

Class, Alienation, and the Metamorphosis of Power: A Marxist Reading of Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man*

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Abstract

This paper explores the novel *The Last White Man* (2022) by Mohsin Hamid with the help of Karl Marx's theory of alienation, psychoanalytical analysis and archetypal analysis. The novel is situated in a "white-becoming-black" society that creates an interesting metaphor for the proletarianization of the bourgeoisie. To analyze the capitalistic structures and their effect on the four forms of alienation (alienation from the product of labor, alienation from the process of production, alienation from fellow worker and alienation from species-being), this study symbolically reads the whites as the bourgeoisie and the blacks as the proletariat. The paper demonstrates that Hamid's novel is a critique of capitalist social relations and also a roadmap to lessen the alienation which can be done by class consciousness, solidarity and self-actualization. The transformation process is analyzed in the light of the characters of the novel, particularly Oona and Anders and his father, in the context of psychological violence and how class oppression can be understood, and identifies possibilities for human connection and understanding. For example, new keywords are introduced that are associated with Marxist alienation, class consciousness, and capitalism, the proletariat, and the bourgeoisie, and self-actualization.

1. Introduction

Despite its economic and social differences, human attraction is not affected by money, color or race; but if there is a repulsion between the two sexes resulting from the economic division, it produces physical and psychological deformities, such as trauma, psychological illness and alienation. Alienation is a psychological state that is experienced by persons who are treated abnormally by others, and who feel isolated in a community. People who are alienated can't express themselves; it's difficult for them to exercise their thoughts and behavior in society. From the perspective of alienated persons' "paradoxical consciousness" it can be explained that alienation is a phenomenon. Marx (1844) calls the paradoxical consciousness of alienated persons the "consciousness of conscious people who are not conscious of their social conditions," or "the consciousness of conscious persons who are not conscious of their social conditions."

Mohsin Hamid's *The Last White Man* (2022) is a dystopian tale in which, in some way, white people take on the skin color of black-skinned people. The novel's protagonist, Anders, wakes up one morning to discover his skin in some way has a "deep and undeniable brown" (Hamid, 2022, p. 1). This change of circumstance is a potent allegory of the proletarianization of the bourgeoisie, of the privileged becoming the sufferers, the victims of alienation, discrimination and psychological pain like that of the working class.

This research is based on the Marxist alienation theory which treats the alienation relationship of the bourgeoisie and proletariat in Hamid's novel. The study symbolically considers whites as the bourgeoisie and blacks as the proletariat; how the alienation capitalism produces is discussed and what the effects of alienation are in the minds of individuals and their lives. The novel is a voice of the working class,

addressing the complaints of workers in the society in which people aren't allowed to think for themselves.

1.1 Research Objectives

To make the point of the downtrodden working-class, as hinted at in *The Last White Man*

To substantiate the Marxist idea that capital social pressure leads to alienation and to explore its impact in the novel.

To suggest ways to deal with alienation and emerge from oppressive systems by minimizing it as described in the novel

1.2 Research Questions

What does Hamid show readers in *The Last White Man* in his literary characters' day-to-day lives?

How does capitalism bring Marxist alienation in *The Last White Man*?

How does Hamid propose to realize one's self and to prevent alienation?

1.3 Significance of the study

This research is meant to examine the current socio-structures and the sense of competition among the working class and to shed light on products' path of wealth accumulation. The study recommends analysis of texts that can be useful to raise awareness about mental health, which has recently been taboo in the United States due to fear of rejection. The work appeals to industrialists to make efforts for workers so they may have the basic right to live mentally free, recognizing workers as human beings with the same urges that all men possess. The study is an appeal for workers to strive and withstand pressure of the society with a constant effort to be recognized. Such a change of great magnitude can be effected through the combined efforts of the workers, literary people, social activists and authorities. The study offers solutions for the novel to cope with alienation and allows bourgeoisie and proletariat to live in harmony.

2. Literature Review

The process of alienation is a result of economic structures. It is a belief that has been around since man was a social animal and that he cannot survive without society. Man is a social being (Godelier, 2015). People's dependency on each other due to different skills existed long before the man needed to be in a capitalist society. A dependency was visible even in the barter system, before the inception of currency. As Mauss (1925) said, "Reciprocity is the backbone of human social life" and this has always been the case with sales. Man has had a family even though he lived in caves—and had bonds to others outside the family. Early humans lived in small mobile groups, frequently extended families (Lee, 1979).

People have feelings of envy, which exist in human nature. In human history, oxytocin has been involved in developing relations as Carter (2014) explains: "Often referred to as the 'love hormone,' oxytocin facilitates social bonding, trust, and nurturing behavior, which is why humans instinctively protect and care for loved ones in times of need. Man's quest for a longer time with either his family or loved ones. There was a sense of what is mine and what is theirs, a sense linked to survival, according to Lee (1979): "People had a sense of what is mine and what is theirs, one that was associated with survival and well being, likely, for early humans. People were engaged in enterprises that would leave them free to be with their families, as Boehm (1999) notes: "In early human societies, the notion of work was frequently linked to obligations toward the family and community. People grew in numbers and men went out and spread around – taking with them their closest friends. Migration suggest that humans migrate their hearts instead of their feet, migrating into not empty spaces, but into spaces that are filled by a relational process (Tuan, 1977). Man wants to be connected and does not want negativity to him.

The sense of being superior and secure in society, which was noticed by Freud (1915), was evident in the presence of upper and lower classes that traveled with men; they attempted to be number one. In many times of famine and disaster, those who were fittest survived. More, more, more is what it has always meant to be a man, and the reason is that it's wired into our brains with neuro-chemistry: "Dopamine D2 receptors produce a 'moreish' psychology—our reward system activates not when we're satisfied, but when we know more is available, leading to constant buying and seeking" (Linden 2011). The men who survived because of more resources became the upper class, and those who could not because of lack of

resources became the lower class, a dynamic Sahlins (1972) notes: "The abundance of resources can create a sense of superiority among those who have access to them, while scarcity can lead to feelings of inferiority."

The alienation of man in capitalism intensifies as follows: Racial, national and moral formations have all been shaped by wealth throughout history. This is clearly stated by Marx (1867, p. 915): "The discovery of gold and silver in America, the extermination, enslavement and burial in mines of the native people, the introduction of Africa as a preserve for commercial hunting expeditions of blackskins, are all features of the beginning of the era of capitalist production. In ancient Greece there was an idea of upper and lower, as Cartledge (2002) observes: "The social pyramid of Athens was not simply a social hierarchy based on wealth but rather one based on a matrix of birth, citizenship and perceived moral value, even among the wealthy, metics, being foreigners living in the city, were ranked lower than the impoverished citizens. With economic sensibility, man was aware of the power and perks that come with power, as Bourdieu (1986) pointed out: "Economic power is only one aspect of social power, and those who possess other forms of power such as political or cultural power."

When inspecting human nature, it is found that the reason for hard work is to stand out, according to McClelland (1961): "The need for achievement is a key motivator for human behavior, and it encourages individuals to work diligently and strive for success to stand out and be recognized. If he or she stands out from a crowd—even among his or her own countrymen—then his or her status is respected. It is this which men are seeking; this is what Maslow (1943) called a "fundamental human drive": "Men work hard and strive to be the best in order to be respected by others. Self-respect has much to do with alienation, as it becomes a psychological problem. Marcuse (1964) argues: "The wounded sense of self-respect is a basic component of alienation; people who are not recognized and respected are more likely to suffer from a sense of feeling alienated and disoriented."

In ancient Rome, people were thrown in front of the lions to be eaten so that others can enjoy this spectacle and people suffered not just from the outside but also from the inside because they saw other people who were suffering in silence. The key texts of Roman law confirm: the condemned before entering the arena, he/she loses his/her humanity. Their suffering was literally dehumanised, made 'spectacle material' (Coleman, 2006). As the world changes, needs evolve—"Dopamine receptors get used to every level of achievement, as Linden (2011) points out, "The same neural circuits that give our ancestors joy of fire now call for smart homes." Resources were required in higher quantities, and by competing with more fellow humans, a stage came when man had to compete with his own people to achieve his aims. This is cited by Hirsch (1976): "When everyone has bread, the competition shifts to who has artisanal sourdough—Hirsch's 'positional goods' theory is the explanation."

2.1 The Internalization of Alienation

Marx (1848) discusses that when industrialist doesn't want the working-class to enjoy what they produce themselves, the distance them from what the produce by increasing the prices, exporting them and marketing the products with their logos without leaving a trace of all those who worked hard in its production. Then alienate them from the means of production by assigning them the duty at a particular place or wing of the industry, they remain from the basic essence that what they are working on has to go through a number of other machines and conveyer belts. They are forced to work at distance from the other fellow workers. Their shift timings are different. They feel difficulty in meeting the fellow-workers. When they don't meet they cannot communicate ideas that much effectively. This all crushes them psychologically and they feel like a "cog in the machine." They cannot perform their professional tasks as they want to do. They have to go to the work even if they don't want to go. This is what Marx (1848) called alienation from species-being. Alienation has its effect on psychology more than anything else. It has ravaged human minds, as Fromm (1993) says, "The alienated person is out of touch with himself as he is out of touch with any other person. He, like the others, is experienced as things are experienced; with the senses, with common sense, but at the same time without being related to himself and to the world outside productively. It is one of the worst forms of alienation and is the root of numerous

alienation issues faced by humans, as described by Laing (1960): "Psychological alienation is the most devastating form of alienation. Sometimes things that are good for one thing are bad for another, as Engels (1845) put it: "Living standards were improved with cotton mills, but also "white lung disease": life expectancy in Manchester in the 19th century was 24 years, lower than in the Neolithic.

The human minds can see what is around them and make the body able to face challenges. Serves as a support to human spirit and feelings. Durkheim's "social proteins" suggests that the institutions can be seen as the "amino acids" of meaning, and when they are broken down, anomie becomes the psychological equivalent of malnutrition (Durkheim, 1897).

The marginalised groups of the world as are the Dalits of the Hindu society feel low when others look at them with different expressions and ultimately suffer alienation. Dalits were not even allowed to use common water taps, and their women, knowing their untouchability, were molested, as Rao (2019) called for: "Thirst becomes a daily reminder of subhuman status, what psychologists call 'hydraulic humiliation'," he said. Oppressors refuse to accept the oppressed as a citizen and thus they are forced to work jobs that the upper class does not allow. This geographic scripting makes manual scavenging appear 'natural' instead of coerced, Prashad (2000) says, pointing to the Dalit settlements being close to 'dumping grounds and far from temples'. If a man is forbidden to sit at his level, he is unable to enter houses, he cannot be treated with respect in society.

As Goffman (1963) said: "Such conditions lead man to arrive at a point in his life where he is only able to feel shame for himself, self-contempt has replaced his self-respect. The disrespect, more painful than physical, makes a man feel more powerless, as Goleman (1995) says: "Psychological pain, such as that of disrespect and humiliation, can be more debilitating and lasting than physical pain. The powerlessness is due to the absence of economic resources, as Marx (1848) explained: "The proletariat are powerless in front of the bourgeoisie because they lack the economic resources needed to challenge the dominant class. When a person attempts to escape from such cruelties, society won't accept that person due to their experiences. The "stigma permanence effect" guarantees that the people of the marginalized groups have what Goffman (1963) described as a "tribal stigma". It is a mark that cannot be erased despite changes in the person. Everyone's target of being respectful and if they don't do so, and if someone does not respect them in return, they become alienated from themselves psychologically. Marx (1844) stated: "The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and range. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates. With the increasing value of the world of things proceeds in direct proportion the devaluation of the world of men."

2.2 Universal Roots of Estrangement

Capitalism is merely a term that's created in terms of economic purpose. It is the class that has always ruled society. When seen in hierarchical order, there were the capitalist people—those with economic power—who were in power from the past till now, as Mills (1956, p. 23) said: "From Pharaohs to financiers, those who control surplus resources dictate civilization's trajectory. Capitalism merely perfected their tools." There was the presence of different groups throughout history, such as emperors and their subjects, generals and their armies, senators and normal citizens, nobles and artisans. But, there is one thing common about the human psychological subconscious – all are human, and the pain it feels for the other – empathy – is its proof. Segregation was also present in the past because of the feeling of superiority or inferiority, as Durkheim (1893) put it: "Segregation is rooted in notions of superiority and inferiority, such that one group feels superior to another and can therefore dominate and oppress it.

The history of the emperors is a history of cruelties against new territory, in order to make people feel and stay inferior, and give up their memory, as Arendt (1951, p. 190) said: "Systematic cruelty aims not just to break resistance but to destroy the very capacity for memory—turning the oppressed into strangers to their own past. When addressing their leaders, who had made themselves appear very hard to get a word in edgeways, people had to muster up courage. These leaders are also surrounded by many people around them, as if they have no one to share their feelings with their feelings are also alienated. As said by

Machiavelli (1532): "A prince should never let anyone know his real mind of his thoughts... So he is an exile among all, an unknown man among courtiers, and alone.

2.3 Quest for Self-Actualization in a Systemic Alienation

Alienation can be experienced when individuals know what to do but can't do it, as described by Maslow (1943): "The knowledge of what one can do and what one cannot do can create feelings of alienation and frustration. Alienation may exist among businessmen, or even among persons of the same economic background. When a person deals with other businessmen and treats them in a derogatory way to gain more, to have less competition in the market, as Sartre (1960) said: "The bourgeois is not merely an exploiter; he is first and foremost a man who sees others—even those of his own class—as threats. His solidarity is a lie; his true religion is competition." It may also be found in the nobility, which, although enjoying the privilege, has a tendency to feel isolated and cut off from others, because of the intricacies of court politics and the competitive nature of maintaining its social rank, as Elias (1983) explains: "Often the nobility feels cut off from the rest of society even though it has a privileged position, because of the complexities of court politics and the pressures of maintaining its social rank.

If teachers begin to conceal their academic discoveries from students or become stringent, students are reluctant to go to the teachers. The students feel alienated from the teacher because it is stated in *Deschooling Society* by Illich (1971): "A classroom where questions are feared is a factory producing alienation. As Jacobs (1961, p. 72) said, "lowly, unprosperous and random as they may seem, sidewalk contacts are the small change from which a city's wealth of public life may grow; when they fail, people become prisoners in their own homes.

Industrialisation came with a new repressive system of working longest hours for the lowest wages. Thompson (1967) observed: "The working class was exposed to a system of work discipline, in which workers were compelled to work long hours and risk punishment, such as loss of wages. If the working class got ill, they were not given a break and a chance to rest properly. Indirectly, as in *Hardacre* (Skelton, 1976), if not directly, then hardacre was unable to get his remaining pay during his time of quietude, and the entire family had to bear the burden. They could not be given assistance for no one was able to sit idle on their table. The crimes against the working class were so severe that they were treated as an enemy class and were offered salaries as if there is no difference between them and the bourgeoisie, in fact they felt that they are very different. The bourgeoisie created new needs where they didn't exist, it created factories where people were content to work with their craft, it oppressed economically weak people instead of competing with other industrialists, as Marx (1867, p. 617) put it: "The bourgeoisie invents new needs to sustain its system of exploitation. Where people were content to work with their craft, it creates factories; where communities thrived, it imposes wage slavery.

Industries were founded in oppressed regions by the colonizers, and the bourgeoisie working in these regions repressed the local population. They brought products from the proletariat who in exchange were treated as slaves and cultured inferiorly, as described by Conrad (1899) in *Heart of Darkness*: "The ivory taken from Congo, the exploitation of the resources, the hard work of the people proved to be of no avail for them. The products are gathered or made by the labourers' efforts, but the labourers are inferior because of their colour, creed and race. The capitalist system puts the concept firmly in people's heads that money is the yardstick by which loved ones are judged, as illustrated in *The Metamorphosis* (Kafka, 1915), where the protagonist Gregor Samsa works diligently to support his family, but never manages to relate to them.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Marx's Theory of Alienation

Karl Marx developed his concept of alienation as a criticism of capitalist society which forces the workers to do so much work that they begin to feel disconnected with the society in which they live with other men, their traditions, their family and the necessities of life. Born on May 5, 1818, and passing away on March 14, 1883, Marx was a German philosopher. He was a philosopher, political theorist, historian, sociologist, journalist and revolutionary economist. Lenin (1913) said that "the main substance of

Marxism was Marx's economic doctrine". Marxism is based on the ideals of communism, as capitalism was exploiting the working class. There the apparatus of production is only related to the bourgeoisie, and only the government has to do with the system in as much as it is needed. The fundamental concepts in Marxism are: Proletariat and Bourgeoisie. The working classes or those engaged in the industry, are called the proletariat, and their employers or those who have the power, are called the bourgeoisie, and who are the ones who run the industry for the working class and who expect them to give their wages or salaries for their work.

According to Marx alienation in capitalism occurs in a variety of four forms: Alienation from the Product: In the capitalist system industries are manufacturing items daily and workers are being fed and indulged with their full effort to produce them to the standard. However, only the company's logo will be used to get the product to the market. The labor's work on the product is absolutely not noticeable. The labor and the user have no thought that it is produced by a specific labor because of the amount of labor. Similarly, in *The Last White Man*, the hatred towards blacks by whites was not due to a particular person but for the whole community.

Alienation from the Process of Production: The burden of the bourgeoisie on the proletariat is developed by the attitudes of the bourgeoisie, that they want only wealth. The laborer of the olden days knew exactly what tools he had in his possession and at times he had developed a sense of attachment to the tool with which he made an artifact. Once he was aware of the entire production process. Yet, capitalism has affected all the emotions and everything was measured, so that the proletariat was removed from the process of production. Alienation from Fellow Workers: Workers are alienated in the industry from one another due to the sense of competition between them. The appraisal of their contribution in the industrial process urges them to neglect the others' efforts in the whole process of production. The bourgeoisie make the working class so busy that they have no time to spend with fellow workers.

Alienation from Species-Being: The main and psychological aspect of alienation in Marxist alienation is alienation from species-being in which man goes against his nature. This is the most terrible type of estrangement to which any man can be subjected. A man's nature is to be distinguished from others by his own abilities, and his best nature is accomplished by exercising his abilities. So hard things were done to be able to create different products, and before industrialization, it was not uncommon for everyone to come up with their own ideas to make a good product.

3.2 Maslow's Theory of Self-Actualization

The last white man is interpreted using the self-actualization theory by Maslow. This theory proposes that man's development, acceptance of personality and action. The reason to actualise oneself is to become the best person he can be, to experience what he may be able to be, and when he is not able to do something, because of ignorance, then the need for that to be fulfilled. When men realize themselves they can easily feel ok with who they are and how they are seen. Self-actualization helps them show sympathy to others and show others that they are helpful, and that is how it helps to mitigate alienation. When others, society, and loved ones are changing, and the one who never changes is gone, then Anders thinks he's reached self-actualization. With his body which he was very proud of—the white skin—which is the worst thing he could see in his life.

3.3 Psychoanalytical Theory

The psychoanalytical theory was presented by Sigmund Freud in the early 1890s. The theory is an interpretation of the traits of people in general. The theory proposes that there are three aspects of the mind: the Id is the unconscious part of the mind that appears in situations such as survival; the ego is the conscious part of the mind that functions according to the situation in the here and now based on the principles of reality; and the superego is the conscious part of the mind that functions on the basis of the principles of social practices. Psychological interpretation is a key aspect of the novel, as characters experience psychological changes to help smooth over the situation or to alleviate it. The subconscious has memories of the past and is a preparation for the present. According to the novel, he made this move to assert himself over the situation, or to make reality come back in mind's strength.

3.4 Archetypal Theory

Using Carl Jung's archetypal theory, this study attempts to explain universal, recurring patterns of behavior and symbolism in the characters and story of *The Last White Man*. This theoretical approach seeks to explore the underlying psychological roots of the characters' transformations and disorientation, which are not merely socioeconomic in nature as Marxism does. Jung's concept of the collective unconscious, which contains the latent memories of each of the individual and the common human past, helps to explain the automatic reaction of both the converted (the "blacks" or the proletariat) and the untransformed (the "whites" or bourgeoisie). The archetype of the Shadow represents the repressed and often times abhorred aspects of society and even the self, is one way to understand what the protagonist Anders finds repulsive when meeting his new mirror. The situation of disorder in society and the scapegoating of the changed group matched the stereotype of the Enemy or the Other, which is a primitive projection of one's own anxieties onto another group. The journey from alienation to acceptance is a journey towards the Self (completeness) and the Child (potential, rebirth in the future).

4. Textual Analysis

4.1 Story in a Nutshell

The novel's plot is about a person who fell asleep white and woke up black. Anders is the main character who is also depicted like Kafka's character, Samsa, in *The Metamorphosis*. Anders is full of shame and hate for himself, along with emotions of surprise. He and all the whites in the town used to hate blacks. He is a thoughtful man, not thinking about his life after becoming black in his house where he has a good life with a furnished house and electronic gadgets, but thinking about going out to get something at the market. He knows he will not be able to face people because living in a white-dominated society where blacks are hated, he understands how whites treat blacks.

Oona is Anders' close girlfriend. He believes that she will understand him and that his life will be easy; but it comes to him that in a capitalist society, relations are only established on a basis of reciprocity on fair conditions. He feels that Oona is ignoring him as he calls her and she doesn't call him back. Oona's mother is initially revealed to dislike Anders and her daughter is not to accompany him, because of his blackness. Even his father is amazed to see him. Social tension between the whites and blacks escalates to the point of whites beginning to fight against blacks and demand they be removed from the town. They begin to kill blacks, and some blacks retaliate. Anders realizes that the whites' perspective of being self-righteous is right, as he was white once.

The riots and lack of understanding for the feelings of the oppressed cause chaos in the town but also a journey of blacks toward self-actualization, shown especially through Anders and Oona. The last white man, his father, is a bridge between white and black as he allows Oona and Anders entry into his house. After the death of the last white man, there is still a hint of inferiority. From the very beginning, Oona's mother is escaping her identity. Anders and Oona's daughter are the only means of hope for the family to survive as they are. Even till the end of time, Oona's mother shows that hatred towards blacks is in their genes, even when they themselves become black, as the change of skin colour does not easily change the background and the psychology of man. Her granddaughter is confident and confers that however they are she and her grandmother are the same,

4.2 Psychological Background of Hamid

Hamid is a Dystopian author. The factor of displacement can be seen in *The Last White Man* in the form of Anders' movement from his house to his father's house. Most of Hamid's novels deal with issues of identity crisis and alienation and he is a Pakistani-American. He is a Muslim writer in America, who was one of those who got harsh critique after 9/11 for being Muslim. Sometimes when people did not target him directly, due to living in an environment where every second person taunts or shows hatred, he imagined himself alone. The hateful media did not take people's emotion into account while they were residing in the area. This threatened the identities of Muslims in America to a great extent. They began concealing their identities in fear of hate in the society. Considering the lives of alienated people living in America, Hamid wrote the novel on racial alienation, which can also be studied as Marxist alienation

because most conditions in racial or any kind of alienation are similar to Marxist alienation, with the only difference being that alienation is due to difference in economic status. The blacks symbolize the proletariat, who face atrocities of the bourgeoisie. The whites are bourgeoisie.

4.3 The Sufferings of the Oppressed Working Class

Anders is the protagonist, who is alienated from the things he is creating, from the process of creation, from his other workers and from his species-being. The oppressors are numerous and collected around, as expressed in a series of riots: "A melee here, a shooting here" (Hamid, 2022, p. 40). They spread terror among the proletariat or blacks. The result is a positive attitude of people towards blacks symbolized. Capitalism doesn't take it upon itself to rob the workers, no, it takes the thoughts of the workers, which are filled with hatred. Through these thoughts, the older generations have been able to turn people away from themselves, as in the novel, "They smile,' her mother said, 'but you never know what they're thinking. Their kindness isn't like ours'" (Hamid, 2022).

The bourgeoisie's attitude towards the working class is inhuman, as reflected with the attitude of Anders' boss, rioters, and Oona's mother. Following the Industrial Revolution, the workers had to work without any form of security, and were subjected to the dreadful sound of dynamite as can be seen: "Anders heard shouts in the distance, the sound of glass breaking" (Hamid, 2022, p. 89). The bourgeoisie did not like them being there: "The cleaner was always there, pushing his mop in slow arcs, but Anders had never really seen him as a person (Hamid, 2022). However, when one of them turns into a worker, he begins to see how brutal they were towards the working class: "Their eyes met, and in that instant, Anders understood something that couldn't be said: the cleaner looked at him differently, he looked at him as one of us, not one of them" (Hamid, 2022).

They don't give a shit about the workers, if they do, then it's a bad one; they're robbers or rioters, as written: "She blamed them, the ones who were different now, for everything that was wrong. Look at the news,' she'd say. It's all connected. They deceive the workers into distancing themselves from the worker and use a method in which they try to convince workers of their capitalist view, that no harm is being done. The poor treatment robs workers of their mental faculties, but is unrecognized, as was the case with the hatred of Oona's mother towards Oona when she suddenly turns black. The mistreatment causes the proletariat to doubt their role in society, their allegiance to the machines or means of production, the difference between their wages and the value of the goods they produce, the difference between their inner purity and their unnurtured outer life, and the difference between their ideas and their deeds.

The working class suffers their fate without complaint and is treated badly by the capitalists. They don't complain, as with Anders not being able to speak up in front of Oona's mum. Capitalism has made all workers unspoken: "At work, Anders was quieter than ever before; not quite certain of how any of his actions would be read" (Hamid, 2022, p. 33). In this society, only money matters, and it pushes people out of the normal. The minor detail "Anders paid in cash" (Hamid, 2022, p. 78) emphasizes the impacts of wealth on social life—that wealth dictates power and people without wealth are unable to impress and attract people toward themselves.

But novel means that under capitalism, only the working class are oppressed, while the upper class is unaware. This is evident in the line, "you don't work, you don't get paid" (Hamid, 2022, p. 4). They are ill-treated and shamed by their bosses, and alienated workers die before anything happens. Industrialists twist and use labor as pawns and pretend to safeguard the rights of workers. The capitalists are indifferent towards employees, as shown by Anders' boss saying "you better be dying" (Hamid, 2022, page 4). Alienation is the awareness of what workers have lost, and Anders knew that it was important to be bourgeoisie—he was once there himself who rather than being tortured, torture the proletariat. This is reflected in Anders' response to turn black (poor) when he is still rich (white). The words in the line 'Anders scrambled out of his bed' (Hamid, 2022, p. 1) depict the desperate need of the capitalists for wealth or the bourgeoisie.

4.3.1 Psychological Violence and Class Trauma

The shock of economic downfall comes to these characters when the industrial class and the former white characters in the novel face the downfall, since they know they will not be able to enjoy the bonuses associated with economic prosperity. The research has determined that whenever a person experiences such a thing, the inertial mind plays a role in that, because the man does not look at him again, as stated: "He didn't look in the mirror much" (Hamid, 2022). If a man is going towards transformation or if a man hasn't made himself new in a new way, he can't understand him totally, because a man is in his mind and the external conditions want something else from man and complete transformation is very necessary in his mind. The working class, due to their economic conditions which make them weak in front of wealthy people, remain unsure which of their acts may offend the upper class or that their work may not be in accordance with the bourgeoisie, like Anders had to be cautious of what to say and when to say and how to act and when to act.

4.3.2 Technology and Class Strife

Machines that do not require wages interest the capitalists and lower labour, as the machines grow rapidly. The description of Anders' mother's car reveals that machines relieve the lives of the capitalist class, but if workers are the ones that become jobless, it doesn't matter at all to the capitalist class. Men are not machines to be used for work in factory or farm, they need food, food is the result of their work, and they need it to live. They have to work according to their mind and physical health, which is not understood by the bourgeoisie. Robots take over people's jobs, and they are losing even industrial wages. In the novel, the use of mobile phones represents social media activity, but class hatred increases, a depiction and warning to society that machines must not be prized more than humans, as it leads to chaos and misunderstandings. The use of machines acts as a catalyst in distancing humans. The capitalists never think about the psychological consequences of physical changes on the workers, even of changing their lifestyle. As described: "Men who once built engines now sat idle, their hands remembering rhythms the world no longer needed," bourgeoisie segregate workers from society and lead to changes in their thinking.

When workers have to think too much about each step, like in the novel, at the beginning Anders walks slow. As they think about their alienation, they do not confront the bourgeoisie, who are people, too. Communication is the primary means of social life, thus, the society operates smoothly, however, in the absence of the basic step, the society's members, the proletariat are driven out of the normalcy of social life. The proletariat have to burn the midnight oil to earn bread and butter; they have no power to even argue, as they are like birds between land predators but with no wings (Hamid, 2022, p. 48). The capitalist division produces differences and distances between people, even among workers, who do not pay attention to each other; some day, workers begin to emotionally detach themselves from their peers, as in this quote: "He was making his way to the wall, a guy he saw pushing a man like him, but he didn't pay attention to him, his stomach felt sour, and his legs just wouldn't move any further" (Hamid, 2022, p. 149).

The opposition in Anders' mind toward the workers is evident in his boss's remarks: "I would've killed myself" (Hamid, 2022, p. 24). These sorts of people attempt to make the working class alienated not only from the upper class but also from themselves, by making statements that attempt to get them to consider their place in society. The bourgeoisie act in an unrefined manner and in return expect people to align behind them, mentally playing with them to have an influence over the lower class.

4.4 Internalized Oppression and Spatial Confinement

The proletariat has a hard time getting to the product, he has to go through many processes. It's no secret why in Anders' words he writes "who knows, maybe he thinks the same about me. Even at an early age, Anders has an antagonism for his own kind, having been born black and having been indoctrinated with the negative attitude that has been passed down from generation to generation. It is hard to get rid of, unless you become fully actualized. In comparison to his mind, its skin or appearance can not urge him to that degree. "Under the skin it was still him" (Hamid, 2022, p. 36) but Anders denies it, "It changes what you are, the people act around you" (Hamid, 2022, p. 36). When men fail to identify themselves as the

new, they fail to portray themselves as what they actually should be, and this is the crucial step to be identified in society.

All men are created equal. They can afford everything that allows them to have quality time and access to the products they once had – as described: "He shut the gym down at noon for the first time and headed straight for his dad's house without calling home first" (Hamid, 2022, p. 83). Prior to economic instability, there was normality, no worker exploitation under capitalism, nothing was amiss, people lived in contact with one another. It is only the deprived who can look into the woes of others and understand them for they are deprived of all these things. After becoming black, Oona's mother knows of the agony of Anders. This thought is also discerned in Anders when he talks about the cleaning guy at the gym. When deprived, they learn to live with it and they have a new life. Though it smelled of sweat (Hamid, 2022, p. 24), everything leaves traces, even after moving on. Thus these make the capitalists aware of the needs of the lower class.

The limits imposed by capitalist society are represented by the movement of Anders between his computer, refrigerator, bed and sofa, confining the worker within the boundaries of alienation. Even with knowledge of the right and wrong, Hamids uncovers an absence of courage and loyalty among workers who are alienated for the injustice. They do something against themselves. Workers find themselves caught up in work thoughts: "and he felt imprisoned, doubly, triply imprisoned, in his skin, in his house, in his town" (Hamid, 2022, p. 73). They are unable to protect what they once possessed before capitalism dispossessed them.

4.5 Mitigating Alienation: Resistance and Human Connection

4.5.1 Solitary and Emotional Bond

Workers need to observe people in power like Anders' Father and Oona herself who are flexible and kind; they need to build strong relationships with them if they want to advocate for workers' rights, mitigating alienation as mentioned: "He drove to his father's house without calling, without thinking, like a child fleeing a nightmare" (Hamid, 2022, p. 71). Love conquers distance, it gives confidence and it reduces alienation. One person can be a powerful agent of resistance among workers. The novel calls on the capitalists to consider themselves as workers and experience the anguish of self-denial. The oppressed have grown used to their own oppression, and are lulled to sleep by the notion that nobody understands. But Anders agrees, he will never be white (rich) again.

Alienation leads to acceptance, as perceived when "Oona had met a stranger who, growing familiar, whom Oona greeted with a steady gaze, and who gazed steadily back, until both smiled..." (Hamid, 2022, p. 82). Oona's thought "but now it seemed that there might be a way out" (Hamid 2022, p. 83) illustrates the need for extra effort to overcome alienation. For the collective prosperity, people should sacrifice for the rights of the proletariat. There needs to be a single, dedicated and merit-based leadership to eradicate alienation and achieve the goals with smoothness. These groups can put pressure on the capitalists, thereby minimizing oppression. Furthermore, the lack of duty among police officers, as shown, facilitates crime to flourish, and when someone calls 911, the dispatchers respond but their voice is gone, echoing like a ghost (Hamid, 2022, p. 121). Under capitalism, the rich and powerful do not protect the worker, as they are occupied with making profit. Proper enforcement of law prevents evil, but in the novel, police fail to quash alienation due to being in line with whites.

Capitalism forces and invites people to abandon the comfort of their peaceful town and its gentle environment, to enter the overcrowded city, where there are actual arbitrary relationships in which men and women exchange their lives with emptiness, such as in the city where Oona "began an interrupted, or abandoned life" (Hamid, 2022, p. 20).

4.5.2 Memory, Trauma, and Revolutionary Empathy

It is very necessary for a proletariat to stick to his base and be strong to face the world bravely; this is a point which is well illustrated by the author: "upon that tree that careened skywards haphazardly, off-balance but rooted and thick at its base. He should not forget about his past to be original, which is always inside man. The transition from one identity to the new isn't instantaneous as turning a light on or off but

more like the change in awareness when you realize you are now a new person. At times they use their past experiences to embrace the new. It helps to make the new events relate to those that remained his favourites. Memories and the attitudes of the industrialist class and days before a downfall in the economy remain in the thoughts.

The study hints the concept that there would be a more friendly environment, when positive attitudes are demonstrated from both sides. All man has to do is to give his mind the understanding that even economic fall and alienation isn't a thing that can't be treated. When people lose their identity, chaos reigns in the society. If the proletariat becomes anonymous, he is disappointed or hurt. The black retaliators illustrate the need for class consciousness, for asserting identity for the proletariat before it can determine its position in the society and its stride of how much magnitude it will take to affect the society. The one who has lost his identity, has never ever been able to regain it—unless he is shaped in the new form; he is always looking for the old one instead of moving forward in the new one. They must be aware of their class, otherwise they'll know whether they are being played or not. It is because that if the worker is sincere it makes the industrialist think of his evil attitude toward the proletariat. However, if they are to live happily, the only way for the proletariat to survive in society is to give its best.

A very important point the novel uncovers is that the bourgeoisie needs to be lenient with the proletariat because it is the archetype related to men that when they become sad, they weep, and weeping lowers grief, which is greatly described by the author—that a man can only express himself to release what he hides inside in front of those who provide him space. The unity is strength, and that's the symbolic meaning of the death of the only white man in society. This has been proven in *The Last White Man*—that the product will be available to the proletariat if the bourgeoisie show leniency toward the proletariat. If the bond between two men is out of humanity, the bourgeoisie may stand for the working class' security, even stand against the capitalists, due to the bond of love that exists between them. A man cannot live in a jungle, they have to live in a society and all people have to be in contact with each other because they are dependent on each other: Industrialists are not able to make all of their products themselves, as seen in the scenario in the town after the riots—boring and monotonous. They must have someone who works for them and then the proletariat rely on the upper class for wages.

The relationship between black Anders and white Oona and the relationship between Anders and his white father highlight that one must be responsible in order to be able to live in the face of cruelty, and that a certain security must exist for them, because it gives them the space to play freely and to oppose with some political activation. Capitalist alienation as a reciprocal recognition. In *The Last White Man*, Oona's mother is happy when she thinks highly of Anders, thus proving that happiness can be found when all people are equally considered. There are a number of products that every man needs, and he is certain that they are purchased using resources—resources which are in the hands of capitalists. The one who is once deprived of that then, whatever their identity, if not molded in that, they always remain in search of the old days rather than being on the way to proceed in a new form.

This can be alleviated by empathy, the collective of which can change individual suffering into revolutionary class consciousness. People with similar minds, know others' feelings. They desire to be together. There are those who have experienced something first hand who can understand others' experience. The other might also have the moment to have their catharsis, like someone who didn't cry because Oona cried, and Anders didn't. "Oona cried and I didn't" might be the moment of the other to cry, too, for some reason. There's something in all of them that unites them, like in the novel, Anders, Oona, and Oona's mother were a family. Her mother Oona, who had adapted herself to the new, even changed into the new, was responsible to pass on everything she wished she has in the new generation. Her third generation, the daughter of Anders and Oona, was born with her identity, did not have to deal with circumstances and said the word "stop" indirectly to her grandmother. The people who are from the working class fathom the pain of alienation. That's why they're skirting the issue of alienating others.

Oona's mother thought her grandchildren might be born with white color, but it is clear that a man cannot enjoy completely until he has developed the sense of acceptance and realizing their ability to undertake something with what he has become.

5. Conclusion

The alienation of the proletariat brings about a different kind of mental illness in them, the most pernicious of which is depression. The working class is in depression, the product is affected, in history there are many examples of the destruction that has come as the result of either carelessness or forgetfulness on the part of the working class; work is also the product of this class of mind. It's proven by the destruction of Rana Plaza in Bangladesh, there are many such instances. A man cannot understand another's feelings until he comes to his place, which is the same technique used by Hamid to warn the bourgeoisie and call the proletariat to have the benefit of society in view—which would be softness toward the proletariat for the bourgeoisie and being class-conscious and actualization of themselves for the proletariat.

The study explores those areas and segments of the working class that are nowadays in every proletariat's personality and are even discussed in society, but these discussions and discourses are not targeted toward the people who are meant to be targeted directly. Alienation has now become so common that even people while being in the same room are alienated from one another. Immigrants spend their entire lives outside of their country of birth, but they are never able to become citizens of that nation, and even if they do become citizens, they are never able to become completely entangled in that culture. They're alienated there, and even when they get back to their own country, they're not able to adjust there. Such tragedies are seen in human life due to alienation. A factory worker retires producing the same good, but earns so little that he is unable to purchase the good if he desires it, and needs it. He doesn't know the overall number of machines that was used to make the product. When he is about to see his friends, he is short of time and gets rid of his plans. Forced labor with conditions under which he doesn't want to work because he is sick, and thus alienated from himself and his human potential.

The modern industrial system is akin to running the State. It has to be produced by the working class, and it has to be produced in different ways by different people: it has to be produced by those who are in the process of production in some way, whether by producing the product in raw form, the product in a finished form, or by packing it. At last, they themselves are not aware about the state of their produced goods as after production of batch, it is taken to some other location like Warehouse. The operator of those products does not know the people who worked hard to produce them, but instead, he/she knows it by the capitalist's or the company owner's logo. The study reminds men of the need to create an emotionally healthy and balanced environment for their families and loved ones, so that they do not fall into depression and anxiety, particularly if they are retired. However, in a capitalist society, the bourgeoisie seem to have forgotten the fact that, when a person is dislocated, he is not only physically dislocated but also psychologically.

The study shows that the people living under the capitalist system are treated inhumanly, and that is welcomed and regarded as the only way of exercising power in the capitalist system; hence the white rioters who started the riots were not arrested. The industrial class should not forget that the working class requires products for which they work days and nights, and for which they have sold their services, it is the products that they need. The second form of alienation is more pertinent in the study since both Anders and all the blacks including the Gym cleaner were socio-economically tortured and alienated from the people of society. But if they are separated from whites, they are unable to communicate with them. There are numerous differences between them in how they live, and how they treat various issues. The major cause of this is psychological, as shown in the study—that communication is the process of production, and if the proletariat remain distant and hesitant from the process to have something in return, i.e., good relations with whites, they cannot have it.

The basic step towards class consciousness, or sometimes class consciousness is developed towards self-actualization, as well as being one of the main steps to reach at least the threshold level of personality, is

suggested in *The Last White Man*. The study indicates that the people who retaliated against the bourgeoisie were those who actualized and realized themselves and that the protagonist and his surroundings were the ones that became aware of class consciousness and became aware of themselves, and were able to go on with life in the new normal ways. The proletariat can have their own ideas that may be beneficial and better than the bourgeoisie. It is found in the study that when not given proletariat rights properly, they can never be independent of the oppressors. But they can have their rights by showing their importance in society with their actions to mitigate alienation with a sense of unity.

The analysis brings us to the fact that the only reason behind Marxist alienation is the hatred between two extreme segments of society which is ignited and fueled by the bourgeoisie. The study encourages moving in the middle to realize oneself with the understanding of each other so that each is able to stand for themselves in their class. So nothing can be done separately – man is a compound of emotions and man is to live in society. He would be isolated, and would suffer from various hormonal imbalances. Oppositions in life are indispensable as there is no light without dark, but the responsibility of man is to keep it positive by developing interaction with working class. In other case, the bourgeoisie may encounter other consequences in terms of their image in the market. From the analysis it can also be concluded that the whole society suffers as a result of the nonchalant attitude of the industrial class. The bourgeoisie and the proletariat is still here, and remain here. There's no denying it. However, prior to the hustle and bustle of today's life, people were also engaged in the small businesses and there were challenges back then. However, the people were in contact, and the more one knows about one another, the more one knows about humans and ultimately oneself, so there were less obstacles in the development of relationships. Nowadays it's not easy to survive, once it was and people are more and more patients of psychological disorders. The working class is now prepared and fighting, but still cannot obtain even what it produces and cannot even act according to itself in luxury surroundings, without any worries.

After having felt the difference among the people, the proletariat should make connections with them out of love and all people are not the same and man can change himself by action and make them understand their sufferings and help them in several ways like formulation of policies advantageous to working class, like regulating long working hours or reducing the prices of the products and opening fair price shops etc. It's also the call to the bourgeoisie to stay in their limits, and not to push the other group that far, so they may cause any trouble. To know how to act and behave towards the proletariat is also pertinent to the bourgeoisie for their entire life is not to be played without reason. As the world is moving towards the virtual world, it is essential to be in the race as per the demands of the time. But people in power must comprehend the fact that adaptation takes time, and they must use the supremacy of the man to confront their inner emotions, struggle with themselves when the capitalists tease them. The mere cause of mental dissatisfaction and oppression by the opposite side is enough to explain why there have been so many riots in history. Finally, it is proposed that some knowledge should be gained between the two groups as not all individuals in both groups are opposed to one another. The workers should also be as soft as a piece of sugar when meeting with some industrialists and urge them to do good for the working class, as shown in the novel when the two groups met, understanding grew up in the town and thus the people started celebrating their life with independence and the normalcy came in the town after the riot. Unity is strength. The sense of compassion is the key to living free and happily.

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