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THE POLITICS OF PARTITION: A MARXIST READING OF CLASS, IDENTITY AND RESISTANCE IN SIDHWA'S ICE CANDY MAN

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ABSTRACT

This study explores class antagonism, Marxist themes and the consequences caused by class antagonism and Marxism in Sidhwa's Ice Candy Man (1988). The study follows a qualitative research design and conducts a textual analysis of the selected text, Ice Candy Man (1988). Marxist theory (1887) given by Karl Marx, is used as a theoretical framework in the present study. The findings of this study show that this novel delineates the story of various social groups suffering class conflicts and the pursuit of their aims inspired by economic and financial advancement. It noticeably portrays the assorted social classes and everlasting antagonism in a social and economic framework. Apart from this, the novel illustrates religious practices, discovering it as an active and conservative force the ruling utilizes to justify class antagonism and unnatural nature.

Keywords: class antagonism, Marxist theory, Karl Marx, qualitative research design

Introduction

Marxism is the theory of political economy and revolutionary practice propounded by Karl Marx (1848), a German-born philosopher, arguing for an eventual classless Communist society resulting from the proletarian revolution unseating capitalism (Engels & Marx, 1848). The class difference perspective is based on the theory of class designed by the Marxists, who use a socioeconomic approach to classify classes as confined by Tyson (2006). Marx argued that economic power will always be oriented with social and political power, "economic method therefore not only a particular form of the categories of society but is them the representative category or type within it" (Tyson, 2006, p.306).

Marx called the “material circumstances” for economic conditions and referred to them as a “historical situation” in which there emerges or becomes possibly certain social arrangements along with their political superstructure that address those material needs (Marx, 1859). He maintained that two fundamental classes of people are revealed by their material circumstances: The “haves” (bourgeoisie), who own the means of production and control it, thus also having a say in the economy (Marx, 1848). The “have-nots” (proletariat): the group that does not own production and must sell its labor to get it.

Eagleton Terry (2002), in his work *Marxism and Literary Criticism* (2002) quotes that Marxism is not just the name of social, political and economic philosophy and lifestyle but rather it closely deals with the literature. The 1988 novel *Ice Candy Man* by Pakistani author Bapsi Sidhwa is a classic that uses a Marxist perspective to examine the intricacies of colonial India. This study will try to unpack the Marxist issues in the novel, exploring how Sidhwa employs Marxist ideas to critique the capitalist systems, social hierarchies, and imperialist exploitation of the time.

1.2 Statement of the problem

This study explores class antagonism, Marxist themes and the consequences caused by class antagonism and Marxism in *Ice Candy Man* (1988). Despite the prevalence of Marxist themes and motifs in Sidhwa’s *Ice Candy Man* (1988), a critical analysis of the portrayal of class struggle, alienation, and exploitation under colonial India’s capitalist systems remains understudied. This study will try to fill this gap by examining how Sidhwa employs Marxist ideas to critique the oppressive structures of colonial India and how the *Ice Candy Man* (1988) presents a call to action for revolutionary change, highlighting the need for a deeper understanding of the intersections between literature and Marxist theory.

1.3 Objectives of the study

To investigate class antagonism and Marxist themes in *Ice Candy Man* (1988).

To find out the consequences of class antagonism and Marxism, *Ice Candy Man* (1988).

1.4 Research Questions

How does *Ice Candy Man* (1988) portray class antagonism and Marxist themes?

What are the consequences caused by class antagonism and Marxism *Ice Candy Man* (1988)?

Literature Review

Yasemin AS\CI (2019) examines *Hard Times* (1854) by Charles Dickens from a Marxist perspective. She generated some interesting points, which, in her mind, the author of this novel addresses contemporary problems (Marxist, to be specific), such as views on labour and the working class, and the struggle between classes was seen through the Marxist eye. The people of the novel are to lead an existence akin to machines, and they, too, will alienate themselves. A number of characters make an effort to start a strike against the exploitation of the ruling class. This novel shows the consequences of the 1840s Industrial Revolution and us upper and middle-class Industrial-town characters. It contains issues and interests of the Victorian age; instead, the writer of this novel successfully reminisces his philosophical truth that everyone is equal. It is his calling for a social and economic revolution while highlighting the shortcomings of the industrial society (AŞCI: 2019).

Ningchuan (2012) use a combination of psychoanalytic and Marxist feminism to interpret Doris Lessing's 1978 short tale *To Room Nineteen*. The study aimed to examine gender relations in this feminist fiction. It investigates Susan's suicide deed from the perspectives of "self" and "self-ego versus semi-others." Nevertheless, because of her utterly flawed social standing, the suicide is an outward manifestation of her inner turmoil. However, it also carries out an imbalance and conflict between her patriarchal gender identity and idealistic consciousness.

A notable example of Marxist literature is the works created by South African novelist Peter Abraham, including *Song of the City* (1945) and *Mine Boy* (1946). Similarly, Wade (1990) views both works as Marxist discourse. The song is about a black countryman who must deal with the metropolis and metropolitan life. The story addresses the political problem facing white society and whether South Asia should support Britain during World War II by joining this side of the conflict. Wade penned this: "...both *Song of the City* and *Mine Boy*, in dealing with capitalistic liberalism; power wielded by bourgeoisie applying predatory maneuvers on rounded proletariat or unconcealed subversive rubber stamp-all for narrow political gains; black working class as a foundation for a racist system that has ever kept them scripted under relentless racial oppression..."

Afolayan (2011) examines two Nigerian novels, Lekan Oyegoke's *Ill Winds* and Biyi Bandele-Thomas' *The Sympathetic Undertaker and Other Dreams* (1993) using Marxist principles. Afolayan (2011) said both writers' stories presented dimensions of dystopian Nigerian societies articulated in a plausible manner to reflect broken political systems, dysfunctional bureaucracy, and corrupt leaders.

Methodology

The present study is qualitative in nature. The researcher applies Marxist's theory (1898) as a theoretical framework to accomplish the study's goals. The text of Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* (1988) serves as the main data source. The research study uses material from online sources, including articles, journals, and research papers, as a secondary source of data collecting. The current study collects only the relevant data from the text of *Sidhwa Ice Candy Man* (1988) to support the present statement. It employs a qualitative and descriptive approach to data analysis. The investigator intends to employ a qualitative methodology that encompasses textual analysis, thick description, and close reading to identify recurring themes, patterns, and insights related to the psychological growth of the characters. The gathering and analysis of textual data will be conducted using the following methodologies.

Analysis and Discussion

In this paper, we propose that the Marxist hermeneutic of *Ice Candy Man* (1988) by Bapsi Sidhwa reveals class oppressors and oppressed and how identity politics have played out in the historical context of the Partition of India. In combining historiometric analysis with Marxist theory, historical materialism gives considerable insight into the novel's economic and social forces that define characters and class conflict. From a Marxist point of view, the characters' social relations are determined by economic and material facts such as class, gender, and colonialism. From this perspective, therefore, *Ice Candy Man* serves to provide a stinging commentary on the exploitative capitalism that typified colonialism and the exploitation of people and resources. The following section presents the analysis of some extracts in order to strengthen the above arguments. It further provides solid arguments regarding a Marxist Reading of Class, Identity and Resistance in Sidhwa's *Ice Candy Man* (1988):

Extract 1

"Somewhere in the uncharted wastes of space beyond, is Mayo Hospital. We are on a quiet wide veranda running the length of the first floor. The cement floor is shining clean. Col. Bharucha, awesome, bald, as pink-skinned as an Englishman, approaches swiftly along the corridor. My mother springs up from the bench on which we've been waiting. He kneels before me (Sidhwa, 1988)."

The above extract captures aspects of dominance, control, organizational and social relations of power, and status in organizational and interpersonal interactions. It takes place in the clean veranda of Mayo Hospital, representing power and high-class ranking. The cleanliness of the shiny cement floor gives a sense of a confined environment that is available to only those lucky to access such privileged medical facilities, and there is something wrong with society's separation from the "haves" and the "have

nots". Col. Bharucha is awesome, bald, and pink-skinned like an Englishman, and this character, together with the institutional reference, creates a colonial imprint. His physical appearance and professional performance relate to postcolonial societies' vestiges of colonialism, under which power and control are considered to be 'white' and 'Westernized.' The conversation between Col. Bharucha and the narrator is by far characterized by a clear power and authority relationship. Col. Bharucha's authority is painted in the picture of a terrifying aura helped by his fame and the implied respect that people give him even when the doctor's cortège is not around. How the man is described—the man who kneels before the narrator but simultaneously has "thunder" around him, auorates the contrast between the man's humbleness and his professional arrogance. These two aspects perfectly symbolize the relationships between the caregiver and the candidate – empathy and subordination.

The narrator's ability to see Col. Bharucha "complex hazel", eyes 'as direct as an animal's and seemingly able to read thoughts' shows a doctor-patient power play. The roles assigned to the character of Bharucha reveal the narrator's powerlessness, and the impression given the authorities are omniscient, symbolizing what Marxist would understand as an indication of domination.

Thus, this extract shows that power relations of social class in healthcare organisations are well-bolted: Col. Bharucha as power figure and Mayo Hospital as institutional setting. This interdependence of colonial traces, professional power, and patient powerlessness can therefore be mapped onto Marxist readings of structural oppression and the continuation of the oppression of the powerful over the weak. This analysis, using principles of thick description and text intensity, uncovers regularities of power, privilege and dependency, which mirror the socio-political themes of the research.

Extract 2

"My parents sit on wood-bottomed chairs in Col. Bharucha's consulting room. Mother holds me. I've been inflated to twice my size by knitted underwear, pullovers, a five-foot Kashmir shawl and a quilt. Col. Bharucha is applying a stethoscope to the emaciated chest of an infant. A woman in a shabby black burka holds the child. The infant coughs so severely that his mother has to hold him upright (Sidhwa, 1988)."

The above excerpt demonstrates the two families' social-economic, multiple-class hearings. The narrator's nuclear family – sitting on wooden chairs and wearing protective clothing represents the relatively privileged class while the poor mother wrapped in a tattered black burka and her "skinny" baby represents the poor. There is a power relation in Col. Bharucha whose stethoscope hangs 'like a talisman' and the father whose body language is 'deferential' to the power relations of the patriarchal system. Patriarchal demands are accentuated by the mother's caregiving

and her veil, as well as the father's speaking for her. Various forms of pain imagery, for instance the "severe cough" of the infant, work towards portraying the detestation of the oppressed, parted parcel of Marxist analysis. The text patterns analyzed through thick description and close reading show that the narratives are characterized by inequality, systematic neglect, and patriarchal oppression, which are consistent with the study's theoretical and methodological framework.

Extract 3

"I quake. The news comes as a complete shock. I thought I was seeing the doctor for my cold. Misinterpreting my devotion to the cast which conceals my repaired foot, Mother thinks I'm merely scared of being hurt: and has kept the true purpose of the appointment from me. 'No!' I scream, unable to bear the thought of an able-bodied future (Sidhwa, 1988)."

The above excerpt is rich with various emotions and psychological states that could be discussed with the help of the chosen qualitative paradigm with focus on Marxist approach as described in the Chapter 3. This scene draws on the subject of isolation, freedom and the relation between the self and the society, within the Marxist concern with the human as a particle in a structured organized world that often tends to oppress rather than nurture the individual.

The psychological condition of the narrator can be easily traced in their response to the procedural intention of the doctor's appointment. The "complete shock" and the screamed "No!" describe how individuals can resist a change that is being forced on them and represents the surrender of their body and their life. This can be best understood as an individual's fight against oppression and repression of the social order; oppression and repression are seen as signs of alienation within Marxist theory. When the cast on the injured part is removed, the foot inside presents the narrator in the best possible way – limited in mobility, yet secure and known.

This mother's decision to hide the true nature of the errand is one of the ways in which women practice paternalism by not allowing men the freedom of decision-making "for their own good." This dynamic presents a small view of this power dynamic as those in perceived power make these decisions for the group, as Marxist criticisms argue about oppressive top-down systems that use the needs of the institution or society over the need for people to have agency. Thus, the narrator's scream also turns into a protest against the hegemonic power in a more fundamental sense, if only within the discursive sphere.

It also describes the problem of psychological alienation of the narrator. These aspects of the novel reflect the psychological price of living in uncertainty, a state that Marxist theory generally defines as the obliteration of the individual in the face of oppressive systems that rob him or her of his/her potential and dreams. Rewriting the choice in favor of suspense

against the certainty of an altered, laborious and loveless life daily raises the issue of fear of any kind of change dictated by the outside world. What we find in this reluctance to welcome change is the echo of the narrator's view of the future as something that is earned through hard work and that is not related to joy, the Marxist critique of the dehumanizing nature of socially imposed tasks.

Thus, we can note that this excerpt represents the analyzed themes of Marxist theoretical patterns: social exclusion, power relationships, and the struggle against the top-down change. Clarifying the signification of thick descriptions, through interpretation of the text it exposes the psychological, social factors of the narrator's intentions and actions, the conflict between the psyche and the social order. These cyclical features help in obtaining a better appreciation of the other socio-political aspects addressed in the study.

Extract 4

“‘The goddamn English!’ I think, infected by Col. Bharucha's startling ferocity at this ‘dastardly’ (one of Father's favorite words, just as ‘plucky’ is Mother's) instance of British treachery. ‘They gave us polio!’ And notwithstanding the compatible and sanguine nature of my relationship with my disease, I feel it is my first personal involvement with Indian politics: the Quit-India sentiment that has fired the imagination of a subject people and will soon sweep away the Raj! (Sidhwa, 1988).”

The above excerpt from *Ice Candy Man* shows the moment of realization of the relationship between personal and politics, which is appropriate to analyze with the help of the qualitative method described in chapter 3. The extent of internalization of Col. Bharucha's “startling ferocity” toward British colonial oppression, which translates to the phrase, “The goddamn English!” represents an important transition from the domain of the personal to that of the political. Association of polio with British betrayal also maps suffering to colonial injustice, thereby enshrine Marxist condemnation of colonialism as means of oppression and alienation. This hybrid construction of compatible and sanguine nature in response to polio placed beside anger at colonial injustice shows how the private and political are intertwined in Beadle's work. This moment of awakening is further posed in relation with the Quit India movement: ‘It is funny’, said the narrator – in truth I am one with all who strive to ‘sweep away the Raj!’ In this regard the text embodies the Marxist notion of revolutionary spirit emerging out of oppression and turning the feeling of alienation into class or group consciousness. To this end, using familial phrases such as “dastardly” and “plucky” shows how ideology is reproduced and formed in society and how the process may be disrupted through analysis. This way the excerpt connects personal wrong with structural oppression, which

echoes frequent topics of alienation, exploitation, and rebellion, thus, corresponded with the study's theoretical and methodological approaches.

Extract 5

“When the caterpillar returns, now marching on our side of the road, the red jackets and white saris separate to take the alien shapes of Englishmen and -women. Observed in microscopic dissection the head of the centipede is formed by a strutting Englishman holding the stout pole of a red flag diagonally across his chest (Sidhwa, 1988).”

Using Marxist theory as the theory of choice, the above extract unmasks the delicate interplay between domination and submission between the colonial masters and the subjugated natives, and the latent social-political struggle using elements of texture and imagery.

Representing the Englishmen and -women as the caterpillar, later employed for a synecdoche analysis, the colonials are depicted as an encroaching and other [ness] presence in the socio-political body. Thus such an orientation of the ‘red jackets and white saris’ is a testament to the colonization of traditional native materiality by the British military attire whose domineering presence disrupts the wearing of the garment. These tallies with Marxist preoccupations with the assimilationist process of the subjugated in an oppressive society, whereby they are denied their civilizational heritage.

The ‘proud Englishman’ at the head of the centipede is a symbolic representation of the colonial self. The epitome of colonial egoism is represented by the figure of the Englishman, protruding in the front of the colonial metaphorized as a centipede. His gestures are grandiloquent, thus one may speak about performative presentation of colonial power and dominance, for instance, when the colonizer ‘swings the flag as a baton’ in an acrobatic fashion. The red diagonal strip across his chest is as much formalistic as they are emblematic of control, trying to associate themselves with Marxist readings where signifiers of authority are used to maintain dominance. The flag is a symbol of territory or conquest here, but more so it is an instrument of a theatrical act and of subjugation.

The magnified scrutiny by the narrator of the scene exposes power relations reflecting the critical consciousness desired by Marxist theory. The Englishman’s “glance [sliding] to Ayah” means that women of India were sexually exploited during colonialism. By being present in the scene Ayah simply represents the rest of the colonized people who the colonialist looks at as passive objects within the framework of colonial oppression.

That is why one can speak about the grotesque in Englishmen’s colonial rule represented in the imagery of “purple” and the caterpillar’s transformation. That the “caterpillar” is alien, and the transformed individuals who “wield” their power visually and symbolically refers to the Marxist narrative of alienation of the oppressed by colonial masters.

Hence, this excerpt gives a picture of the relations of domination and subordination and cultural displacement that colonization brought with it. From the Marxist point of view, it exposes themes of domination, objectification, and resistance and details how power legitimizes continued power through signification and role. Close reading and thick description reveal latent patterns of alienation and power that match Chapter 3's methodological and theoretical specifications.

Extract 6

“Queen Victoria, cast in gunmetal, is majestic, massive, overpowering, and ugly. Her statue imposes the English Raj in the park. I lie sprawled on the grass, my head in Ayah's lap. The Fallettis Hotel cook, the Government House gardener, and an elegant, compactly muscled head-and-body masseur sit with us. Ice-candy-man is selling his popsicles to the other groups lounging on the grass (Sidhwa, 1988).”

The above text is an example of a ‘thick description’ of Ice Candy Man, within the context of colonial power, cultural and social relations, examined through the use of the qualitative approach discussed in Chapter 3. Applying Marxist approach to the analysis, which is the framework of the paper, the author concentrates on the cycle of oppression, cultural otherness, and interconnection of individual and collective subjectivity.

The British Raj in the novel is represented by the statue of the Queen ‘made of gunmetal’ called ‘majestic, massive, overpowering, ugly’ the statue represents colonial power and the ‘imposing’ structure re-establishes the British control of public spaces and therefore Indian society. This may be followed in Marxist criticism, where physical and cultural icons of authority are employed to sustain domination and dispossess the subordinated from their ethnic heritage.

The statue is dominant over the narrator and Ayah now that she is lying on the grass with her head in Ayah's lap. This contrast corresponds to the contrast between locally developed ‘home’ or domesticity and the alienation of colonialism as mechanical repression. The people close to the narrator, the man who was once a cook, the man who tends a garden, and the man who gives massages, are all types of colonized people. That seeing the statue while at leisure implies they are never free from colonialism – even when having fun with friends or in a public space of play – is the message that rings.

A pedophile, Ice-Candy-Man with his long limbs and eye popsicles, offers an aspect of economic estrangement implicit within barter. His character as a vendor in this scene represents sale of leisure which is a result of the assimilation of local culture with that introduced by the colonizers. This is a good example of how personal and cultural interests have merged in Ayah and how colonial and local forces interact in shaping and constructing the subject.

The dominance of the statue in the park environment issues a physical symbolism for the larger imperialism structures of the Raj as the characters' discrete encounters depict the colonised flexibility. The stand-out figure of, the mechanical, otherworldly figure of Queen Victoria, casting a large shadow over the lively human figures playing on the green, conveys the struggle between colonization and indigenous life. This tension correlates with Marxist worries of alienation as well as subversion of the dominated within structures of domination.

Therefore, it can be noted that this excerpt shows the colonial power at work [through the statue of Queen], and, at the same time, the indigenous potentiality of human relations in the colony and indigenous culture. The dynamics of domination and subordination, as well as individual and shared stories, correspond to Marxist views on power and submission. By identifying a close reading and thick description, the analysis reveals alienation, resilience, and cultural adaptation patterns necessary to meet the methodological and theoretical requirements.

Extract 7

“I learn also to detect the subtle exchange of signals and some of the complex rites by which Ayah's admirers co-exist. Dusting the grass from their clothes they slip away before dark, leaving the one luck, or the lady, favours. I don't enjoy the gardener's turn because nothing much happens except talk. He talks and Ayah Talks, and he listens and Ayah Talks (Sidhwa, 1988).”

This excerpt from *Ice Candy Man* tries to analyze the feelings between the characters and their social behaviour under different circumstances and the narrator's mind mapping. Marxist analysis renders the relations between structure, power, and alienation in the personal and/ or societal relations as presented in this text. Ayah's relationship in the narrative with her many male admirers provides the reader with a lens through which the effects of class, gender, and colonialism can be observed in a country undergoing colonization. Being a caregiver, Ayah finds herself in a lower social power, but she enjoys some degree of power within her domestic setting. The “politics of exchange” and “eroticized rituals” of her lovers point at arrangements of informal power relationships and the norms governing conduct. Her admirers' disappearance ‘before it gets dark’ indicates that personal relationships are not outside the social order, as Marxist criticism would have them; they are informed and regulated by it.

The notion that the gardener's turn does not involve, but is limited to, talk shows a detachment from the narrator and, thus, the adult world. This detachment drives the narrator into daydreams in which they create perfect scenarios, adjusting their reality to their desires. They depict their father as ‘talkative’ and their mother as ‘silly’. The house images express the desire to get out of the elements of life that the subjects of the writer themselves

through these fantasies embody the Marxist notion of alienation, where people look for comfort or satisfaction outside of the unkind or non-rewarding structure. The imaginative job that the narrator performs of challenging their 'cannibalistic' brother-in-law to rescue Godmother shows how much the narrator desires to fight the socio-cultural construction of reality.

Governance of Aspirations: Godmother and similar North American suburban women of her class play the game of socio-cultural boundaries with full consciousness; the mention of her brother-in-law being a doctor from 'way beyond the perimeter of my familiar world' does indeed hint at this certainty. The narrator's effort to transcend these barriers in their daydreams is a manifestation of a desire to be in control in a world that is full of controls. This follows the Marxist perspective of revolutionary struggle when the isolated individuals raise an anti-social protest against the restrictions of their existence.

The narrator only watches their thoughts and dreams challenge Ayah's acting submission to the colonialist regime. Thus, by mentally reconstructing their reality, the story's main focus is to regain control over their life event, thus expressing defiance towards specific other activities that alienate the character. Hence, it shows the Marxist theme of trying, albeit in a limited way, to gain control and freedom in a controlled, oppressive society.

Therefore, this excerpt deals with issues of isolation, manners and the desire for choices in a systematic world. The dynamics of Ayah and her lovers illustrate the informal bargaining of power; the narrator's fantasies demonstrate how people can resist becoming alienated. Thus, the text outlines the patterns of energy, alienation, and the longing for self-governance, which corresponds to the theoretical and methodological guidelines of Chapter 3.

Extract 8

"My brother is aloof. Vital and alert, he inhabits another sphere of interests and private thoughts. No doubt he too is busy picking up knowledge, gaining insights. I am more curious of him than he of me. His curiosity comes later. I am skinny, wizened, sallow, wiggly-haired, and ugly. He is beautiful (Sidhwa, 1988)."

The above excerpt from *Ice Candy Man* (1988) offers a promising focus for analysis through the qualitative approach discussed in Chapter 3 and applying the Marxist approach to the analysis of themes of alienation, and the relations between the family members and the impact of perception and identity. After careful and detailed analysis, powerful examples of internalized social structures and the feeling of alienation found their reflection in the text.

When the narrator describes his brother as aloof and living in a different world of interests and even personal concerns, she reveals the lack of emotional contact. This detachment portrays the Marxist concept of alienation in social relations and the familial context. The brother's vitality and reaction to the things he sees compared to the narrator's submission of a perplexing curiosity in things, building an unstated impulse that empowers him regardless of the home setting of a family unit. Such a dynamic is reminiscent of the tendencies in general society in which people segregate themselves from one another based on their differences in positions, traits, or values.

The ability to see a brother as the most sexually attractive figure, animal, person, building, river or mountain shows that the skill of appearances or charisma wins the narrator over. The impossibility of attaining this is a representation of how certain attributes place some people categorically beyond others in a similar way that privilege makes some people build a gap from the rest of society.

In terms of self-identification, the awful words skinny, wizened, sallow, wiggly-haired, and ugly obviously are signs of internalized alienation and the subject's own diminished estimation of self-value. This can be compared with the high image of the brother, showing the Marxist approach to discuss how people tend to accept society's judgments, and as a result, develop the feeling of self-worth according to the un/prestige of one's appearance. The implied doubling of the unequal relationship established between the narrator and her brother contributes to the social abjection and otherization by underlining the aesthetical and vital values available to those who embody the acceptable other.

The narrator's curiosity towards her brother and the lack of curiosity from the brother's side of a one-sided relationship, power struggle, is even in the intimacy. The brother's curiosity which comes "later" signifies slow acceptance of the narrator's individuality, representing the subordinates' realization in power relations. This delay can be viewed through Marxist critique as recognition of the value and capacity of the subjugated people, though mostly when they are subjugated.

Conclusion

In our opinion, this book presents the partition era in a provocative manner. Bapsi Sidhwa's depiction of the split is multilayered. She begins by discussing the period before the partition, marked by harmony, peace, and harmony amongst diverse societal factions and ethnic groups. However, when class divisions began to form, the various communities grew more independent and accelerated the separation process. Sidhwa objects to the English imperialists for allegedly inciting the ethnic division. She claims that the ruling class used the religious discourse between Muslims and Hindus to portray the higher class as having profited from the subjugation

of the lower classes. According to Sidhwa, there is a propensity to elevate the upper class to the position of dominating the lesser masses. She demonstrates how the higher class utilizes the money to sponsor religion in order to instil a false sense of consciousness in the lower class, supporting her accusation that religion has terrible consequences. Bapsi Sidhwa herself has straightforwardly shown several dysfunctional households. She says all the characters have lost any sentimental value, and Marx was right; in the capitalistic society, the tender, warm value is ripped off people, and they struggle for the tricks and the dollar. Thus, the findings of this study show that this novel delineates the story of various social groups suffering class conflicts and the pursuit of their aims inspired by economic and financial advancement. It noticeably portrays the assorted social classes and everlasting antagonism in a social and economic framework. Apart from this, the novel has illustrated religious practices, discovering it as an active and conservative force utilized by the ruling to justify class antagonism and unnatural with natural.

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