



**DISINTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS VALUES UNDER CAPITALIST CULTURE:
A COMPARATIVE MARXIST STUDY OF *THE MURDER OF AZIZ KHAN* AND
*THE WHITE TIGER***

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Abstract

*Disintegration of traditional values remains a pressing issue, particularly relevant in the contemporary era. This research aims to examine, through comparative mode, the disintegration of indigenous values under capitalistic culture as depicted in **The Murder of Aziz Khan** and **The White Tiger**. The theoretical framework guiding this research is grounded in Marxist literary theory. Developed by Karl Marx, this framework encompasses a set of political and economic ideas that Marxists believe can facilitate the interpretation and transformation of the prevailing exploitative capitalistic structures into a more equitable societal order. It fundamentally critiques Western capitalism as an inherently materialistic endeavor that has marginalized and distorted pre-imperial humanistic cultures while also challenging the homogenization of diverse cultural practices and ideologies under the hegemony of the bourgeoisie, which aims to establish a global consumer culture. The research posits that the bourgeois class in both literary works operates as neo-imperialists, perpetuating the exploitation of marginalized groups within society. The pre-capitalistic ethos of social harmony and collective well-being is supplanted by a culture that commodifies individuals, engenders class conflict, and fosters socio-economic oppression of the impoverished. The research concludes that capitalistic culture leads to a bifurcated society divided into two distinct classes—the capitalist/rich and the working/poor—marked by pervasive inequality, injustice, exploitation, and the degradation of the underprivileged by the affluent. Additionally, it reflects the dominance of ruling-class ideologies, the inclination toward Western cultural values, and the ongoing presence of neo-imperialistic forces.*

Key Words: Comparative, Marxist literary theory, Western capitalism, capitalist/rich, exploitation, Ruling-class ideologies.

Introduction

Comparative is a concept that derives from the verb “to compare” (the etymology is Latin comparer, derivation of par = equal, with prefix com-, it is a systematic comparison). Comparative studies are investigations to analyze and evaluate, with quantitative and qualitative methods, a phenomenon and/or facts among different areas, subjects, and/or objects to detect similarities and/or differences. According to Pickvance (2005), comparative analysis is conducted mainly to explain and gain a better understanding of the causal processes involved in the creation of an event, feature or relationship usually by bringing together variations in the explanatory variable or variables. Comparative research has a long history and it has gained much attention in current research due to globalization, technological advances, etc. on cross-national platforms (Azarian, 2011).

This research aims to examine, through comparative mode, the disintegration of indigenous values under capitalistic hegemony as depicted in *The Murder of Aziz Khan* and *The White Tiger*. “Local value system, its norms, traditions and ecosystems are disintegrating under the pressure of profit motives of globalized capitalist forces resulting in social apathy” (Mushtaq & Hayat, 2016, p. 141). Traditionally, culture is viewed as a reservoir of humanistic values, aimed at transcending the commodification of individuals and fostering their reintegration into the authentic social and life processes. “Under capitalism, culture is entangled with economy and is contaminating cultural and economic patterns of behavior and thought of various cultural zones of the world to create a society of consumers” (Mushtaq & Hayat, 2016, p. 142). Zulfikar Ghose, born in Sialkot in 1935, is a multifaceted literary figure known as a novelist, poet, essayist, critic, and educator. He holds a prominent position in English literature and is recognized as a significant representative of Pakistani culture. His novel, *The Murder of Aziz Khan* captures the decline of Pakistani culture under the burgeoning influence of capitalism in the years following the country’s independence. It focuses on how capitalistic ideologies are taking root in Pakistan, leading to the erosion of local values and cultural identity.

Class conflict between the capitalist elite and the working class in Pakistan is the central theme of the novel. The Shah brothers represent the capitalist class. Their expansionist agenda is facilitated through the establishment of industries and mills across the country, through both legal and illegal means. On the other hand, Aziz Khan and the farmers of Kalapur symbolize the working-class population of the society that is forced to live in poverty and suffer from tyranny of the oppressive capitalist class. Whereas the Shah brothers revel in the luxuries and comforts afforded by their economic power, Aziz and the majority of the people remain deprived of any comforts, they know nothing about comfort, joy and happiness – they suffer from hunger and poverty. Fundamental democratic principles, justice, and human rights become increasingly marginalized for the economically disadvantaged. Under capitalist culture, power, freedom, democracy, and justice areas gradually withdrawn for the poor in society. The Shah brothers represent the wealthy elites using money to bend justice to their favor turning injustices to perceived reasons. Lust for money consumption coupled with unlawful activities erases every sense of care for the society. The novel reflects Marxist view how economic interests disrupt social relations, with capitalistic culture prioritizing individualism over socialist ideals, leading to disintegration of indigenous values. The novel focuses on the shift from a unified family structure to capitalistic individualism, highlighting diminished values of joint family systems, and increased selfishness.

Aravind Adiga, an acclaimed Indian author, occupies a distinguished position in literary world. His debut novel, *The White Tiger*, published in 2008, deals with the detrimental effects of capitalistic culture on indigenous values of postcolonial Indian society. The society is sharply divided into two distinct classes: the capitalist/rich class and the working/poor class, echoing Marxist theory. These groups represent divergent paths, with the affluent able to dictate their circumstances while the impoverished endure conditions reminiscent of subhuman existence. The protagonist, Balram, embodies the struggles of the working class, while Ashok symbolizes the affluent capitalist class. The stark disparities between these classes are evident in their lifestyles, privileges, and access to social, political, and legal rights. Adiga (2008) emphasizes the profound divides that separate them, both economically and socially. This duality reflects the complex realities of postcolonial Indian society, where the influences of capitalism exacerbate existing inequalities and challenge indigenous values. The affluent possess unfettered access to resources and opportunities. Their economic power enables them to exert control over the lives of marginalized

individuals like Balram. Consequently, the latter become victims of exploitation, humiliation, and degradation, particularly at the hands of the Stork-like individuals.

This comparative Marxist study demonstrates that both Ghose (1967) and Adiga (2008) depict disintegration of indigenous values under the capitalist system in their respective novels. They describe the effects of capitalism on people, organizations and different segments of society, pointing out that corruption concerns everyone from the rich to the poor. Capitalism disrupts all the indigenous values of the postcolonial societies. The central theme in both novels is the inevitable decline of indigenous values as a direct consequence of capitalist system in postcolonial contexts. The novels throw light on issues of unequal distribution of wealth and resources, rampant corruption, the passion for Westernization, globalization, and devious erosion of moral standards. They show how, in this age of capitalistic culture, essential values like humanitarianism, social collectiveness, equalitarianism, democracy and justice are sidelined within society.

Literature Review

The Murder of Aziz Khan and *The White Tiger* represent pivotal works in English literature from Pakistan and India, respectively, earning significant acclaim for their authors. Published in 1967, Ghose's novel reflects Pakistan's early industrialization and political turmoil, gaining international recognition and symbolizing a new chapter in Pakistani English literature. Adiga's *The White Tiger*, awarded the *Man Booker Prize*, marked a transformative moment in Indian English literature and inspired substantial scholarly exploration.

Rehman (1991) argues that *The Murder of Aziz Khan* highlights themes of alienation and capitalism's societal impact. According to Ross (1989), Ghose's thematic concerns in *The Murder of Aziz Khan* transcend "popular ones subject to political and social change." Rather, the novel "captures a moment in the grand course of human history" and explores its events in a "timeless way", ultimately revealing the persistent nature of evil and its tendency to assert itself (Ross, 1989, p. 203). Hashmi (1994) identifies land as a central theme and metaphor in *The Murder of Aziz Khan*. He observes that the protagonist, Aziz Khan, endures degradation and the seizure of his land by the emerging industrialist class within post-colonial Pakistani society (Benson & Conolly, 1994, p. 580). *The Murder of Aziz Khan* realistically depicts the exploitation of the labor class and socio-economic disparities in post-independence Pakistan (Ahmed, 2009). Jajja (2012) maintains that the novel, *The Murder of Aziz Khan* illustrates how the economic base shapes society's superstructures. He further observes that the narrative highlights the class divide between the wealthy and the impoverished, a division perpetuated by capitalist systems and ideology. Ali (2016) examines the theme of class conflict and its impact on various characters in *The Murder of Aziz Khan*. She posits that the Shah brothers represent the capitalist class, while Aziz Khan symbolizes the working class. Ali (2016) argues that class conflict disrupts multiple aspects of society and highlights how the dominant class seeks to regulate the actions of laborers.

Sebastian (2009) asserts that *The White Tiger* provides an authentic portrayal of class distinction. He characterizes the protagonist, Balram, as a voice for the impoverished, contrasting him with Ashok and other affluent figures who represent the wealthy elite. Sebastian (2009) notes that the rich and poor differ fundamentally in all aspects of life, with the former inflicting humiliation, dehumanization, injustice, and exploitation upon the latter. He emphasizes that the affluent remain completely detached from the struggles and sufferings of the marginalized.

Singh (2009) argues that the subalterns are unable to resist or rise above their circumstances due to their constrained subject positions, lacking value and status within

society. Singh (2009) further describes the members of the underclass as being trapped in the 'Rooster Coop' concluding that their plight results from factors such as illiteracy, poverty, bureaucratic system, unemployment, cultural conflict, dowry practices, superstitions, economic disparity, and corrupt police and judiciary system. Yadav (2011) contends that the advancement of Indian civilization has resulted in decline of religious values and beliefs, asserting that the novel reflects this decline. He describes the state of religious values as being 'at sixes and sevens' and notes that the protagonist critiques religion by equating the gods of darkness with politicians, who appear to focus solely on winning elections year after year.

Sheoran (2013) contends that *The White Tiger* highlights social injustice amid the nation's economic prosperity. It is the story of the struggles of the poor who migrate to metropolitan areas in search of better livelihoods. Upon moving to the city, Balram, the voice of the marginalized, encounters the exploitative societal system, ultimately breaking free from the 'Rooster Coop'. His journey leads him to engage in illegal activities, murder his employer, and challenge the autocracy of the wealthy.

Shagufta (2013) argues that Adiga's novel offers a realistic depiction of the ongoing struggle between opposing social classes, noting that the gap between them continues to widen. The interests of the wealthy and the impoverished are fundamentally divergent. The story centers on Balram, a member of the proletariat, who aspires to join the affluent class by breaking free from the social, moral, and religious constraints that bind him. Despite his education, dreams, and ambitions, Balram's aspirations are thwarted by the cruelty and exploitation of the capitalist class. He endures a childhood marked by extreme poverty and hardship, witnessing his family's struggles to survive; his father dies due to inadequate medical care for tuberculosis, and his mother succumbs to the despair, stemming from their financial difficulties. Choudhry (2014) asserts that Indian society is advancing economically, scientifically, and technologically. However, he contends that the portrayal of a successful society obscures the suffering and hardships faced by the marginalized. Despite these advancements, the poor continue to confront significant challenges: inadequate educational system, insufficient healthcare, corruption in government agencies, moral decline, and landlordism. The elite benefit from progress while remaining indifferent to the struggles of the underprivileged, who remain victims of exploitation and enduring suffering.

A critical review of previously conducted research on *The Murder of Aziz Khan* and *The White Tiger* demonstrates that the novels have been examined and interpreted from various perspectives, probing into numerous themes and ideas. However, a comparative analysis of these novels through a Marxist lens with a view to revealing the disintegration of indigenous values under capitalistic culture, has yet to be conducted. This gap lays the groundwork for the current research in the selected texts.

Research Methodology

This comparative research employs qualitative methodology to analyze the disintegration of indigenous values under capitalist system as depicted in *The Murder of Aziz Khan* and *The White Tiger*. It employs Marxist theoretical framework to examine themes of class struggle, economic determinism, and globalization's impact on local traditions in the selected novels. It critiques capitalism's exploitative nature and its alienating effects on individuals, revealing how economic priorities distort socio-cultural realities.

Theoretical Framework

Marxism, based on Karl Marx's theories, critiques capitalism as a materialistic system that distorts humanistic values and advocates for a classless society with equitable resource

distribution. Marxism emphasizes equitable wealth distribution and state ownership of production to achieve income equality. However, current economic disparities are worsening, leading to increased class tensions and potential revolutions. In literature, Marxist theory is valuable for examining how socio-economic conditions shape narratives, revealing the interconnectedness of economic forces and cultural expressions.

Marxism, a philosophy and social theory developed in the 19th century based on Karl Marx's works, views history as a continuous struggle between the bourgeoisie and proletariat classes. Marx (1968) remarks that "The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles" (Marx, 1968, p. 1). Marxism is a materialist philosophy that aims to increase individuals' awareness of their social, economic, political, and cultural realities, focusing on the existing world rather than abstract theories. Marx (1968) asserted that, beyond interpreting the world, the crucial objective is to transform it for the better. Lukacs (1971) points out that "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point, however, is to change it" (p. 1).

"Propounded by Karl Marx, Marxism is a set of lego-historical and economic views which are directed at social change in favour of the oppressed class" (Mushtaq & Hayat, 2016, p. 142). Marx (1844) argues that society requires change due to widespread poverty and suffering caused by an exploitative capitalist system. He identifies economics as the key force behind social structure, and highlights class consciousness, dividing society into two groups: the bourgeoisie, who own production means and live in luxury, and the proletariat, who struggle to meet basic needs. The bourgeoisie exploit the proletariat, fostering inequality and alienation, where workers feel detached from their labor. Marx (1844) advocates for proletarian unity to challenge capitalism and achieve a classless society, emphasizing that the end of bourgeois dominance is essential for social transformation. According to Marx (1844), "the more [the worker] produces, the poorer" he becomes, as the power and scale of his production grow. Consequently, "the worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates," indicating that the worker's value diminishes as he generates more goods. This process entails a "devaluation of the world of men" in direct relation to "the increasing value of the world of things." Thus, labor not only yields commodities but also reduces "the worker as a commodity" within the market economy (Marx, 1844, p. 40).

Further, Marx (1844) says that the value of men decreases in front of the increasing value of things. The worker is no more important than a commodity. Marx (1844) identifies four distinct forms of alienation experienced by the proletariat: alienation from the product of their labor, alienation from the act of production itself, alienation from their own essence or humanity, and alienation from fellow workers. This condition leads to the phenomenon of reification, wherein individuals are reduced to the status of objects or commodities. Consequently, interpersonal relationships are commodified, transforming human interactions into market-driven exchanges. Marx (1967) critiques the capitalist economy for exploiting workers, focusing on profit and commodifying labor. While production and exchange are social processes, capitalism reduces them to monetary terms, with capitalists setting the conditions for workers who are denied the surplus value, their labor generates. Workers produce goods to meet social needs, but capitalists seek wealth for its own sake, extracting more labor for lower wages. This profit-driven model fosters class conflict, uniting the proletariat against the bourgeoisie.

Marx (1967) fervently advocates for socialism and communism, as these ideologies regard individuals as autonomous and equal beings, fundamentally opposing the exploitative practices inherent in capitalist culture. Communism is an economic system where land, transportation, and productive forces are collectively owned by the community, aimed at achieving equitable wealth distribution among all members of society. Under this system, the

means of production are state-controlled, ensuring that individuals are compensated according to their contributions while working in alignment with their needs and abilities, presenting a potential solution to the issues generated by capitalism. Levine (2003) argues that the global challenges and fears posed by the hegemonic influence of superpowers, particularly the USA, render Marxism as relevant today as it was in Marx's time, as it advocates for socialism while critiquing capitalism as an exploitative and vulgar system. He affirms that "Marx thought that only a triumphant socialism could excise the demons of his own time. It is fair to speculate that he would have thought the same for our own" (Levine, 2003, pp. 168-169).

Marx and Engels' (1998) concept of 'base' and 'superstructure' posits that the economic base shapes the superstructure, which includes social and ideological forms that legitimize bourgeois hegemony and ensure the complicity of the masses in maintaining the capitalist system. The superstructure comprises social, political, religious, ethical, and aesthetic forms that create ideologies, legitimizing the bourgeois class's dominance over the proletariat, with the bourgeoisie serving as both the material and intellectual force in society. The bourgeoisie, who control the means of production, design this superstructure to justify their dominance over the proletariat, perpetuating exploitation. While the superstructure can influence the base, the economic base predominantly determines consciousness and social relations, dividing society into the exploiting bourgeoisie and the exploited proletariat. Lukacs (1971) asserts that, those who possess economic resources, wield control over social and economic relationships, effectively treating workers as powerless instruments. He argues that institutions, that exert control over the economy. also shape the ideology of the working class, influencing their interactions with others, their relationship with nature, and their self-perception. Lukacs (1971) states that "history is precisely the history of these institutions" and examines the transformations, they undergo as entities that unite individuals within societies. He explains that these institutions begin by regulating "economic relations between men" and subsequently influence all facets of human relationships, including individuals' interactions with themselves and with nature (1971, p. 48).

Economic forces and social status significantly influence love, marriage, and social relations, often leading individuals to mistakenly believe their connections are founded on humanitarian grounds rather than acknowledging their underlying economic basis. Lukacs (1971) refers to Marx who points out that "People fail to realize that these definite social relations are just as much the products of men as linen, flax, etc." (p. 48). Marxist literary theory critiques the methods employed by capitalists and the bourgeoisie to exploit the proletariat, while also examining how the capitalist system engenders immorality and various social ills within society. Capitalist/bourgeois culture is eroding the established social and local values cherished by communities. The pursuit of material gain within this capitalist framework has led to the fragmentation of these values. Commodity exchange influences not only the external aspects of society but also its internal dynamics, permeating various facets of community life and reshaping them into a new social structure (Lukacs, 1971).

Lukacs (1971) rejects bourgeois realism which is frozen in immediacy and tries to perpetuate dominant ideology. He observes; "The social situation of the bourgeois set a priori limits to its speculative thought or, to use our own terminology, that the forms of middle class thought are dependent on the deep inner logic of the content of middle class life" (Lukacs, 1971, p. 346). The realism of Lukacs (1971) so conceived affirms the principle of continuous change. It historicizes present as a part of temporal process and legitimizes proletariat struggle for transformation of society into a future socialistic world order. Lukács (1971) reveals the function of the dominant ideology of the bourgeoisie, defining ideology as the manifestation of the ruling class's consciousness. He argues that the proletariat operates

under the illusion of exercising personal autonomy, while in reality, they are subject to both the physical and ideological dominance of the bourgeoisie and capitalists (Lukács, 1971). Marx (1968) remarks that materiality of human production influences ideology. He points out that “life is not determined by consciousness rather consciousness by life” (Marx, 1968, p. 49). Marx (1848) declares ideology the ‘false consciousness’. This set of ideas and beliefs obscures the realities of the economic base and the oppressive practices of capitalists. Victims of these ideologies often fail to recognize or challenge their existence.

Textual Analysis

Zulfikar Ghose and Aravind Adiga, prominent literary figures of the postcolonial South Asian region, engage with the pervasive influence of capitalist culture within Pakistan and India, respectively. Both authors demonstrate an acute awareness of capitalism’s deep-seated impact on the traditional values of their societies. Through their respective novels, *The Murder of Aziz Khan* and *The White Tiger*, they illuminate how the dominance of capitalist ideology disrupts and erodes local cultural frameworks. They focus on westernization, globalization, uncritical acceptance of dominant ideologies, and the shift towards urbanization—all of which characterize the capitalist transformation of their societies. Class conflict, socio-economic exploitation, and loss of belonging are recurring motifs that highlight the unsettling erosion of traditional values under capitalist hegemony.

Pakistani writer, Ghose (1967) vividly portrays a society fractured by class antagonism under capitalist forces, realistically depicting the division of Pakistani society into the capitalist elite and the working class in his novel, *The Murder of Aziz Khan*. This class conflict aligns closely with Marx’s (1968) concept of class distinction. Central to the novel is the story of the Shah brothers, relentless in their pursuit to destroy the life of Aziz Khan, a small farmer who resists selling his land to them. Their presence symbolizes the rise of capitalist culture in postcolonial Pakistan, highlighting a profound social divide. Through the ongoing struggle between the wealthy Shah brothers and Aziz Khan, Ghose (1967) conveys the pervasive exploitation of the working class by the powerful elite. Aziz Khan, a modest farmer with a 70-acre land, embodies the suffering of Pakistan’s marginalized masses, his plight representing the systemic hardships endured by the oppressed. This class conflict is underscored by stark contrasts in lifestyle and economic access: while figures like the Shah brothers enjoy opulent lives with ample resources, the working class remains distanced from basic rights and quality of life. Ghose (1967) critiques the capitalist system, portraying it as devastating for the impoverished, stripping them of their rights and freedoms under the patronage of corrupt leadership that possesses “neither ideas nor ideals, neither a sense of justice nor a sense of humanity” (Ghose, 1967, p. 26).

Indian author, Adiga (2008), similarly, addresses the issue of class conflict in his novel, *The White Tiger*. Through a Marxist lens, the novel’s protagonist, Balram, emerges as a representative of the exploited working class, while characters like Ashok symbolize the privileged capitalist elite. Ashok and others of his class are portrayed as the “big bellied”, reveling in luxurious lifestyles marked by cruelty, corruption, and a profound lack of empathy toward the impoverished. Adiga (2008) highlights this class divide by portraying India as a nation split into the “India of Light” and the “India of Darkness.” This binary reflects the pervasive inequality and exploitation embedded within the social fabric, where the wealthy thrive in opulence while the poor endure hardship and deprivation. Adiga (2008) states:

India is two countries into one, India of Light and an India of Darkness. Ocean brings light to my county. Every place on the map of India near the ocean is well off but the river brings darkness to India. (Adiga, 2008, p. 14)

Adiga (2008) contrasts two distinct realms within Indian society: the “India of Light”, where the affluent capitalist class resides, enjoying unparalleled access to life’s luxuries, and the “India of Darkness”, a realm bereft of even basic necessities of life. The “India of Light” symbolizes prosperity and progress, while the “India of Darkness” lags behind in all aspects, encapsulating the deprivation and marginalization endured by the working class, represented by Balram, the novel’s protagonist. Drawing from Marxist theory, this dichotomy aligns with the division between the bourgeoisie—who control production and wealth—and the proletariat, who struggle to meet basic needs. According to Singh (2009), deprivation, subjugation, isolation, and resilience are central to the lives of the underprivileged class, encapsulating the daily struggles of those within ‘India of Darkness’.

Ghose (1967) portrays the theme of exploitation inflicted upon the impoverished by the wealthy elite within a capitalist framework. He depicts the degradation, humiliation, suffering, and deprivation endured by the working class in postcolonial Pakistani society. He highlights the oppressive conditions imposed upon the poor by powerful figures, who subject them to multifaceted exploitation—economic, political, and even sexual. The Shah brothers epitomize this exploitation: Akram, the eldest, coerces farmers into surrendering their ancestral land to the Shah family, while Ayub systematically undermines worker rights within the family mills. Ayub’s unyielding dismissal of worker welfare is evident in his efforts to dissolve the workers’ union and suppress demands for fair treatment, including pensions, wage increases, and holiday allowances. “*The Murder of Aziz Khan* depicts the prevailing situation in a capitalistic society where labour unions are being suppressed. However, the resistance is increasing and it seems that it would ultimately win over the powers of oppression” (Ahmad, 2013, p. 17). Workers in the Shah mills are reduced to mere instruments, stripped of autonomy and basic rights. Riaz, Javed, and Salim, among the mill’s earliest laborers, are dismissed simply for voicing resistance to these oppressive capitalist practices. Ghose (1967) captures Akram and Ayub’s antagonism toward worker unity in Akram’s words:

Don’t worry, we could dismiss ten times the men we employ and immediately find new labor to replace them. I don’t think anyone who has a stomach to feed would want to strike. Not in this country. (Ghose, 1967, p. 207)

The passage above highlights the devaluation of workers within a capitalist framework, highlighting the absence of humanitarian concern from the capitalist class for society’s most vulnerable. This indifference reveals the systematic exploitation of the working class by the wealthy elite, who prioritize profit over people. Such themes resonate with Marx’s (1968) critique of capitalist societies, where the laboring class is commodified and exploited to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Likewise, Adiga (2008) conveys the pervasive exploitation inflicted upon the working class by the capitalist elite within India’s social hierarchy. Reflecting Marx’s (1848) theory of class struggle, Adiga (2008) presents characters such as the four landlords—Buffalo, Stork, Wild Boar, and Raven—alongside figures like the Great Socialist, as embodiments of the bourgeoisie exploiting the proletariat, represented by individuals like Balram. The four landlords—Buffalo, Stork, Wild Boar, and Raven—symbolize capitalist forces, exploiting the inhabitants of “Dark India” by imposing excessive taxes. Their power is

fortified through alliances with corrupt political figures who, for personal gain, perpetuate a cycle of economic and political subjugation. In the portrayal of the Great Socialist, Adiga (2008) captures the entrenched corruption within Dark India's political system. Elections are manipulated through bribery, fake identity cards, and pre-determined outcomes, symbolizing the hollow promise of democracy for the marginalized. Through Balram's father, who has witnessed twelve rigged elections without casting a single genuine vote, Adiga (2008) critiques the systemic exploitation that denies the working class a voice, reflecting the deep-rooted inequalities sustained by capitalist and political structures in postcolonial Indian society. "I've seen twelve elections—five general, five state, two local—and someone else has voted for me twelve times" (Adiga, 2008, p. 100).

Marx (1968) puts forward the idea that the bourgeois culture "has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural" (Marx 1968, p. 36). Ghose (1967) treats the transformative impact of urbanization on postcolonial Pakistani society under capitalist influence. With the arrival of the Shah brothers—symbolic of the capitalist class—the rural, agrarian village of Kalapur undergoes a shift, evolving into an industrial hub. The conversion of Kalapur from a rustic farming community into an industrial zone illustrates the disruptive force of capitalist-driven urbanization. As industries begin to dominate, exploitation of the labor force becomes routine, and many of Kalapur's residents are compelled to migrate to metropolitan areas in search of employment, often at the cost of selling their ancestral lands. This shift marks the gradual decline of the traditional peasant lifestyle, replaced by an industrialized, urban-centric culture. Through Kalapur, Ghose (1967) symbolically reflects the broader trajectory of Pakistan's postcolonial transformation, highlighting the societal upheaval wrought by capitalist-driven urbanization.

Sindhu (2013) expresses the view that the migratory tendency from rural to urban areas is due to the changing nature of economic system known as capitalism. The people, hailing from the poor class, move to urban areas. She states that *The White Tiger* is the story throwing light on the change of an "innocent village boy into a citified fellow full of debauchery, depravity, and wickedness" (Sindhu, 2013, p. 189) as an outcome of urbanization. The novelist, Adiga (2008) shows that the inhabitants of 'India of Darkness' are coming to cities in order to get better opportunities of earning and learning. He shows this migratory tendency on the part of the dwellers of Dark India in these lines, "They were all migrating to Delhi. You'd think the whole world was migrating" (Adiga, 2008, p. 178).

Ghose (1967) addresses the theme of alienation imposed on postcolonial Pakistani society by capitalist forces. Echoing Marx's (1844) theory of alienation, Ghose (1967) illustrates how capitalist culture estranges individuals from their heritage, identities, and relationships. The rural farmers of Kalapur, dispossessed of their ancestral lands by the Shah brothers—newly arrived symbols of capitalism—experience an acute disconnection from their land, profession, and cultural identity. As these farmers migrate to urban areas for employment, they leave behind not only their traditional agrarian lifestyle but also the familial and communal bonds that once defined their existence. Through Aziz Khan, Ghose (1967) portrays a character deeply rooted in tradition and agricultural values. Aziz Khan's ultimate loss of land symbolizes the larger cultural erosion inflicted by capitalist encroachment. The Shah brothers are wholly responsible for the deterioration of the joint family system which is replaced by selfish-capitalism. The novelist sums up the disintegration of the Shah family in the words of Akram: "[The Shah family] will never be the same integrated family and business. A moral weakness has been exposed" (Ghose, 1967, p. 307). Marx (1968) remarks that "The bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced family relation to a mere money relation" (Marx, 1968, p. 34). Under economic pressure in capitalist society, familial bonds disintegrate. The familial

bonds of the Shah family itself weaken. All the members of the Shah family experience the atmosphere of disputes. Afaq explains to Ayub's wife the hatred existing among the Shah brothers in these terms: "He hates me" (Ghose, 1967, p. 101). This line suggests Ayub's dislike for Afaq and, on a deeper level, underscores the erosion of familial bonds in a society driven by capitalism.

Similarly, Adiga (2008) deals with the theme of alienation that pervades postcolonial Indian society under capitalist influence. He illustrates how capitalism fosters a profound sense of disconnection among individuals. Balram, the protagonist, embodies this alienation as he grapples with his estrangement from family and homeland. During a visit to his village with his employers, he feels a marked detachment from the soil and traditions that once defined his identity. This estrangement extends to his domestic life, where he finds little joy in familial interactions, avoiding communal meals and intimacy with relatives. The workers of 'Dark India' also experience alienation, stripped of connection to the very buildings they construct. Balram's journey is characterized by a deepening disconnection from his own identity, culminating in a rejection of his cultural and religious roots. The theme of alienation is further amplified through the portrayal of Ashok's family, which falls a victim to the isolating effects of capitalistic individualism. Members of Ashok's household become so engrossed in their material pursuits that they neglect familial bonds. This materialistic preoccupation contributes to Ashok's failed marriage, highlighting how capitalist motives can fracture intimate connections. As Balram ascends in the social hierarchy, he becomes increasingly arrogant, self-serving, and corrupt, abandoning his family and responsibilities. His disdain for his origins culminates in his refusal to engage with his family's traditions and emotional ties. Adiga (2008) demonstrates how capitalist culture undermines foundational societal values such as selflessness, social responsibility, and respect for elders, leading to a disintegration of the communal fabric that once fostered solidarity and support.

Both Ghose (1967) and Adiga (2008) illustrate how economically powerful individuals dominate their respective societies, exercising control over various institutions under capitalistic culture. This aligns with the fundamental Marxist tenet that the economic base of a society fundamentally shapes its superstructure, including its socio-political and cultural conditions. Those, who wield financial power, dictate the historical and social realities of the community. Ghose (1967) emphasizes how the Shah brothers, as financially affluent figures, manipulate societal structures to their advantage. Their wealth allows them to forge connections with the ruling elite and infiltrate the institutions of power in Pakistan. The Shah brothers lead opulent lifestyles, establishing mills and factories both domestically and internationally, while also investing in exclusive educational opportunities for their children. This financial leverage enables them to engage in corrupt practices, such as hiring skilled lawyers, bribing witnesses, and purchasing judicial favor to evade punishment. For instance, they exploit the legal system to seize Aziz Khan's ancestral land and orchestrate the murder of his son, Javed, all without facing consequences. Ghose (1967) shows how the law becomes a tool of oppression against the economically disadvantaged, as exemplified by Aziz Khan's plight. The Shah brothers, shielded by their wealth, operate above the law, using their resources to evade punishment and manipulate regulations to their advantage. In stark contrast, individuals like Aziz Khan, powerless and without financial means, become targets of a system designed to favor the affluent.

Adiga (2008), similarly, paints a picture of economically powerful people, dominating the social, political, and economic fabric of India. Ashok is the rational bourgeois in this prejudiced society, he belongs to the privileged section of the society who, because of his financial power, influences laws and standards of the society. Through Ashok and the other landlords, Adiga (2008) provides lessons about the social repression inherent in any capitalist

system in which the rise and domination of the ruling elite over the powerless continues to tantalizingly wreak havoc in the society through political influence. He elaborates how Ashok exercises power in almost every segment of Indian society. Ashok, the Stork, the four landlords and the Great Socialist signify those who wield a lot of economic muscle to subdue not only the helpless, such as Balram, but also the structures within social relations. Money making endowments allows them to sway situations to their benefit, thus affirming their dominance over the socio-political arena. For instance, the Great Socialist has large wealth that enables him to achieve votage, thus showing how economic capital brings about political capital. He leverages his financial resources to influence public opinion and secure victory in the election, exemplifying how capitalism is deeply embedded within the bureaucratic system. The character of Ashok represents the privileged class, whose financial resources afford him significant sway over societal norms and institutions. Through Ashok and the other landlords, Adiga (2008) exposes the exploitative mechanisms inherent in a capitalist framework, where the rich manipulate political and social structures to maintain their dominance over the impoverished. He illustrates the extensive influence wielded by Mr. Ashok's family across various sectors of Indian society. Characters like Ashok, the Stork, the four landlords, and the Great Socialist epitomize those with substantial economic power, allowing them to dominate both the downtrodden, represented by Balram, and the institutions within the social framework. Their financial resources grant them the ability to manipulate circumstances to their advantage, reinforcing their control over the socio-political landscape. For example, the Great Socialist's immense wealth plays a key role in his electoral success, showing how economic power easily translates into political influence. With substantial financial resources at his disposal, he can shape public opinion and manipulate the electoral process.

Both Ghose (1967) and Adiga (2008) focus on the relationship between economic power and social authority, highlighting how the wealthy shape societal structures while perpetuating the struggles of the impoverished. They critique the materialistic nature of capitalistic culture, illustrating how it reduces human beings to materialistic entities, devoid of empathy and ethical values. They contend that an excessive obsession with material wealth erodes fundamental humanistic principles within society. Materialism emerges as a powerful allure, with individuals increasingly measuring their worth and success through economic metrics. This concept confirms with idea of Marx (1844) and Lukacs (1971) about economic determinism that indicates the idea of economic forces, determining the relations and values of people. Ghose (1967) illustrates how the members of the Shah brothers' family lose family ties as the former focused on accumulating irresistible assets. These women only get married with no affection, they are but mere property and their marriages are meant for the greed for monetary gains. Ayub's relationship with his wife is also devoid of love, as is evident in the novel: "Though sometimes she found Ayub an ordeal she must suffer for the sake of advancing her own designs of establishing a dynasty" (Ghose, 1967, p. 68). Consequently, this materialistic obsession renders the Shah brothers blind to the suffering of others, as the farmers of Kalapur become victims of their exploitation and indifference.

Similarly, Adiga (2008) deals with the collapse of familial and social ties under the weight of capitalistic culture. After growing rich, Balram is in a strong position to dominate the different institutions of the society with power of his pelf as he knows that "The moment you show them cash, everyone knows your language" (Adiga, 2008, p. 300). His strong economic base enables him to save himself from the clutches of the police, to save his driver from punishment for causing the death of the son of a poor family and so on. Balram's growing fixation on material success leads him to disregard the traditional values of respect and duty toward his elders. His alienation from his family signifies a broader societal trend

where individual aspirations for wealth and status overshadow communal bonds. Balram's transformation into a self-serving individual highlights the destructive consequences of a materialistic mindset, as he becomes increasingly isolated from the very relationships that once grounded him. When Vijay goes to the cabinet, the landlord, the Stork opens the door of the car of Vijay because Vijay is materially strong. Balram, the protagonist states that "A land lord bowing before a pig herd's son! The marvels of democracy" (Adiga, 2008, p. 103)!

Ghose (1967) and Adiga (2008) critique the societal implications of unchecked materialism, emphasizing that the quest for wealth not only disrupts personal relationships but also cultivates an environment where human values are sacrificed on the altar of economic gain. Their novels serve as cautionary tales, illustrating the inherent dangers of capitalist culture that prioritizes material success over human connections, ultimately leading to a society marked by exploitation, alienation, and moral decay. Ghose (1967) gives a realistic portrayal of capitalist dominance within the context of postcolonial Pakistani society. The Shah brothers represent the affluent class, embracing a lifestyle rooted in Western aspirations and behaviors. They spend much of their time, indulging in leisure activities such as clubbing, dancing, and drinking. The Shah brothers' desire for their children to receive an education in European countries further highlights their aspiration to adopt Western ideals and lifestyles. This ambition manifests in their eagerness for their offspring to speak English fluently, aiming to replicate the cultural markers of the West. This educational pursuit implies a disconnection from their own cultural roots. Similarly, Adiga (2008), an Indian novelist, focuses on the pervasive influence of Western cultural practices such as dancing, drinking, the commodification of women, and clubbing within the context of postcolonial Indian society shaped by capitalist ideologies. He points out that "You've also got plenty of places to drink beer, dance, pick up girls, that sort of thing. A small bit of America in India" (Adiga, 2008, p. 203). The reference aptly illustrates the encroachment of Western culture, characterized by indulgences such as drinking beer, dancing, and casual sexual relationships, into the fabric of postcolonial Indian society. It offers a realistic portrayal of how European cultural practices are becoming increasingly prominent, indicating a significant shift in societal norms and values.

The dominant ideology of the capitalist class operates within society under the influence of capitalistic culture. This ideology compels individuals to accept and conform to the prevailing beliefs established by the ruling class, as articulated by Lukacs (1971). Ideology encompasses the frameworks through which individuals interpret and engage with the world. Importantly, ideology is not a spontaneous phenomenon; rather, it is deliberately constructed and ingrained within the populace. Lukacs (1971) elucidates the role of this dominant ideology, suggesting that it serves as a reflection of the ruling class's interests. He posits that workers may perceive themselves as autonomous agents; however, they are, in reality, subjected to both the physical and ideological dominance of the capitalists. Individuals are led to believe that their material and historical circumstances are governed by their *Kismet* (fate), resulting in a resignation to their conditions and an unwillingness to challenge the colonialist ideology or pursue change. The capitalist ideology reinforces this mindset, ensuring the perpetuation of attitudes and belief systems that facilitate the ruling class's control over the laboring masses. Consequently, the oppressed fail to mobilize against their dire situations or aspire to ascend to the ranks of the ruling elite. Ghose (1967) vividly illustrates the pervasive influence of capitalist ideology. He highlights how the people of Pakistan accept various forms of injustice and brutality inflicted upon them by the ruling class as a manifestation of their *Kismet*. This acceptance signifies a broader failure to contest the capitalist ideology that binds them, ultimately hindering any collective effort to challenge their subjugation. Similarly, there are many instances of the blind obedience of the dominant

ideology in *The White Tiger*. For example, Adiga (2008), the novelist, indicates the concept of the dominant ideology as follows:

A handful of men in this country have trained the remaining 99 percent—as strong, as talented, as intelligent in every way—to exist in perpetual servitude; a servitude so strong that you can put the key of his emancipation in a man’s hand and he will throw it back at you with a curse. (Adiga, 2008, pp. 175-176)

Adiga (2008) demonstrates Balram’s aspiration to emulate Vijay, stating: “[Balram] wanted to be like Vijay—with a uniform, a pay check, a shiny whistle with a piercing sound and people looking at me with eye that said how important he looks” (Adiga, 2008, p. 31). The preceding quotation highlights the formidable influence of the ruling ideology that the subjugated must adhere to, often against their will. It is through this ideology that individuals become ensnared and confined throughout their lives. The populace is indoctrinated with the belief that their current existence is predetermined and unchangeable.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this comparative research has undertaken a Marxist literary analysis of the disintegration of indigenous values within the framework of capitalistic culture, as depicted in the selected novels *The Murder of Aziz Khan* and *The White Tiger*. The findings reveal that both the selected novels deal with disintegration of indigenous values under the pressures of capitalism. Ghose (1967) and Adiga (2008) effectively capture the detrimental effects of capitalistic culture on qualities such as humanitarianism, social collectivity, egalitarianism, democracy, and justice, which become increasingly marginal in a capitalist-dominated society. They present depiction of the disintegration of indigenous values under the pervasive influence of capitalistic culture. They vividly depict the repercussions of this cultural shift, which manifests in changing values, class conflict, family disruptions, the suppression of marginalized voices, exploitation, wealth concentration in a few hands, urbanization, and the decline of socialism, alongside a growing materialism and erosion of the human spirit.

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