

Chapter 1

Introduction: Hari Kunzru and His Writing

Hari Kunzru's writing explores the controversial legacies of colonialism and the impact of today's globalized world on the formation of individual identities. He has had short stories published in various magazines. His first novel, *The Impressionist* (2002), won the 2002 Betty Trask Prize and the 2003 Somerset Maugham award. It was also shortlisted for several awards, including the 2002 Whitbread First Novel Award. The novel shows the absurdity of world based on radical classifications and challenges the institutions of the British Empire exposing their oppressive and cruel foundations. The novel explicitly recalls the epic tales of the British Empire. It is also the novel which speaks about the impossibility of separating literature from politics.

His second novel, *Transmission* (2004), shifts his focus from the British Empire to our contemporary world which is dominated by technology. It shows how the present world is dominated by technology.

In 2005 he published *Noise*, a short story collection, and his third novel, *My Revolutions*, in 2007. In 2003, Hari Kunzru was named by Granta magazine as one of twenty 'Best of Young British Novelists'. His *My Revolutions* is the story of a modern capitalistic society of London. It explores the complex social structure from the analysis of the main characters Chris Carver, Miranda Martin, Anna Addison and their revolutionary background and representations. The protagonist like Chris Carver is the member of various activist groups; they make an effort to steal food from grocery stores and give it a way for free. August 14 is the name of their group and Chris Carver involves as an individual, radical- revolutionary and energetic being. The group targets to destroy the symbols, building and many other capitalistic

institutions and their culture by aiming to bring change and transformation in their social structure which is governed by capitalistic norms and values. This project aims to analyze the characters living and relationships because they resist to the main stream of capitalistic culture in a fiction but very realistically capitalism is almost the same everywhere at the age of globalization.

Furthermore, it makes an attempt to analyze how Kunzru opposes and dismantles the norms, values, rules and regulations of bourgeoisie culture of the British society during 1960s and 70s. It projects to study the condition, nature of capitalism, effects and its transition through the lens of critical and creative perspective to dismantle the dehumanizing forces of capitalism. It is presented through a powerful character line Chris Carver.

My Revolutions continues to explore the author's concern on identity and changing relationship between the mainstream and the counterculture starting from the 60s and 70s up to the 1990s. His writings challenge the economic and cultural globalization, calling attention to its most problematic aspects such as the decline of civil and democratic rights. He writes about the marginalized group of society. His focus is in the negative impacts of globalization and capitalism. In his writings, he gives place to the characters that suffer from the state mechanism, capitalism and imperialism.

Culture and Counterculture

The word 'culture' is derived from the Latin word 'cultura', a noun which refers to the process connected to growing crops i.e. cultivation. Culture is natural phenomenon of a social structure that is determined by the way of people's living in a society, their knowledge, experiences, attitudes, relations and ways of life. It becomes a tool to the people to intercept their life and guide

their actions in the society. Thus, culture, social structure and social relations came to refer the same phenomena and interrelated among themselves. There is no single history, religion, society and geography. Literature as the reflection of society varies according to the varying culture.

In the late 18th century, there emerged the idea of culture as “a whole way of life” of a social group of whole society. Regarding culture, British cultural Marxist Raymond Williams gives three types of definitions assuming culture as one of the most complicated words in English language. According to him, the three definitions are: first, culture can be used to refer to a general process of intellectual, spiritual, and aesthetic development. The second use of the word ‘culture’ might be to suggest a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group. Williams suggests that culture can be used to refer to the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity (1-2). Culture is the way of living which is changeable according to the change of time. It is the norms and values of the society.

The word ‘counterculture’ denotes the culture that opposes the prevailing culture. It regards the way of expression of ideas very radical that makes people in power and institution. It compels to listen to those voice and vision of even a small group. It foregrounds the language of the street rather than the so-called standard language.

Counterculture refers to a group that is able to provide an intellectual justification an account of their radical and unconventional position. It speaks against the strict standard norms of morality and speaks for the sexual behavior including the extreme sexual conduct. It articulates the issues of drug use and sexual experience to take them into public area and set them in motion. It is an

antiestablishment and anti-traditional literary movement that speaks against cultural conformity rooted in capitalist culture.

A countercultural action or expression communicates disagreement, opposition, disobedience or rebellion. It rejects or challenges mainstream culture or particular elements of it. It is the act of protesting against a particular situation or issue. It is also rebelling against the accepted or acceptable way of doing things. The struggle for liberation when someone is oppressed or marginalized is another feature of counterculture. It is also the way to represent one when someone is misrepresented or simply not represented. The act of creating own culture when someone is dissatisfied with the culture that is made for him.

In the 20th century, countercultural points of view were commonly expressed as action. The countercultural pamphlets, flyers, posters, newsletters and independent newspapers or magazines are therefore the remains of a larger active expression. Often they were originally meant to serve immediate, sometimes urgent, purposes: to promote action, gather support or inspire change.

Some of the features of counterculture are civil disobedience, demonstration, disruption, underground press, liberation, total assault on culture drug addiction, anti-war movement, etc.

Review of Literature

This tragicomic novel tries to subvert the notions of capitalistic ideology. It takes place in London and the representation of modern Capitalism because London is run by the state authority and is in the control of the then politicians. Through the main characters in *My Revolutions* are opposing the mainstream culture of capitalism; they are vitally important as they illustrate the contradictory representation of complex social structure.

Will Blythe elaborates upon class hierarchy and complex lifestyles of capitalist society in his article "Politics Issue, Underground Man" as he states:

Kunzru gives an amazingly convincing account of a period he never witnessed. And by treating the millenarian aspirations of his characters with respect. "He reveals the yearning behind the dreadful agitprop, the abiding message inside the Molotov cocktail bottle. His revolution from then on becomes a series of painful turns on the karmic wheel: poverty, heroin addiction, anonymity." (280)

Through Carver, Kunzuru depicts the pathetic situation of a revolutionary character. At that time, state believes in random and inhumane use of punishment, including imprisonment, banishment to stop the voice and demand of proletariats for their equal autonomous independent representation and practicalities.

Different critics have analyzed Kunzru's *My Revolutions* in their own perspectives drawing various themes. In this regard, literary critics Traci J. McNamara writes in his new essay "Contemporary Literature",

His revolutionary background is decades behind him, and his placid lifestyle would seem to belie its existence. But as the young Chris Carver, he was a member of various activist groups, one that focused its efforts on stealing food from grocery stores and then giving it away for free, and others that blew up buildings and conspired with foreign terrorist organizations. The justification for Chris Carver to participate in such activity was always simple. In the case of the food stealing and redistribution ploy, Chris reasoned: "Principle number one: if we wanted to call ourselves revolutionaries, we had to be prepared to break the law." And: "Principle number two: it was our food already."

Stealing was justifiable to Chris Carver because society's power structure had been perverted, and he was a mission to set things right.

(2)

The representation of Chris Carver in *My Revolutions* is the fight of an individual against the entire system based on discrimination of the power structure in the society. This novel is trying to raise the issue of marginalized, downtrodden, poor, helpless and powerless people. It also encourages this people to fight against the exploitation. Chris Carver and his group express the need for changes in the economic and social system of his time.

Capitalist society through materials and means made the individuals and society dependent. Capitalistic system is based on making profit by their production, motive of capital where the working class people in suffer. In the state of affair, proletariats struggle to raise their voice against the capitalists by aiming to make space for themselves and the transformation of societies, too. Characters like Chris Carver who challenges the systems, which is subjected to harsh punishment, crime, brutality, injustice, corruption, domination and many other forms of social drawbacks.

Another critic Tim Adams writes in his article "Many Unhappy Returns for a Teenage Terrorist" argues,

Hari Kunzru's third novel is a slowly unwinding story of assumed identity. Frame's real name is Chris Carver. He was well known as a student radical at the LSE in the late 1960s, arrested and imprisoned for violent protest against the Vietnam War in Grosvenor Square, living in a series of squats around west London, plotting revolution and free love. Miranda knows none of this. The closest she comes to the Sixties is in the fragrance of the range of relatively essential oils she

sells for a living. What begins as student pranks against the state eventually develops into something much darker, when Carver carries out the 1971 bombing of the Post Office Tower, a 'real' act for which no one has ever claimed responsibility. (27)

The representation of identity is another striking theme whereas assumed identity is the victim of social structure. Here, identity changes according to the situation because Chris Carver hides his identity in the eyes of society and he act beyond the law even the past is hidden. Social structure of 1960s cannot permit the violence made by a group in the name of revolution. Chris carver is the victim of the social structure made by the capitalist culture. During the early 60s, and the anti-Vietnam war campaign was in its height.

The depiction of 1960s is another major aspect of the novel. Chris Carver is a radical youth of 1960s. He is the narrator of the story. He narrates his story about his activeness in many activist group. August14 is the name of a group where he represents as he by changing or hiding his identity as Mike Frame. He is a University student who involves in various activist groups, they make bombing in many places in 1960s London. He is a part of their group that said things had to change. In 1960s, counterculture is in height through Mike Frame's activities the writer vividly depicts the sixties culture in London. Opposing the authority is one of the culture and trends of the then youths.

With the publication of Kunzru's novel *My Revolutions*, different critics have analyzed it from multiple perspectives. Another critic Sam Sacks in his essay "Writing and Nothingness" claims,

There is a genuine pathos in Chris' effort to explain his life to himself. Of the hectic, idealistic early days, he recalls, you could make

something out, dimly through the blizzard of opinion that seemed to surround even the simplest question of right and wrong: change, the sense that everything was in play, all verities suspended. We were getting telegrams from the CGT union in Barcelona, from Bertrand Russell. We were a sign of something, the canaries in the capitalist coal mine, the Vanguard. Class has now been absorbed into the democratically broad fascination with individual identity. What is to be poor, middle class, and extravagantly wealthy? These all are now all equally viable subjects for exploration, equal dint of their categorical existence. In the all inclusive ethos of a globalizing age, each component contributing to the planets diversity perforce merits serious consideration. (4)

During the 1960s and 70s, revolutionaries were not treated commonly by keeping them in isolation, often beaten by police and kept in prison. The treatment was painful, which made the revolutionaries ill and incapable of resuming their day to day life. The era of 1960s and 70s was a dominant phase of internal chaos in London and it was reflected in literature of the time. However, Kunzru, besides depicting the reality of that periods, provides the light entertainment, fascination, infatuation, liveliness, existence of modern World which also serves to examine the role and growing rapidity of capitalism and its effects upon situation and surrounding of common people. Definitely it provides several truths to show the revolution against authorities, culture, and the ethics of capitalism by hoping to establish the state of equality- equity, justice and liberalities for the sake of humanity.

My statement is different than the above criticism because none of these critics discuss about the issue of ‘counterculture’ which is the most dominant theme of the

novel. These critics have commented either on the representational issue or on the conflict of form which the novel contains. But representation of Chris Carver as opposing to socio-cultural values and norms, destroying industries and distributing food in free of cost, and owning nothing but their freedom are the shocking elements towards the normal society. He depicts counterculture as a part of the then society. Kunzru takes the side of Chris Carver and gives them his voice to raise a question against the oppressive nature of society and its cultural practice because his desire to bring about changes in the social scenario of that time. Thus, counterculture is the most important issue of the novel *My Revolutions*. The characters break the values of the capitalist society and establish their own culture based on differences, diversities and heterogeneities. The culture which they practise due to its differential base provides the bases for terming it counterculture.

Chapter 2

Theory: The Culture and Counterculture

Defining the Concept

Mathew Arnold one of the pioneers in the field of cultural studies, in *Culture and Anarchy*, saw culture as the best that has been known and thought in the world. In the same time, E.B. Taylor, the supposed father of modern anthropology, defined the term in an ethnographic way. According to him, “culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capability and habits acquired by a man as a member of society” (1). Thus, culture is an ideal for Mathew Arnold but for E.B. Tylor it is social convention. But Edward Said, a notable postcolonial writer and critic, analyses culture in terms of ‘power’. He argues, “culture with its superior position has the power to authorize, to dominate, to legitimize, denote, indirect and validate: in short that is the power of culture to an agent of and perhaps the mainstream agency of powerful differentiation, with in its domain and beyond it too” (9). Thus, culture for Said is not only positive doctrine of the best that is thought and known but also a differentially negative doctrine of all that is not best; this double faceted view of culture makes one aspect of culture more powerful than other. So it becomes a powerful means of domination and appropriation.

Germinating among the turmoil of 1950s and 1960s, cultural studies is composed of the themes, approaches and methods drawn from Marxism, new historicism, feminism, gender studies, anthropology, racial studies and ethnicity, popular cultural studies and colonial studies, and field is related to social and cultural force that either create community or cause discrimination or division and alienation. It has heterogeneous nature since the province of it is broad as it constitutes a wide

variety of materials, method, ideas and facilities.

Chris Barker, a cultural critic, emphasizes on the cultural studies: “The term ‘cultural studies’ has no referent to which we can point. Rather cultural studies are constituted by the language game of cultural studies” (17). Raymond Williams, a notable Marxist-cultural critic setting himself against the high aesthetic and elite culture focused by Mathew Arnold, develops a new concept. For him culture is “a whole way of life of a social group or whole society” (55). While conceptualizing culture as universally accepted, he further adds it to be “signifying system through which necessarily a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored” (Williams 55).

Thus, Arnoldian distinction between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture almost vanishes in William’s formation. Raymond Williams says that the word ‘culture’ came to serve against the division and fragmentation of industrial society. He further adds that “culture is made into an entity, a positive body of achievements and habits, precisely to express a mode of living superior to that being brought about by the progress of civilization” (245). It seems to be more inclusive and gives space to the minority culture. Culture is different in different societies.

Furthermore, cultural studies mean a refusal to the ‘universals’ of culture at the same time challenges the belief that group ‘particularism’ like femaleness, blackness or Africaness are essential unchanging qualities. Like texts, cultures are seen as indeterminate sites of conflict that cannot be pinned to be a single integrated meaning. It is very difficult to demarcate the boundaries of cultural studies as a coherent, unified academic discipline with explicit substantive topic, ideas and methods which differentiate it from other approaches. A cultural study for Foucault is related to the concept of power.

Thus, cultural study transcends the confines and boundaries of a particular discipline such as literary criticism. Cultural studies have concern with political and social interests. It is the phenomenon which respects the struggle within the same pattern. In its extremity, it denies the individual autonomy whether that is a text or a person.

Counterculture claims the existence of other forms of realities beyond the conventional empiricism. This concept embraces the idea of heroism and focuses that self-created ideas should not be controlled, denied and exploited in the name of morality and tradition; rather they are to be acknowledged, respected and responded. Counterculture attacks formal structure and formal leadership. Hence, it is leaderless because all of its participants constantly innovate and probe their ideas in new territory.

Counterculture is a term used to describe a cultural group whose values and norms of behavior run counter to those of contemporary mainstream society. Although distinct, countercultural under-currents exist in all societies, here the term refers to a more significant, visible phenomenon that reaches critical and persists for a period of time. Especially, here, it refers to the young rebellious writers and their attitude toward British society after the World War II. This tendency of going opposite to the values of the society occurred in British society during the sixties of the twentieth century.

The Beats became the source of inspiration and eventually their way of life and attitudes toward society took the shape of a movement. Counterculture enjoys a theological, cultural, attitudinal or material position that does not conform to the accepted social norms. The idea of counterculture began in Britain as a reaction against the conservative social norms.

Counterculture is one kind of subculture. Both counterculture and subculture are contrasted to mainstream culture. The varying distance between subcultures and institutional power centers does seem to make it possible between subordinated and dominant subcultures. Because of it, subculture may be contrasted with mainstream culture adopted by majority of the people, dominating culture believed by elite group and counterculture practiced by middle class.

Phil Cohen opines that sub culture arises from the working class whereas counterculture is the product of middleclass. He further adds, “I do not think the middleclass proceeds subculture, for subcultures are produced not by a dominant culture, but by a dominated culture” (85). Both cultures are the product of the dominating nature of capitalism towards working class people and middle class people.

Counterculture has close affinity to popular culture. Popular culture is the site of a struggle against the norms and values of the central domain of elite or dominant culture, and the culture of periphery. To this connection Lawrence Grossberg in the article “Teaching the Popular” writes:

Popular culture has been defined formally (as formulized), aesthetically (as opposed to high culture), quantitatively (as mass culture), sociologically (as folk culture) the cultures of these opposed groups or classes held to constitute the sites upon which the imaginative resistance to the socially dominant culture and ideology cluster or develop. (183)

Rock and Roll are closer to the popular culture. The Rock and Roll also produce politics of pleasure and opposes the mainstream culture. Grossberg, again in the same article in this concern expresses: “... rock and roll can produce a ‘politics of pleasure’

that opposes the dominant culture...” (185). Subculture, popular and counterculture have the same aim to break the traditional or parental dominant culture. Countering in the parental culture has its own dreams and aims.

The Culture of Homosexuality, Alcoholism, and Drug Addiction

Practitioners of counterculture celebrate homosexuality, alcoholism and drugs as a revolt against the so called mainstream social and cultural norms and values.

After the World War II this trend appeared as a vital shock to the established social values of the contemporary culture. However, people of different era tried to exercise such activity before the war as well knowingly or unknowingly. Abundance of such subversive activity shocked the bourgeois culture after the war intensely.

The homosexual is a relatively new character on the historical stage. However, homosexual acts appear in every known human culture. Intense attachment of men and men or of women and women is also categorized as homosexuality.

Homosexuality remained inside the curtained before the Second World War. It was publicly rejected but remained as the practice of a minority. This practice ruptures the well-established traditional concept of hetero sex.

Homosexuality includes both gay and lesbian practices in the field of sexuality. Sexuality and literature first became an issue within the feminist movement. In its early stage feminism spoke, on behalf of all women. A common female front against what looked strongly liked a common seemed only natural. Homosexual women also got dissatisfied with dominant mainstream heterosexual women. Mainstream feminists become unsuccessful to question traditional views of same-sex relations. As a result, lesbian feminism turned away from mainstream feminism to pursue its own separate path of homosexuality. To this connection Hans Bertens advocates:

In the course of the 1970s however, various groups within the feminist movement began to express their dissatisfaction with a collective feminism that they increasingly saw as shaped by the interests of the dominant group within the movement: white, middle class, college-educated, and heterosexual women. As a result, the groups that did or could not identify with this mainstream image gradually broke away to formulate their own feminisms. These break away communities included groups of black feminists, chicana feminists, and most important for this chapter, lesbian feminists. (Sexuality, Literature & Culture 218)

Hans Bertens, illustrating the work *History of Sexuality* of Michel Foucault says that all modes of queer theory are indebted to it and his argument that especially, 'deviant', that is non heterosexual, forms of sexuality play a prominent role in the organization of western culture. He further illustrates that the homosexual acts were unknown before 1870s. in every western culture they were known and seen as criminal acts punishable by law. For Foucault, homosexuality and homosexuals were produced new knowledge with regard to sexuality. Bertens further supports the rupture of hetro/homosexuality and states in the same article, "Any deconstruction of homo/heterosexual opposition will directly affect the self-definition and ideological organization of western culture" (234). The definition of western culture has changed along with the change in society.

To show the intense anger against the British bourgeois culture, unemployed youth and lower class people practiced alcoholism and drugs excessively. After the Second World War British unemployed youths took to drugs and heavy drinking seeking the physical and spiritual redemption. They felt powerful in taking drugs and

drinking alcohol. Dream and mystic world becomes the life process through these practices. The common people want to get rid of social restriction through the use of drugs that lessen the psychological and social stresses. Society regards drug addiction and alcoholism as a social evil. For this reason, the values and norms of the mainstream society are matters to change for countercultural practitioners. To this point P. Crowley expresses:

In the long run, society determines what is regarded as drug abuse and, in this respect, the attitudes and values of society are subject to change. In the late 1960s, in certain areas of the world, drug taking was identified with protest against authority, with a search for identity of as a mystical experience.

Alcoholism and drug addiction is often associated with freedom. Due to frustration, anger and social pressure people involve in the socially forbidden activities. Jack Kerouac adopts alcoholism and drug addiction in literature as well. His famous novel *On the Road* is a good example of this tendency in which characters seek freedom through the activities of taking drugs and alcohol. British people especially those in the authority declared them criminal and sent to jails. Such activities try to vulgarize the established social order or culture.

Though, culture which runs opposite to the mainstream culture are counterculture, their methods and approaches of practicing it vary. Those who subtly oppose the mainstream culture and its tenants are soft counterculturalist. But those groups which adopt radical experimentation in rejecting the dominant social values can be said to be radical counterculturalists.

Chapter 3

Kunzru's *My Revolutions* as a Critique of the Mainstream Society

The Context: Criticism of Capitalism

Hari Kunzru's novel *My Revolutions* is a voice of rebellion against the corrupt materialist world of British capitalist culture. It depicts the real face of the capitalist society, in which its citizens are controlled by means of power and personal feelings of and desires of an individual are suppressed by means of state institutions. Kunzru wrote this novel to represent when many young British youths questioned Britain's materialism and cultural norms guided by the capitalist notion.

The story has the relation to the 1960s and the revolution of laborer for their freedom and the realities of that time. So the novel reveals the lives of people in Capitalistic society; they struggle against the rule of state mechanism, difficulties of their existence and the realization of socialization process. The novel critiques the essential nature of Capitalism in a clear manner to show the conflict between the needs of people and the requirements of profit as displayed in everything from the raising rift, gap between bourgeoisie and proletariat to the increasing revolution. Kunzru prefers writing revolutionary kind of literature, *My Revolutions*, *The Impressionist*, *Transmission* and *Gods without Men* are placed within the context of socio-political climate of London; he followed *My Revolutions* with *Transmission* while responding the issues of globalization, and the action or process of transformation in the lives of people. It has the social significance that with this craft Kunzru powerfully presents the various aspect of revolution to show the lives of wage less laborer by critiquing Capitalistic approach through their countercultural activities.

It is a piece of social contemporary novel; so it comments on the system of society where the group of minorities is deprivation from their right and the

exploitation of capitalistic culture. It draws the lively picture of revolution, class consciousness, power struggle, identity crisis, destruction, romance, murder- mystery, and difficulties of existence, nature and functions of Capitalism and the sacrifice of revolutionaries to change by aiming to establish new system. However, the differentiation of issues and analysis of discussions and style in character lives considerably include the contemporary social realities.

Chris Carver's Revolt

In the novel Michael Frame narrates his living with Miranda in a house which belongs to Miranda rather than him. Michael Frame is the given name by himself but his real name is Chris Carver. He is living in the name of Michael Frame in order to live a safe life. He explains his present living in this lines like:

This is our house, or rather Miranda's house, the house she allowed me to share and always wanted me to love as she did. Above our bed, hanging from the oak beam, is a dream catcher. I tug at it, breaking the string. I've wanted to do that for so long. Such an absurd, out of place thing. Our house is filled with these objects-tribal, spiritual, hand-crafted little knick knacks that are supposed to edge us nearer to Miranda's wish-fulfillment future of agrarian harmony. There are corn dollies and old glass bottles and prints of medicinal herbs with quotations from Culpeper printed underneath in calligraphic lettering. 'Only from lucre of money they cheat you, and tell you it is a kind of tear, or some such like thing, that drops from poppies when they weep.' (3)

As a university student, he was involved in a group named August-14. The group was involved in various activities one of their protests was against the role of America in

Vietnam War. Here, Chris Carver further explains:

So Trafalgar Square was part of new life, a project of self-invention. I'd come on the march with my friends, who were all members of something called the Vietnam Action Group, one of a dozen different councils and committees that existed at my university, all dedicated with varying degrees of clarity to the proposition that ending America's war in Vietnam was our special duty. My own anger about the war rendered everything else disgusting. I was hopeful- this was how young I was- that I might just be the one, that it might be given to me, Chris Carver, to smash up the old world and build something new. (30-31)

After Second World War, many countries of world were freed from European and American colonialism. Independence movement was in its height. After Second World War America become the most powerful country in the world. America's involvement in Vietnam War was a kind of domination upon a poor country by a rich country. It is a kind of power exercise in a weak country by a powerful country. At that time many students like Chris Carver were raising the voice against the war. They wanted to create a kind of pressure to the state mechanism against the war. Chris Carver and his friends were united and revolted against the war. As the presence and domination in Vietnam by America was the intervention in other internal affairs. Chris Carver and his friends wanted to end the suffocating atmosphere of dominant American culture. In this war many common people of Vietnam were mercilessly killed by Americans. Chris Carver and his friend wanted to end the war through protest and wanted to build a new world.

As regard to Kunzru's *My Revolutions*, the novelist studies the counterculture

and various revolutionary groups of the 1960s-70s in Britain and its effects on working class people, minorities, and youths who undergo severe hardships and suffering under capitalist system of the then society. It criticizes the capitalistic institution for their shortsighted policies mean to maximize profit even while forcing farmers and workers into destitution and even starvation. Here is a conviction of capitalistic exploitation to the laborer and why they turn to revolt against Chris Carver explains:

We issued self-important statements: 'WE HAVE CHALLENGED AND CONTINUE TO CHANGE TO CHALLENGE THE WAY IN WHICH LSE SERVES THE NEED OF THE RULING CLASS IN PROVODING THE RIGHT MANPOWER, STRONGER IDEOLOGY AND RESEARCH THAT MAKES EXPLOITATION AND OPPRESSION OF THE WORKING CLASSES MORE EFFICIENT.' (73)

It stresses to establish the rule of working class people there is need of challenge. The ruling class has suppressed to the working class. It also gives the sense of raising consciousness and challenge to the ruling class for change by their continuous efforts of revolution. The novel expresses a social system in the raising despairs which leads to depression, and the requirement of revolution and transformation to establish non exploitative society.

Kunzru's *My Revolutions* is a voice of rebellion against the corrupt materialistic world of England and it pictures the real nature of capitalist society. The characters in the novel are opposing the norms and values of society. They want to end the discrimination between the capitalist and labor. For this, there is need of revolution. The characters are fighters against the capitalist system. Here Carver wants to make conscious to his comrades about this corruption to overthrow unjust

practices. He says in the lines like:

As we were committed, to the project of forming a disciplined vanguard, to being one of an exemplary group of people who could credibly go out to the workers, raise consciousness through agitation and propaganda and grow the movement to the point where overthrow of the capitalist state would become feasible. (148)

It stresses for the end of hierarchy and the establishment of classless society. The characters are searching for equality, justice and freedom. To get rid of capitalism, the unity of working class people and raising consciousness is necessary. For their transformation the consciousness has vital significance to overthrow capitalistic system likely to establish social order and harmony.

On the other hand, Carver and his comrade succeed to move against the culture of capitalism because their commodities are necessarily used. Through different kinds of the production and economic system of a society is governed and also controlled by capitalists. He and his comrade steal food from the stores and distribute it on behalf of poor but in the capitalistic market there are different options or multiple productions to choose customer but ironically there is no option of buying because of the lack of capital. Here the very concept of consuming goods is rejected, refused or resisted by the character and they are willing to steal instead of buying.

Protest against the State Authority

Chris Carver assumes the role of a revolutionary throughout the novel. He revolts against the conformist society by resisting and refusing the rules of society. The activities of revolutionaries are controlled by the state authority to stop their voice. He knows that when they rise up their revolution should be continuous. The revolutionaries are dissatisfied youth and they protest against the authority by

throwing the missile towards the embassy and the police arrest them. He is accused and charged six weeks imprisonment. While the police arrest him the police describe his own brevity but Chris oppose his brevity and says:

A dog-faced policeman described how he'd bravely tackled me as I was running towards the embassy to throw a missile. I was, he said, looking savage and shouting words it would embarrass him to repeat before the court. When he attempted to effect an arrest, I had punched him in the face. I shouted out that he was a liar. The judge, a lantern-jawed man with a drinker's swollen nose, sentenced me to six weeks imprisonment. (45)

In the cultured and civilized society there is court for justice, policeman for security and law which needs proof of any event to take decision. But the Counterculturalists do not believe on such kind of systematic process and have their own ways of sorting out the matters. Fight is always discouraged in a culture for maintaining social harmony. But social harmony itself is a matter of perspective whatever seems to be harmonious for one group may be the reverse for another group. Here, Carver punched the policeman; it is the rejection, avoidance or overthrow of authority.

Carver opposes the state authority as he says the policeman a dog-faced in a disrespect manner. Moreover, his punch to the policeman is clearly shows us his disapproval to the state authority with the revolutionary spirit. But the case leads to the court for conviction and the judge declare him to six weeks imprisonment because the policeman and judge are the agents of state mechanism. And undoubtedly, they work for bourgeoisie instead of the welfare of minorities or the revolutionaries. In the novel, Kunzru portrays the individual's struggle of existence against the conformist capitalist culture by presenting the most revolutionary characters like that

of Chris Carver, Miranda, Anna Addison, Miles Bridgeman and Sam and so on. Chris Carver is a protagonist in the novel because he has his underground terroristic background to succeed their revolution of liberation. It shows individual's struggle against the materialistic aspect of capitalism. Chris Carver and his friends have caught by the police and kept in the prison because of bombing. In the prison, they also violate the norms of the authority like in this line Chris express:

There are moments from those eight days of occupation that stand out, images that over time have become unmoored from their context, floating free in my memory. Rolling a joint and passing it round with three friends as we sat by an open upstairs window, listening to a police inspector barking orders through a megaphone. Two students from my year busking folk songs and rattling a tin. I had sex with a girl called Tricia in the toilets of the administrative building. (72-73)

Here, Chris Carver and his friends were captured by the administration and kept in a prison. Chris Carver and his friends felt contempt and absolute hatred towards the authoritative people because they were the cause of pain, suffering, torture and agony suffered by the marginalized section of the society. But they challenged the authority and prison system as well. Taking drugs in prison is an illegal act by doing this they are breaking rule. Likewise, having sex in toilet is another example of violating the norms of the society. Sex for capitalist is private issue and often regarded as a matter of prestige. Here, Carver rejects the traditional notion and expresses his hatred towards capitalist culture.

It suggests that at a deep level Chris wants to protest, resist against capitalistic culture. Because capitalism implies freedom but not the compulsion but necessarily people use their production of commodities to the very existence. Different

commodities have been produced by capitalists then they easily can commodify social cultural practices. Religion, Academia, Rights and Rituals, familiar gossip and many other thinking practices have been essentially determined by the capitalism but it makes money especially by cheating, distasteful and dishonorable way. The people who raise the voice of rebellion against the system were treated as strangers in the capitalist culture. Here Michael Frame criticizes the Miranda's desire and trends to follow the consumer fashion.

Protest against the Sexual Culture

The novel raises the issue of sexuality to counter the mainstream ethics of society. Because Anna is involved in sexual activities to make money which is just to support their revolution. And Carver narrates this situation in the lines like: Once or at least that I know about, she accepted money for sex from a man at the club. She told me she did it to see what it was like to become a commodity. Self-denial would be the wrong term for what she was doing (175). Anna tries to rebel against the capitalist by asserting her individuality and sexuality, as society confines sex to the limited people; it's immoral and illegal too. Society takes sex as prohibited from the social enigmas; however, they practice it with the grandeur performance to resist the norms and values of materialistic culture as the forms of protest and revolution.

Kunzru also draws the pathetic living condition of working class people in his novel. In a capitalistic system, the workers are always dominated, exploited physically and psychologically with the low range of wages, the workers have no chance of escaping from it. There is no chance to rebel against that system and there is only working value but not the humanitarian ethics in capitalism. Carver narrates the situation of an Irish couple who are the exemplary models in capitalist social structure in the lines like: "The wife, who had a persistent cough, attended to a baby while we

drank tea with the husband, trying to get him to stop apologizing for not offering us a biscuit. He was making a little money from building work, but the rent was high and at the end of the month, there wasn't always enough" (114). The workers in the capitalist society are compelled to work in insufficient wage.

Protest against the Polished Language and Media

In the course of rebellious activities, Carver also criticizes the trend of capitalistic system in a very angered. Usually they use mesmeric language usually to attract people to gain high reputation and status. They want to keep themselves in a sound reputation because it is an essential nature of Capitalistic system. Moreover, in reality this is the domination through the language. Carver rejects this dominating strategy of such system in the lines like: "Fuck you, I thought. Fuck you and your civilized tone. Fuck up your unearned air of authority, your smug talk about advantages; as if the world is some kind of game you're refereeing" (74). The polished language of capitalist is rejected by Carver.

Here, Carver realizes that the civilized tone of ruling class strategy to exploit or dominate. The ruling class by their language wants to show excessive pride in oneself by convincing that they are the leader of the society in every aspect such as language, religion, education, law, philosophy, political programs and mass media and so on. Carver encourages his comrades to protest, refuse and resist against their language, too.

It stresses that in capitalistic social structure the artist, critics, film star and other scholar person also works as an agent of capitalism. They have been used by the capitalist for the advertisement as well as their mass production for economic profit. In capitalistic system, the talented performers, film stars, critics, singer, dancer and other lack their autonomous independence. They are the educated mind who needs to

work under the leadership of rich, showy illiterate master because in capitalism money can perform ruling power. Furthermore, capitalism forcefully and hegemonically develops the slogan of 'stranger' unless people use their production. Because of the sense of being strange, the people are subservient to the clumsy mechanism of capitalist market economy. In the grand party, Carver criticizes to the people who are supposed to be the agent of capitalist and he narrates this situation in the lines like:

In front of me was the BBC woman. I batted a bowl out of her hand, spraying rice salad over the people around her. I screamed her, 'pig! Fucking pig!' Anna went up to another woman, spilling wine on to her blouse. I pushed the actor who was dancing with Ursula. For the next few minutes we shouldered through the party performing small acts of transgression, breaking things, screaming obscenities and feeling people up, until the place was in a state of uproar. People shouted at us. One man slapped Anna's face, the macho movie hero dealing with the hysteric. (126)

Chris and his friends are violating the rules of the society by misbehaving towards the journalist. Mass media are supposed as the agents of capitalist. There is a close relationship between capitalist and mass media. They are complementary to each other because the advertisements of capitalist product are broadcasted through mass media. Mass media also survive through the money given by the capitalist.

The Use of Alcohol and Drugs

In the course of dismantling elite culture drugs and alcoholism can also play a vital role. Drug taking is considered culturally and socially immoral in any society. Chris in this novel makes a self-centered established culture of capitalistic system that

condemned the drug culture. For Chris, the use of drugs empowers individuals to forget the pains and difficulties, and accelerates their imaginative power. He remarks that “without heroin there was nothing to distract me from my self-disgust” (269). He believes that drugs help him to forget his pain and suffering. He seems to favor drugs taking in terms of forget the pain and suffering.

Drug addicts of beat generation thought that they were innocents. Alcoholism and drug addiction were also natural phenomenon to their eyes. They saw it natural instead of unnatural. In the novel, Chris expresses, “I learned to feed myself and buy drugs in at least four languages, forgetting each one as I passed the guards into the next pointlessly demarcated zone...we did nothing but inject. We rarely went outside. He kept telling me that we were in paradise” (264-265). For him, drug was a kind of things which provides him a great pleasure.

These above lines established the use of drugs as an example of a deviant behavior. Since the society did not care for them or marginalized people, they used drugs in order to provide an outlet to their repressed energies; whether it was normal or abnormal, social or antisocial was something that they simply did not care. These innocent drug addicts were in a quest for spiritual illumination. In above lines protagonist is described as using drugs as spiritual, intellectual and erotic stimulants. This shows the perfect sense of revolt against pure and sacred elite culture. Chris seeks the liberation through the use of drugs.

Protest against the Socioeconomic System

In a society there is prevalence of ‘haves’ and ‘haves not’. There is a social distinction between the members of society on the basis of their property. The then contemporary society was dominated by money, reason, power, industry to suppress the emotion and sensations of human beings. The expression, emotions, feeling and

experience of youth and common people have been disturbed by some circumstances.

Chris expresses the dissatisfaction in the line like:

Khaled had ordered us to kill someone. His name was Gertler, a Jewish businessman who owned a supermarket chain. Gertler's crime was Zionism. He donated large sums to right-wing political groups. The British government had given him a knighthood. The plan was to ambush him and shoot him dead. (260)

In the novel it shows the rising tension between the capitalist and other common people. The dissatisfied youth were against the mainstream culture. Utter disgust towards convention and social norms is the main characteristic of the counterculturalists. This group due to their disgust has shown to these things that are given priority by the dominant cultural practitioners. What are valuable to the dominant social class is rejected by the counterculturalists.

Carver and his comrades are continuously attacking and bombing to the capitalist institution. They are performing them against the strategy of ruling class and then bombing one after another institution. Moreover, Carver says: "We bombed the head office of a construction firm with a contract to build new prisons. We bombed a bank that financed the regime in South Africa. We are everywhere, we wrote we are in your offices your factories we are the man and women next to you on the tube the bus the train" (187). The agents of capitalism are rejected by the revolutionaries.

Hence, it stresses that the bank and head office is an intuitions of capitalism which aims to make profit. Bank is such a tool of the capitalist that enslaves the working class people and promotes profit in currency by providing low wages. Likewise, Carver and his comrades bombed the head office of a construction firm because the construction firm has contracted to build new prisons. Because in Prison

where the people's freedom and desire are restricted and oppressed to stop the rage against revolution of working class people who firmly stands against the ruling class ideologies and their norms and values. They also bomb in factories because it is almost conducted by machine. With the rise of mechanical efficiency and the labor can replace by automatic machineries. At present the goods that are produced by men are replaced by machines.

Every society is governed by a particular socioeconomic system which has a direct impact upon the lives of the people. Kunzru's *My Revolutions* observes the socioeconomic system of United Kingdom at the time of countercultural movement is in its height. The novel clearly pictures the contemporary capitalistic mode of production in the society of the then London and it exhibits the harsh impacts of capitalism in the lives of working class people, who are forced to suffer starvation, destitution, lack of proper shelter, clothing and so on. It not only dismantles the illusion of capitalism but also invokes the sense of revolution to its readers. Kunzru develops the themes and ideas in the novel as the critique of capitalism by showing its effect, impact, emergence, formation and transition by the means of revolutionary visions.

Chris Carver as Counterculturalist

The plot of the novel contains the detail of troubles and difficulties faced by Chris Carver during the 1960s and 70s, when the state run prisons in the United Kingdom and prisons were subjected to harsh physical and mental torture to the revolutionaries. The revolutionary members brought in the prison for treatment and treated as animal for sacrifice. The prison is the place where an individual's desires are restricted and oppressed. He is in prison because he is supposed as criminal who involves in an anti-government activity. The conformist society does not give

permission to organize revolution against the state which is led by the agent of capitalism. Chris Carver and his comrades try to release themselves from the discrimination of capitalistic society. The practice for formation of harmonious communal society strongly relates Kunzru's advocacy in favor of excluded, deprived, poor, downtrodden, working class people and also with the condemnation towards landowners, banks, mass media, etc. as the agents of capitalism.

Mike Frame is really Chris Carver a very young revolutionary. August 14 is a name of a group where Mike Frame is involving as Chris Carver. He is a university student at London School of Economics who involves in various activists groups they make bombing in many places in 1960s London. He is a part of that group and they pronounce things had to change. First they targeted to destroy symbols and building. His group steals food from grocery stores for providing the poor and helpless people then giving it a way for free. It concedes the revolution and struggle of the proletariat against the capitalist bourgeoisies.

Chris Carver finally reaches at Wat Tham Nok (Thailand) he becomes the victim of the same destiny which he faced in Britain because capitalism function everywhere in a same way. In the novel there is a journey from materialistic pursuit to spiritualism. He is wandering Britain to Thailand in search of peace. It has the significance that he wants to avoid the material life and for many days lives with monk. He also reads the philosophy of Buddha at that time when he changes his identity to live freely. He has got a passport on the name of Michael Frame. His hopes and dreams of secure life be scattered with justifiable convection. In Thailand, he sleeps many nights on the street. He says, "for two or three nights I slept on the street in Pat Pong, curled up in an alleyway behind a go-go bar. 'kee nok', the touts hissed at me aiming punches and kicks to keep me away from their customers" (265). In Pat

pong outside the Go-Go bar, he was kicked and punches to keep him away from the bar because he always resists, refuse and criticize the notions of capitalism.

To sum up, Kunzru's *My Revolutions* succeeds to show the atmosphere of the radical protest, sacrifices and contradictions of the 60s and 70s. It explores the basic ideals, the contradictions and the sacrifices to capitalistic system for the reformation, transformation and the liberation of the laborers. It remains the best example of domestic operation to suppress and oppress the voices of revolution by the state brutalities. Carver is a part of group that says things had to change and targeted the symbol, tower and buildings. Here the destruction of the symbol and buildings is signifying that the beginning to the fall of feudal but their revolution is incomplete unless they are liberated from such brutalities, inhumanities. In this regard, *My Revolutions* is a novel which expresses the need for a change in an economic and social system to upgrade proletariats with their reformation and transformations; which creatively and imperatively explore the anti-capitalistic pursuance until the condition of poor attempted to be improved and transformed.

The decade of 1960s as in the novel, also has a symbolic meaning in reality of Britain and its people as it is the time when many young British people are undergrounded and rallying in support of human rights, equity and equality. It is the era of change- a change from the unequal and unethical rule of capitalism because it is believe in the use of power towards a more liberal and free Britain based on the concepts of freedom and equity for the transformation and alternative of lifestyle. Lastly it is a work of art that sounds Kunzru's belief in the collective and unified society; which can be establish through the action of working class by overthrowing the ruling class and their capitalistic formations and it is responsible for the plight of such people and therefore the novel marks its position as the critique of capitalism for

the social reformation and transformation. Showing the condition of labor Carver narrates in the lines like: “Richest one thousand have more than poorest two billion. A billion live and die on a dollar a day” (188). It stresses that the massive exploitation in capitalistic system because of its irrationality for the longing of capital.

All the characters, including protagonist in *My Revolutions*, reject the values of mainstream culture. Thus, in the analysis made above, it becomes evident that the characters deliberately and openly participate in what contemporary society regards immoral activities; drug taking, stealing, and sexual activities. Such activities demonstrate their objection to oppressive materialistic and capitalistic society of England. Thus, Kunzru's novel reflects the countercultural movement of the then society.

Chapter 4

Conclusion: Critiquing the Evils of Capitalism

After a thorough analysis of Kunzru's *My Revolutions*, the researcher has come to the conclusion that the novel depicts the evils of capitalism, through countercultural activities, in the most fascinating and effective manner. The neglected people who were excluded from the mainstream society were often involving themselves in subversive activities. They were the intellectuals of the time but were tortured by the cruel and indifferent capitalist society.

The characters in the novel are social rebels who lead their life in an 'unconventional' way in order to counter the existing cultural standards of the society. The contemporary society was dominated by capitalist which had neglected the needs and aspirations of the marginalized groups like August-14. Chris and his friends aim to change the society by opposing the mainstream culture but they were restricted by the society and authority. These are the people who turned their back on the mainstream society and its hypocritical values.

The plot of the novel contains the details of troubles and difficulties faced by Chris Carver during 1960s and 1970s. The novel is a serious commentary, revolutionary in its passionate tone and is a denunciation of modern day materialism and its destructive effects on individual soul. The practice for the formation of harmonious communal society strongly relates its advocacy in favor of excluded, deprived, poor, downtrodden, working class people and also with the condemnation towards landowners, mass media, banks, etc. as the agents of capitalism.

The life-style that is adopted by the characters is out of code and conduct of the 'standard' society. The atmosphere in which people were living was that of Heroin, and Opium and their pervasive effect upon the society. Kunzru vehemently

attacks the British capitalist society which considers drug using people as anti-social, irrational, and non-conformist. However, the characters in the novel take drugs, heroin, opium, etc. to forget the life of uneasiness and cultural oppression. The drug culture enables them to acquire conscious power to rebel against the social restrictions and limitations of the contemporary system that dehumanizes nature. These suppressed people feel enjoyment when they indulge themselves in such narcotic substances.

The character violates the mainstream culture by adopting various kinds of activities. They involve in criminal activities like murder, stealing, destroying buildings and so on. Chris and his friend steal food from grocery stores and distribute to the poor and homeless. They destroyed various building, industry, bank, etc. The administration proves them as antisocial and keeps them in the prison. Inside prison they revolt against the bourgeois authority. The protagonist Chris involves himself in sexual activities in the toilet of the prison. He tries to expose anger against the prison authority by involving in sexual activities. Such kinds of activities reflect their protest against so-called moral, ethical values of British society.

All the characters, including protagonist in *My Revolutions*, are engaged in the activities that oppose the values of the mainstream capitalist British culture. Thus, in the analysis made above, it becomes evident that the characters deliberately and openly participate in what the contemporary society regards immoral activities; drug taking, stealing and sexual activities. Such activities demonstrate their objection to oppressive materialistic and capitalist British society. To this connection, Kunzru's *My Revolutions* depicts the counterculture of 1960s and 1970s.

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