervene in that originary and continuing containment.

Post colonial literature is rewriting and reading of European historical and fictional record that is vital and inescapable task. Hellen Tiffin says, "Post colonial literature is constituted in counter-discourse rather than homologous, and they offer fields of counter discursive strategies to the dominant discourse"(52). Postcolonial literature is also used to be taken as postcolonial counter discourse because it subverts the colonial discourse. Hellen Tiffin further argues "post colonial counter discourse strategies involves a mapping of the dominant discourse a reading and exposing of its underlying assumptions and dismantling of these assumptions from cross cultural standpoint of imperially subjectified 'local'"(52). Postcolonial writer like Jean Rhys writes back Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* in *Wide Sargasso Sea* in order to narrate the story from suppressed's perspective.

Post colonial literature deals with the issues like hybridity, diapora, identity crisis representation, mimicry, racism, neo-colonialism etc. Post colonial literature deals with the issue people from their homeland into new regions, is central fact of colonization. Hellen Tiffin says " Diaspora is movement of people from their homeland and colonialism is itself was a radically diasporic movement involving the temporary or permanent dispersion and settlement of millions European over the entire world "(52).

Postcolonial writers like people are forcibly or voluntarily away from their home country. In the new region they suffer from the sense of loss of their real homeland and try to retain that homeland by writing literature. This diasporic situation creates the identity crisis of people as well as author. Postcolonial writers show such things in their writings which is one of important feature of post colonial literature.

Post colonial literature is used to show the excremental situation of postcolonial countries. Despite the end of colonialism, colonial effects are prevalent in post colonial countries. Post colonial countries are fragmented culturally as well as politically in postcolonial era due the colonialism. Postcolonial states could not return their pre colonized state. Next important thing is neocolonialism. After the independence of country, national elites hold the power of country and they rule the country like colonizers. Post colonial literature tries to expose these excremental realities of post colonial countries.

Salman Rushdie in his essay "The Empire within Britain," raises the issue of racism. He further remarks:

British people in post colonial era are suffering from the colonial hangover. Colonial psyche still lingers among the Britishers and they treat the non-Britishers in the similar way colonizers had treated the people of colonized country. They are nostalgic for the four hundred years of being told "you are superior".(35)

In this way, postcolonial literature shows the racist attitude of European people. Salman Rushdie has shown British people's racist attitude in his play *Imaginary Homeland*. By showing the racist attitude of Europeans, postcolonial literature resists against

colonialism.

In this way, post colonial literature resists against the colonialism by showing and examining the colonial aftermath. Colonialism leaves scars on postcolonial people and postcolonial literature re- interprets it from post colonial perspective.

### **2.3 Resistance Literature**

Before defining Resistance Literature, it is necessary to define what resistance is in postcolonial studies. First the concept of resistance is most clearly forwarded by Selwyn and Cudjoe in his *Resistance and Caribbean Literature* and by Barbara Harlow in her book, *Resistance Literature*. Cudjoe and Harlow further remarks, "Resistance is an act or set of acts, that is designed to get rid of a people its oppressors, and it so thoroughly infuses the experience of living under oppression that it becomes an autonomous aesthetics principle"(qtd in *The Post Colonial Studies Reader*, Hellen Tiffin et al p.56). He further remarks" resistance literature under these conditions, can be seen as a form of contractual understanding between text and reader, one which is embedded in an experimental dimension and buttressed by a political and cultural aesthetics"(56). From this definition resistance literature can be seen as that category of literary writing which emerges as an integral part of an organized struggle or resistance for national liberation.

John Hawley in his book *Encyclopedia of Post colonial studies* defines resistance literature as, "Resistance Literature is an art form that responds to oppression using the written words as a weapon against aggression and geographical displacement"(337). Many resistance literary writers were journalist before they turn in literature. The purpose of resistance literature is to educate and to elicit sympathy for oppressed communities. Resistance literature always remains away from propaganda and it is always conscious

about its honesty and artistic integrity, which are integral to the collective values of the resisting community. These values include a commitment to others and the preservation of their identity, dignity, and homeland, all of which threatened by colonialism. Without pretence of being object and by providing a rewriting and reading of history, resistance literature presents an alternative historical narrative that gives voice to the disfranchised. Resistance literature is always concerned with a specific historical and political crisis rather than the story of one individual. In resistance literature an individual character or author becomes a macrocosm for entire group and problem of injustice and inhumanity become universal concern. Resistance literature is an innovation in post colonial studies. Resistance literary works present current reality of colonized society rejecting linear or western perspective of history. Hawley further remarks:

The literary texts are influenced by, and pay tribute to, ancestral values that have been devalued or absorbed by the colonizer. Yet resistance writers refuse to lapses into a simplified nativism of the past that reinforces the stereotype of the group as an authentic or backward civilization (377).

Resistance literature includes a diverse body of prose, essays, poetry, and diaries etc. It blurs the distinction between literary genres. Resistance literary texts are always informed by author's political agendas against the colonial forces and its military regimes. They frequently include stories within a story to reveal the complications of political conditions and result of these complications of the daily life of otherwise ordinary citizens who have been forced into reclaiming their homeland. Resistance literary works have been written while authors are in prison, hiding, in forced exile or facing death

sentences for their political activities and ideologies. Resistance literature critiques both repressive outsider and its own communities. Although European writers of the French resistance and the authors writing against Franco during the Spanish civil war could be considered resistance writers, the term "resistance literature" has come to denote those writers disfranchised by colonialism and subsequent struggle for independence and the problems of establishing a new political order that denotes merely repeat the power structures of the colonizers. Although influenced by European writers who often used literature to denounce injustice, resistance literature faces the debate over choice of language, the target choice of criticism and validity of those writers, but forcibly living in exile while many of their comrades are living or in prison in home countries.

Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie* can be taken as a fine example of resistance literature. *Coolie* is written in response to colonialism. The British colonizers ruled over India for more than two hundred years, and the Indians fell prey to the exploitation, degradation and inhumanity brought over by the colonial rule. The novel exposes this social realism of the Indian society very clearly and criticizes that colonial Indian society. The novel is an example of 'Resistance Literature'. In the novel, the relationship of British and Indian characters is colored by degradation and exploitation. In this way, Anand's *Coolie* can be read as a resistance literature.

Resistance literature is a response to a particular political situation, its thematic focus exchanges with the political shifts. Resistance literature is also used by feminist activists to raise voice against the double marginalization. They are exploited by patriarchy and colonizers as well. Egyptian novelist and feminist Hanan al-Zahara in her *The Bagdad Diaries* documents the devastation caused by the Iraqi war and the embargo



by the United States on Iraqi civilians. The choice of language between the colonizer's language and maternal language is a major debate for resistance writers for the choice of language implies the choice of audience.

In this way, present researcher is going to analyze *Life and Times of Michael K* from the above mentioned theoretical perspectives and bringing the matter of Michael K's resistance for freedom against the colonial imposition and apartheid in South Africa.

### **Chapter-Three: Resistance for Freedom in *Life and Times of Michael K***

#### **3.1 Colonial Oppression in *Life and Times of Michael K***

J. M. Coetzee's novel *Life and Times of Michael K* portrays colonial oppression on native people by the white colonizers and their agents in various ways. Coetzee mentions lots of ways which are used by colonial agents to oppress the native people. Threat, warning, relocation camp etc are means through which colonial agents oppress and encroach upon the life of an individual. Coetzee has created an imaginary character Michael K who represents the entire colonized individuals. Coetzee in this novel presents the pictures of colonial oppression on character like Michael K and Anna K. Old people like Anna K feel suffocating and uncomfortable in the city life of Cape Town. So, she dreams of returning back to her birth place Prince Albert and enjoying the freedom from her burden of work and bondage of the city of Cape Town. As 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 shopkeeper, thieves, and beggars, sirens in the nights, 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 curfew; the cold and wet are suggestive of unfavourable 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. This is an example of colonial oppression on people.

They are not allowed to move out without the permit from colonial forces. Michael K goes out to the permit office and requests the police woman telling her about the ill health of his mother but insensitive bureaucracy doesn't listen to their pathetic conditions. 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 braces herself against the counter and glared pointedly over K's shoulder: Yes, you, next!(20)

It shows 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.

Michael K is fully determined to his journey to Prince Albert to fulfil the wishes of his mother that is to get freedom On the way, they are warned

by the policemen who are the agents of the 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 filthy meters off the roadside. That's the regulation: filthy meters either side. Anything nearer, you can get shit, no warning, no questions asked. Understand? (22)

Above lines prove the fact how the colonial forces encroach upon the freedom of the individuals. In other words, it is a true example of colonial oppression. But Anna K's health becomes worse on the way to Prince-Albert. Michael K takes her to the hospital and she is admitted in the hospital of Stellebosch. But the hospital's administration is so insensitive. Anna K is not able to get proper treatment from the hospital. The nurses have no time to look after patients. One of the nurses scolds and dominates Michael K when he asks her to look after his mother. As she says "who are you? Do you see all these people here? When I come off duty I am so tired. I can't. I just fall asleep with my shoes on. Go away. I will look after her"(28). Above lines is spoken by the nurse prove that colonial agents can't understand the problem of the ordinary people like Michael K. Anna K dies and Michael K is given Anna K's ashes. She is cremated in the electricity. In this way, Anna K doesn't get proper burial from the colonial agents. Even after her death she is again suppressed by the colonial agents.

The Jakkaldrif Relocation Camp is another place where colonized people are oppressed. It is established for giving home and roof for the roofless people but its hidden motif is to get cheap labour for railroads and nearby farmers who are also

colonial agents. In this camp, everybody should work except children otherwise they won't get food. This can be seen as an extreme form of colonial oppression on native people. 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, threats 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, Army! I am putting my men on guard, and I am locking the gates and if my men see any of you, man, woman or child, outside the wires, they have order to shoot, no questions asked !No one leaves camp expect on labour calls. No visit, no outings, no picnics. Roll-calls morning and evening, with everyone present to answer. We have 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 language 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. They are deprived of sex which is basic need of human beings. Women are sexually exploited. This thing can be realized from the statement of the guard. He says, "They are starved of sex"(56). When prisoners' children are sick; they are not able to get proper treatment because of the camp's iron rule. As Coetzee mentions:

Two days later the baby that had cried in the night was dead. Because it was an iron rule from above that no circumstances was a graveyard within or close proximity to any camp of any type, the

child was buried in the back block of the town cemetery.(89)

This shows that colonial agents don't have heart and they are crossing the extent of cruelty. But Michael K escapes from there by challenging the colonial agents. He reaches Prince-Albert. Michael K enjoys freedom in the farm until he is discovered by the soldiers. The soldiers capture him and send him to the hospital as he is growing too weak. Noel, one of the soldiers says, "Michaels is an arsonist. He is also an escapist from a labour camp. He was running a flourishing garden on an abandoned population when he was captured. That is the story of Michael K"(131). This is a kind of unnecessary blame upon an individual. He is captured by them and put blame upon him that he is an arsonist and he is feeding the guerrillas in his farm. Michael K is again picked up by a police van. At this Coetzee writes, "Understanding nothing, repelled his smell, they pushed him into their van, took him back to the station and locked him in a cell with five men, where he resumed his shivering and his relationship 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 denies to wear the clothes provided by them because by giving clothes colonial agents try to impose colonial oppression upon him.

The utterances of the corporal in command, "I don't care who you are, who your mother is, if you haven't got a permit you cannot leave area, finished"(23) show that they lack humanity and possess the actual authorial orders, rules and recognition and regulations 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 ashes. Michael K still determined to continue his journey toward Prince Albert to fulfil his mother's desire. The policeman stops him and asks several questions. Coetzee mentions how Michael K's movement of freedom 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 who asks him about his whereabouts. After while K is taken to the railway station with filthy other strangers .There, he is made to work. It shows that colonial agents enslave the individual without any benevolent feeling.

At the Jakkalsdrif camp, Michael K's health was so bad but colonial agents compelled him to work for landlord who is brother-in-law of the captain of police colonial agents. But when Michael K asks for food, the guard scolds him. As he says "fuck off. Asks your friends. This is a camp; you should work for food like an everyone else in the camp. Who do you think you are that I should give you a free

living?"(77). This is an exploitation on native people.

Robert one of the prisoner at Jakkalsdrif Relocation camp, reveals the reality of the camp. When Michael K asks about it. As he says:

So, I hear you asks for who is in favour of the camp? I'll tell you.

First, the Railways. The Railways would like to have a Jakkalsdrif every ten miles along the line. Second, the farmers. Because from a gang from Jakkalsdrif a farmer gets a day's work blood cheap, and at least at the end of the day the truck fetches them and they are gone and he doesn't have to worry about them or their families they can starve, they can be cold, he knows nothing, it's none of his business.(82)

This shows that colonial agents become indifferent when their works is over. In other words, it is colonial oppression through the camp.

One day, fight breaks out in the camp. Two guards are beaten and three prisoners run away from there. Then trucks don't come to fetch the workers gang. Then colonial authority stops giving food to the prisoners. Robert and other prisoners start to raise voice against the authority. As Robert says "They are going to starve us. That fire was the excuse they were looking for. Now they are going to what they always wanted to do"(94). Certainly, the camp is the place where colonized people are oppressed and forgotten. He further says, "If they really wanted to forget us forever, they would have to give us picks and spades and commands to dig; when we had. Every people who died of starvation left bodies behind"(94). The colonial agents establish the camps to kill people and suppress

the colonized people.

Visagie's grandson is another representative of colonial agents who tries to oppress Michael K. Michael'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 am 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, Visagi's grandson tries to colonize and enslave Michael K. Grandson treats him as a body servant and tries to impose oppression on. When Michael K is kept in the hospital, one of the soldiers force him to reveal the secret of remaining in the mountains and feeding the guerrillas. The only person to understand the philosophy of Michael K is the doctor. The doctor realizes the truth about Michael K. He says:

I am only one who can save you. I am the only one who sees you original soul you are. I am the only one who cares for you. I alone see you as neither a soft camp nor a hard case for a hard camp but a human soul above and beneath classification, a soul blessedly untouched by history , a soul string its wings within that stiff sarcophagus, murmuring behind that clownish mask. You are precious, Michael K, in your own



way; you are the last of 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 for freedom in the hospital. Even White people are also suffering from the colonizers.

Michael K runs away from the hospital leaving his clothes. He is also dying of starvation. As Coetzee mentions "He was not wearing pyjamas, what he found to wear I don't know yet, but he had left his pyjamas behind"(155). It suggests the brutality of the apartheid era. Apartheid left nothing more and nothing less than the skeletal remains of the black man. Coetzee in this novel shows the indifferent nature of colonial agents. Anna K worked all her life for Buhrmann. Here, Buhrmann is a white people. So, he is a colonial agent. When Anna K became old, she is neglected by her owner. As Michael K says:

My mother worked all her life long. She scrubbed other people floors, she cooked for them. She washed their dishes. She washed their dirty clothes. She scrubbed the bath after them. She went on her knee and cleaned the toilet. But when he was old and sick they forget her. They put her away out of sight. When she died they threw in fire. They gave me an old box of ash and told me, "Here is your mother, take her away, she is no good to us"(136).

Here 'they' refers to colonizers and their agents. Above lines shows that how indifferent colonial agents are. They exploit Anna K until she is useful. But when she became old, they threw her out of their house. This show colonial

suppression and oppression on the native by the colonizers and their agents.

In this way, J. M. Coetzee vividly dramatizes the colonial oppression on the native people. Colonial agents impose various forms of oppression on the colonized people throughout the novel. But Michael K resists against those imposition non-violently in order to get freedom and independence.

### **3.2 Michael K's Resistance to Colonial Domination**

The vision of resistance against colonial forces for freedom is discernible in the acclaimed Coetzee's novel *Life and Times of Michael K*. J. M. Coetzee deals with the lived experiences of the central character, Michael K, and exposes his resistance for freedom 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 condition due to apartheid in South Africa, which reflects the hostile socio-economic, political and cultural conditions in which Michael K is embroiled in the turmoil of restrictions, confinement, oppression, suppression and so on.

Coetzee has created an imaginary character to represent the entire colonized individuals. He has given the knowledge to fight against the colonial agents enduring pains and suffering like Michael K. Despite being young, energetic, and bold, Michael K doesn't 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 for freedom 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 in his own pace to fight against the colonial forces in order to breathe 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 colonial agents and to live in the ecstasy 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 get freedom. Michael K is confined in the camps where he strongly resists taking food medicines etc. provided by the colonial authorities. Instead of accepting food, he remains fasting even when he is hunger stricken. As Coetzee mentions "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 wearing the clothes and taking 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 tolerates the unbearable situation painstakingly. As the doctor says, "He is lord of his life, and he is rebel who fights in his own way" (56). This statement shows Michael K's vigorous desire for freedom.

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 etc that try to encroach on the ground of personal freedom to live the life of own's choice with the complete freedom and independence. Through this novel Coetzee justified the strength of an individual spirit and vigour to resist against the acts of colonial elements non-violently. Coetzee vividly dramatizes the encroachments of the colonial authorities upon the life of individual and its non-violent resistance done by a 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 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. Non-violent resistance is also accepted by 21<sup>st</sup> century's leaders like Swami Ramdev and Anna Hazare to abolish the corruption in India. The vivid description of colonial imposition upon the life of individuals in South Africa and its non-violent resistance done 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 the 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 inherent and basic human beings.

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 colonial agents. Michael K goes out to the permit office and requests the police woman telling her about the ill health of his mother but the insensitive colonial bureaucracy doesn't listen to their pathetic conditions. 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. (20)

It shows 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 approaches to office, he determines to take his mother by any means. So he tries to take her from several ways. Above mentions activities which are done by Michael K is also an act non-violent resistance.

Michael K is fully determined to his journey to Prince Albert to fulfil the wishes of his mother that is to get freedom and independence. Despite the curfew on the ways he puts his life on risks. On the way, they are warned by the policemen who are the agents of the 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 meters off the roadside. That's the regulation: fifty meters either side. Anything nearer, you can get shot, no warning, no warning, no questions asked. Understand? (22).

It illustrates how the colonial forces encroach 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. Michael K changes his way to the prince Albert-Albert despite the curfew on the ways and without permit, Michael's journey is also non-violent resistance is also challenge against colonial agents.

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

The soldier who was holding gripped the nape of his neck between thumbs 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, 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 soldiers 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 and they encroached individual freedom. 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. This is Michael K's non-violent resistance.

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

Michael 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 hip of blankets living like a corpse away the feed bottle.' It is not my kind food' is all he will say. (145)

Above lines lucidly expose the fact of Michael K's non-violent resistance against the act of colonial agents. He even pulls out the tube 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 refuses 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 strong and constant. The doctor also asserts that Michael 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 does not 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 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 escapee 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 responds as "You smile, I said, 'but what I say is true: 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 resistance is so strong that he even leaves back the pyjamas provided by the hospital and wears his own old clothes. The doctor 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 Michael K's protest against the opposing forces is so strong and is perfectly non-violent protest.

Through non-violent protest Michael K is very much successful to change



and divert the mentality of the doctor who is working in the hospital inside the camp. In fact Michael K enlightens him and gives him profuse knowledge freedom and independence through the act of non-violent resistances against the imposition of the colonial elements. He is now ready to go 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 gone and gone before I knew. The night 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 the doctor proves the fact that he and other too were completely engulfed by the colonial authorities and were tired of it. The doctor finally asks excuse with Michael K for his mistreatments and says, "Michaels, forgive me for too following you like this 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 has 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, 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 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 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 remain pliant but your body was crying to be fed its own food, and only that (163-164).

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 that 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.

Michael K cares and respects two things; his mother and the earth. When he is asked about his garden and vegetables, he says "They weren't mine. They come from the earth. What grows is for all of us. We are all the children of the earth"(139). Above mentioned Michael K's statement proves that whatever grows in the earth, they belong to the native people. Whoever encroaches is his land, he resists against it non-violently. For him all the human beings are children of the earth. Michael K loves his land more than himself.

When Michael K is in the camp, he challenges the guard. He gives him warning that one day he will escape from there. As he says "Can I go out? I don't want to work. Why do I have to work? (85)". But the guard scolds him and says "You don't want to work but you want other people to feed you" (85). Michael K replies that when he needs to eat, he'll work. This statement shows Michael K's non-violent resistance against authority of the camp. Next morning, all prisoners go for work, Michael stays at the camp despite authority's order. He does so in order to resist against colonial agents for his individual freedom non-violently. The guard asks him about war. Michael K says, "It's not my war, let them fight it, it's their war (86). This statement of Michael he is not in the favour of guerrilla fight. He is in the favour of non-violent fight which is so successful to fight against colonial agents.

In this way, J. M. Coetzee has illuminated the strong desire of Michael K's to resist against several colonial forces non-violently in order to obtain freedom 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 chapter of this novel highlights the same dominant idea in detail.

### **3.3 Dismantle of Colonial Regime in *Life and Times of Michael K***

Here, in this novel, Coetzee has used many symbols which suggest that colonialism is going to be ended. Colonial government is not able to keep law and order in a country. Colonial government introduced apartheid policy in South Africa which divided the country. Minority whites were ruling over majority of

blacks. People started guerrilla war for their right. So, the country was in war which complicated life of the ordinary people like Michael K and Anna K. People need permit from authority to visit in their own country. Colonial Bureaucracy was so insensitive that they didn't give permit easily. Instead of using polite words they are using harsh language. When Michael K asks for permit, the policewoman uses harsh language. As she says:

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 braces herself against the counter and glared pointedly over K's shoulder: ' Yes, you, next! '(20)

Instead of using harsh words she could have used polite expression. When the bureaucracy doesn't address people's problem, such kind of government and bureaucracy should be abolished. It suggests that colonialism should be ended.

Colonial government is running Relocation Camps to provide roof and food for homeless and jobless people. But its hidden motif is to get cheap labour for railroads and nearby farmers. It is also a place of colonial oppression. Colonized 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, threats 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, get war! I am putting my own men on guard here –fuck the Army! - I am putting my men on guard, and I am locking the gates, and if my

men see any of you ,man ,woman or child, outside the wires, they have order to shoot, no questions asked! No one leave camp expect on labour calls. No visit, no outings, no picnics. Roll-calls morning and evening, with everyone present to answer. We have 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 language to show their real conduct. All those things shows that colonialism should be ended because it can't address the people's problem. Another place which suggests that colonialism should be ended is hospital where Michael K's mother is admitted. Colonial government is not able to provide proper treatment for the people. So, this is a symbol which suggests that colonialism is going to be ended.

War takes ugly turn in South Africa. Michael K understands the purpose of war from a prison master is to give minorities their duties. This is the sign of democratic idealism of racist South African government. As he says," So that minorities will have a say in their destinies". But in a country like South Africa, it makes a dirty turn and repression of the black majority by the White minority begins to shape. Michael K hates war and about it he remarks, "War is for taking others monkey (56)". War takes ugly turn when it goes out of the control. People like Michael K suffers from both sides.

In this way, Coetzee has used many symbols which suggest that colonialism should be ended. Coetzee successfully dramatizes the vivid events and actions which suggests that colonialism is going to end. Curfew, police patrolling,

guerrilla war, resistance of people etc are things which suggest that colonialism is going to end.

### **3.4 Voices of the Suppressed**

*Life and Times of Michael K* portrays the hostile socio political condition of South Africa during the apartheid period. It is highly political novel. *Life and Times of Michael K* is written against the apartheid in South Africa. Through this novel, Coetzee shows his sympathy towards black people in South Africa. The rioting, widespread unemployment and homeless people roaming in the streets are all symptoms of social disintegrations occurring as a result of apartheid policy. South African government is losing its control in its own country. Government should guarantee life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. When government is not able to guarantee these things, people will start resistance against government. Michael K's resistance is against it and it's colonial insensitive colonial bureaucracy. Coetzee presents the sadness of South Africa that has made dependencies and parasites and prisoners of its own children black and white. Coetzee presents the reader with an allegory of South Africa without the factor of race and encourages to identify the protagonist understanding of his characters basic humanity and inhumanity. Coetzee revealed the South Africa's racial justification and its cruel police state as well as a vast bureaucracy of prisoner keepers and prisoners.

Coetzee, in this novel, assumes the dignity and raises the voices of the minority group and their central position in the universe. Michael K represents the entire colonized people who are struggling to discover their true identity and freedom. Through this character Coetzee suggests that black people can break out

of racial and social hierarchies. On a larger political and social ground, Coetzee insinuates that for political stability and economic independence to be a reality in Africa.

H.M. Tiffin criticizes this novel from the perspective of postcolonial counter-discursive text. He further remarks that it is a rewriting of the archetypical myth of Robinson Crusoe and Coetzee has restructured the earlier myth typically in a different manner. It is narrated from the colonized perspective. In his words:

Only for Michael K of *Life and Times of Michael K*. does the desert briefly bloom. More a persecuted Friday than a Crusoe imperialist, he has little time; however, to enjoy the fruits of his isolation before society attacks his peace. Michael K is the lord of his life. (198)

This criticism hints that this novel deals with the lived experience of colonized people. It raises the voices of the colonized people who are subject to repression, exploitation and oppression.

Another critic, Nadine Gordimer compares this novel with Nelson Mandela's brilliant autobiography is entitled *Long Walk to Freedom*. He further remarks:

Nelson Mandela's brilliant autobiography is entitled *Long Walk to Freedom* and this dense novel from Coetzee could have the same title. Michael K, the title character, wanders South Africa in search of his identity and his independence, and it's a long walk. As the book opens, Michael K and his mother live in Cape Town, South Africa, during a period of civil war. She loses her employment and her health deteriorates, so they leave for the countryside, he pushing her in a makeshift wagon.

We find that Michael K, born with a hare lip and ever after relegated to the margins of society, craves nothing more than independence, and he wanders far and wide in search of it. (31)

Through this novel, Coetzee urges for minority group to raise the voices against oppression and exploitation. If they resist against their oppression non-violently, certainly they will get their rights. Like, Michael K resists against colonial agents throughout his life to get freedom and independence. Even against authorities' restriction, he procedure journey. Colonial regime tries to control the every sphere of human. But people like Michael K who has a sense of freedom resists against it. Colonial rule in South Africa complicates the life of people. They need permit from the authority to go one place to another. When ordinary people like Michael K need permit for travelling and they are not behaved well, certainly they will start doing resistance against colonial government.

Through this novel, Coetzee intends to show that despite colonial authority imposition character like Michael K who resists against its imposition non-violently in order to get freedom. They can not stop the instinct of freedom which is inherent in each individual which is basic need of human being. Coetzee has beautifully written the resistance literature in order to show impact of the colonial rule in South Africa soil.

In this way, Coetzee raises the voices of the oppressed. Every human being has the same kind of rights. We should not impose unnecessary imposition on anyone. We should respect other people's self esteem. We should resist against any kind of imposition non-violently. Non-violent resistance is very good weapon to resist against any kind of impositions.



#### **Chapter-Four: 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 Novel has widely covered a range of geographical, historical, socio-political and cultural issues rampantly burring colonial attack on South African grain on the one hand, and the non-violent counter attack by imaginary central character Michael K to resist the encroachment of colonial and imperial forces that try to ruin South African individuality, culture, nationality, political and social identity. Throughout the novel Coetzee has lucidly visualized the power and the success of non-violent protest over all the opposing forces such as colonial restrictions, confinements, suppression, oppression, domination and exploitation. 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 triggered by the domination of Michael K to achieve freedom and independence through non-violent protest. Michael K does never lose his confidence during the hard struggle. It shows that the strength to continue the struggle against all the opposing forces a way to success to escape all restrictions and confinements imposed upon him by the colonial elements.

Likewise, the originality of resistance has triggered by the passion of Michael K to procure freedom and independence and to live 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 the 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 the colonial restrictions and confinements in order to live and 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 in order to get freedom. 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 protest and resist the colonial imposition he takes recourse to such protest fasting, disobedience, non-cooperation and the visions of truth and non-violent activities. He raises all the non-violent weapon as one led by weapons not due to lack of physical strengths but honouring the ways of non-violent movements lead by the Mahatma Gandhi to free India from the strong holds of British rule. The non-violent protest against the colonial imposition can be almost seen throughout the novel.

Thus, J. M. Coetzee a 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 the text, Coetzee suggests 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 in order to get freedom. To illuminate 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 similar other accesses, non-

violently and ultimately secures his goal of living in a free, independent and favourable atmosphere.

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