

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Commodification of Human Subjectivity in Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag*

A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in English.

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August 2013

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Letter of Recommendation

Ravi Lal Mijar has completed his thesis, entitled “Commodification of Human Subjectivity in Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag*”, under my supervision. He carried out his research from May 2013 to August 2013. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis, entitled “Commodification of Human Subjectivity in Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag*”, has been submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Ravi Lal Mijar, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Acknowledgements

This thesis has been highly profited from the valuable suggestions of teachers and friends who proposed changes and additions, enhancing the usefulness of my research work. I welcome this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude to Saroj Sharma Ghimire under whose guidance this thesis has been prepared.

I am also indebted to the Central Department of English for providing me an opportunity to conduct this research work. I am grateful to the Head, Prof. Amma Raj Joshi for his helpful suggestions.

Mention must also be made about the help received from my parents to all my friends of the English Department before and during my research work.

Finally, I would like to thank Keshab Adhikari for his meticulous and timely help in typing this thesis.

Ravi Lal Mijar

August 2013

Abstract

This thesis, "Commodification of Human Subjectivity in Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag*" focuses on stories of Ha Jin to show the issue of commodification of human values. The researcher shades light upon the miserable existence of proletariates on the one hand and the extreme form of domination by the bourgeois on the other. Ha Jin commences with the ingredients of capitalist society in order to prove his writing as a evidence of brutal acts of bourgeois and its effect upon the society. The research explores the stories such as "The Richest Man" which commodifies Li Wan materializing everything, even the norms of Mao; "Emperor" shows the commodification of labour value; "New Arrival" reduces Ning, the woman's values as commodity; "Fortune" promotes the utilitarianism depicting the misery of Tang Hu and "In Broad Daylight" shows the obligatory situation of women by providing the picture of a prostitute serving her master all the day and night. Thus, the researcher argues that *Under the Red Flag* exposes the horrors and evils of capitalism which has commodified everything and takes Ha Jin's critique of such commodification as critique of capitalism on humanitarian ground.

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I. Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag* and World of Capitalism

This research entitled “commodification of human subjectivity” probes in to the problem of the poor, suffering and marginalized people. The poor peasants suffer not because of their destiny but because of the bourgeois reduction of human values to the level of object. The human subjectivity ceases to exist. Then, just for surviving, the poor are ready to tolerate any sort of torture and exploitation. Generally, in the feudalistic and capitalistic system, the poor and marginalized people are bitterly exploited where they are obliged to work with in low wages. The working class people are not treated as the human being but just as the commodity and their desires and aspirations are crossed down. The human values and sensibilities are not realized and merely taken as the commodity. Consequently, a hierarchy is created in the name of social, economical, political and religious basis. In the same way, at the time of extreme capitalization, a feeling of grouping and self interest becomes primary factor and human values and feelings are forgotten. The poor and innocent people are troubled by the capitalists and rich men. The human beings are treated badly that they are taken as the commodity and even forced to death. The same case as mentioned above is applicable in the context of *Under the Red Flag*, a novel by the towering figure—Ha Jin.

This project focuses on Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag*, a true story of workers in China. In these well acclaimed stories, Ha Jin vividly depicts the harsh and bitter realities of marginalized, oppressed, tortured and dominated Chinese people. How

those discriminated people were tortured by so called powerful and dictator regime have been dramatized in the stories. As Marxist concerns for such people Ha Jin becomes the advocate of proletarians in his stories. Powerless have been deprived of history by powerful. These twelve stories contain the undercurrent of cynicism in the face of authority. This thesis aims at representing the marginalized people as proletarians. Jin's *Under the Red Flag* is a book of short stories set in China during the Cultural Revolution. A unifying theme appears to concern how individuals negotiate between two worlds, the old and the new, and how these worlds come into conflict. Set in the small town, Dismount Fort or in surrounding rural villages, the stories are full of compelling action and wonderfully drawn characters: peasants, members of street gangs, village bureaucrats, military officials, and the occasional professional. "The Richest Man" preserves the protagonist Li Wan materializing everything, even the norms of Mao. "Emperor" is the presentation of commodification of labour value. In "New Arrival" Jia Cheng reduces the female value of Ning as commodity. "Fortune" promotes the utilitarianism by depicting the miserable condition of Tang Hu. "The Richest Man", "New Arrival", "Fortune" and "Emperor" in *Under the Red Flag* are the representatives of the Marxist voice of Ha Jin to find which thee research uses the modality of Karl Marx's notion of how the proletarians have to undergo the series of subjugation at the hands of bourgeoisie class.

Under the Red Flag comprises twelve stories which take place during China's Cultural Revolution. The abiding tensions of peasant life prove themselves again and again to be deeper when the females are taken as the objects as in "New Arrival". "Fortune" unearths the dialectics between high and low to present how the proletarians are commodified. "Emperor" is the replica of the subjugation upon the

labours by the authority. The depiction of the marginalized people of the Chinese society in the text of Ha Jin finds its correspondence with the dimensions of Marxism. "The Richest Man" chronicles the history of a selfish man who is habituated to survive exploiting others. The problem in his short stories is the subjugation of the common class by the so-called upper strata of the society.

Under the Red Flag, a collection of stories, has received several criticisms since the time of publication. Different critics have criticized this collection of stories from the different perspective. *Under the Red Flag*, Jin's second collection, is perhaps even more brutal in the truth it reveals about China and human nature. There are some mixed opinions on Ha Jin's literary style. Peter Bricklebank is disappointed with *Under the Red Flag* for its lack of sophistication and depth he claims:

Unfortunately, these sorts of political exigencies seem awfully familiar, especially when used in the service of well-worn themes. And Ha Jin's narrative style isn't much of a help. As plain and stiffly serviceable as a Mao uniform, it lacks expressive elegance and leaves the reader wishing for greater psychological richness for colors other than red. (14)

Thus, the critic analyses how Ha Jin's stories lack the expressive nature that is necessary for the readers. Ha Jin, however, excels in the psychology of the characters rather being pragmatic in nature.

Similarly, Wenixin Li focusing on the richness of plain style and giving importance to the traditional cultural society argues:

While Ha Jin's narrative style appears plain and unassuming, his work is 'always captivating and rewarding. Working in the tradition

of the classic Chinese story. The Chinese culture gets mirrored as the text copies the contemporaries. In same manner, Li adds, 'He strongly prefers a well-spun yarn to elaborate stylistic experimentation. (23)

Besides these personal criticisms of the critics Official Website of the Flannery O'Connor Award highlights diasporic condition of the writer giving him the highest honor for portraying the loss and moral deterioration of the Chinese people and society. In the introduction to *Under the Red Flag*, Ha Jin was raised in China and emigrated to United State after the Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989, writes about loss and moral deterioration with keen sense of a survivor.

In the same way, another prominent critic Judges Citation highlights presentation of the then Communist China in the text of Ha Jin. The very citation pins the point that "The seemingly contradiction between roots in and removal from the third world native land, to the western audience, confers on Ha Jin an aura of credibility in giving a better guide of Communist China- "a world and a people we desperately need to know " (6). In this way, above mentioned critics have given multiple views to the stories, but issue of Marxism has been yet abandoned, which is addressed by the research.

The characters from the upper class society in the selected stories of Ha Jin tend to see labour in material values, reduces the value of women to production value, promotes utilitarianism which can be explained as the reflection of commodification of human subjectivity. Karl Marx's notion of the reification of human subjectivity due to the capitalistic domination has been used to prove the relevance of Marxism basically drawing on the characters in Ha Jin's short stories.

The word 'commodification' refers to 'reification' or objectification which is derived from Hegelian-Marxism but, this term was itself used by George Lukacs in his work *History and Class Consciousness*. The root word of reification is 'reify' which means to convert mentally into a thing. Thomas Manter defines reification as "the turning of something into a thing or object" (363). Thus the reification means changing of something according to the will of its users. Commodification occurs when an abstract concept describing a relationship or context is treated as a concrete thing, or if something is treated as if it were a separate object, or it does not truly exist in separation.

According to Marxist concept in capitalist society, workers are used and treated as the capitalists want. Workers can be purchased and sold, according to capitalist's desires. Again Manter asserts, "Reification occurs when something that depends on human decision and action" (363). So, capitalists reify human beings state of Mind or practice when something is treated as an object or a marketable commodity (Manter 363). In this context of social reality, so called high class people from bourgeoisie culture wants nothing but to make profit even by marketing human beings and their relationships capitalists change human relations, emotions and feelings into commodity or things without giving the real essence to those abstracts. In capitalist society, labor class people are always treated as commodities and thus reified. They are reified because of hegemony of capitalists. Hegemony was a concept previously used by the Marxist but developed by Gramsci into an acute analysis to explain why the "inevitable" socialist revolution predicted by orthodox Marxism. In capitalism, Gramsci, maintained control not just through violence and political and economic coercion, but also ideologically, through a hegemonic culture in which the values of the bourgeoisie became the 'common sense' values of all. Thus a consensus

culture developed in which people in the working class identified their own good with the good of the bourgeoisie, and helped to maintain the status quo rather than revolting. Gramsci further emphasizes about hegemony in this way:

Permeation throughout society of an system of values, attitudes, beliefs and morality that has the effect of supporting the status quo in power relations, hegemony, in this sense might be defined as an 'organizing principle' that is diffused by the process of socialization into every area of daily life. (qtd . in Boggs 39)

This extract makes clear that hegemony power means consent to be governed and working class always given consent with capitalist and they are always dominated by capitalist.

Commodification mainly is caused by modernization, globalization and industrialization. As a commodity becomes universally dominant, the fate of the worker becomes the fate of the society as a whole. Commodification is pregnantly used by Karl Marx and developed mostly by George Lukacs. In the similarly way, other Philosophers from Frankfurt school like Horkheimer Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Raymond Williams did. Marx has given emphasis to the labor's work which should be valued as their own right and others too associated the capitalistic society which degraded human relationship with money. So, commodification means changing of something according to the will of its users and devalorizing human values as mere commodity. All the time, industries produce more goods. Labor class works in the industries to production in the market with high price, capitalists use human beings as commodity.

Commodification is that idea which involves separating out something from the original context, in which it lacks some or all of its original connections at seem to

have power or attributes which in truth it does not have. Thus, commodification involves a distortion of consciousness. Actually, commodification is occurred when an abstract concept describing a relationship or context is treated as a concrete 'thing' or if separate object when this is inappropriate because it is not an object or because it does not truly exist in separation. Marx argues commodification is an inherent and necessary characteristic of economic value such as if manifests itself in market trade, that is the inversion in thought between object and subject or between means and ends, reflects a real practice where attributes which exist only by virtue of social relationship because people are treated as if they are the inherent natural characteristics of things, or vice versa, attributes of human subjects.

Marxism disproves the bourgeois economic, political and social mechanism. Actually, Marxism starts a moment of proletariats against bourgeois by raising voice in favor of proletariats. Proletariats are only workers who build the foundation of production, each and every time they consume their energy with machine for better production. They do not possess material things means of production. When proletariats lose their power of patience and tolerance, they raise their voice against bourgeois who control a lot of wealth accumulated from the means of production without their toil. Commodification thus, comes under this process when bourgeois use the working class people to make their profit. Reification then involves a distortion of consciousness. Karl Marx asserts:

Reification is an inherent and necessary characteristic of economic value such as it manifests itself in the market trade i.e. the inversion in thought between means and ends, reflects a real practice where attributes (properties, characteristics, features, powers) which exist only by virtue of a social relationship between people are treated as if

they are the inherent, natural characteristic of things, or vice versa, attributes of inanimate things are treated as if they are attributes of human subjects. (411)

This implies that objects are transformed into subjects and subjects into objects, with the result that subjects are rendered passive and determined, while objects are rendered as the active and determining factor. Marx has taken positively in the economic sector to be commodified those subjects in to objects but he also seems that the animate attributes should not always treated as in animate attributes. He expresses that reification starts with the primitive direct barter system where he focused that it was the exchange of use value. This is changed by the exchanging goods and other human labor with money value. So, Marx has put inside the concept of reification in his writing ‘capital’.

Commodities, which exist as use-values, must first of all assume a form which appear to one another nominally as exchange values, as definite of materialized universal labor time. The first necessary move in this process is, as we have seen, that the commodities set apart a specific commodity, say, gold, which becomes the direct reification of universal labor-time of universal equivalent. (3)

Although, the idea of reification is implicit already in an early works of Marx (e.g. in the economic and philosophical manuscript), an explicit analysis and use of ‘reification’ in his later writings and reaches its peak in the Grundrisse and capital. In his writing’ there no definition of reification but basic elements for a theory are nevertheless given in pregnant statements of his writings.

Marx summarizes briefly that reification is characteristics not only for the commodity, but of all the basic categories of capital production (money, capital, profit

etc). He insists that reification exists to a certain extent in all social forms in so far as they reach the level of commodity production and money circulation; but that in the capitalist mode of production and in capital which is dominating category. Thus in the developed form of capitalism reification reaches its peak:

In capital- profit, or still better capital interest, land-ground rent, labor wages, this economic trinity represented as the connection between the component parts of value and wealth in general and its sources, we have the complete mystification of the capitalist mode of production, the reification of social relations and immediate coalescence of the material production relations with their historical and social determination. It is an enchanted, perverted, topsy-turvy world, in which Monsieur le Capital and Madame la Terre do their ghost – walking as social characters and the same time directly as things.(48)

Human relation, that's why, stand only in use - value. Where there is value, capitalists society used them and exchanges them with materials. The material enchanted world rolled over the human relations. All the human relations connected with profit- based relations not with heartily relations.

For Lukacs, commodification becomes an even important concept .It is seen as being the root of many problems of contemporary society .Capitalism defines everything in commodity terms because everything has an 'exchange value' an amount of money for which it can be bought or sold. This rates one 'thing'- money as more important than any other thing.

Throughout his career, Lukacs addressed the problem of the relation of form to content, art to politics. He was eventually to be regarded as the principal Marxist aesthician of his time. His aesthetics was thoroughly Marxist; he viewed works of

art as product of the social and economic substances within which they are created and as expression of their creator's ideology. Here, his ideas are Marxist and what he sees in literature is a social reality. He condemned the art for art's sake stance. In this way; he sees the role of art in society and develops a principle which tells that the social reality should be reflected in any work of art.

Lukacs was one of the fiercest Marxist critics of modernism and an unfaltering upholder of their realist position. Disagreeing with the experimental aesthetics of high modernism, he argued that its obscure and fragmentary literary forms were symptomatic of the alienation characteristics of life under capitalism. He was reenergizing realist literature in the modernist experimentation but also played a leading role in the democratic rebirth of the nations.

This process turns social relations into relations with objects, or commodity fetishism, a symptom of the false consciousness that pervades bourgeois society and creates alienation, that split between existence and understanding that separates people from their essential natures. It also obscures and fragments the totality of existence which only dialectical analysis can capture. To Lukacs, both modern society and Marxism guilty of reification, the latter because the doctrine of dialectical Marxism assumed that history is governed by objective, unchanging laws, not people. The dialectic, who argued, works through praxis—the unit of theory and practice—to 'demystify' the working class consciousness that has been dazed by capitalism.

For Lukacs, social reality is a distinct background out of which literature arises or into which it blends. He argues that literature should not merely copy of the social and economic circumstances but also show the conflict of the social classes. In

this way, he rejects the contemporary principle art for art's sake as bourgeoisie ideology or as the products of capitalist society.

George Lukacs is one of the best critics who practice 'the reflection model'. The reflection model sees literature as reflecting a reality outside it. As a matter of fact, it was quite safe and rather conventional to treat literary works as something referring to a reality outside them. Not only for Lukacs, but, before the structuralist revolution, this thinking had a firm hold over Marxists for a long time as Marx himself maintained against Hegel that external reality is prior to ideas in the mind, and that the material world is reflected in the mind of man translated into forms of thought.

Lukacs did not see literature as reflecting reality as a mirror does. But, since literature is knowledge of reality, knowledge is not a matter of making one-to-one correspondences between things in the world outside and ideas in the head. He insists on a shape of dialectical all the parts are in movement and contradiction. To be reflected in literature, reality has to pass through the creative form giving work of a writer. Then, if the work is correctly formed the form of the work reflects the form of the external work. In regard to his use of the term 'form', Lukacs is rather traditional (in contrast with the Russian formalists notion of form as the sum total of the devices used in a text).

In this way, Lukacs leaned more towards the Hegelian side of the Marxist thinking by treating literary works as reflections of an unfolding system. The crux of his idea is that a realist work must reveal the underlying pattern of contradictions in a society or a social order. His view is Marxist basically in its insistence on the material and historical nature of society.

Lukacs focuses on the objectivity of art which seems more scientific.

According to his principal, any work of art should provide the picture of reality that means a work of art should present the social reality. Here, social realist consists of the class struggles too. Different social classes are reflected in the literary text. In this way, if we see *Under the Red Flag*, we can take it as a picture of contemporary social reality. In Lukacs' view, work of art not only provides sacrificial reality but also reveals the underlying pattern of contradiction in society or social order. And, this contradiction is shown by the reduction of human values to commodities.

Theodore Adorno, however emphasizes that "the interior monologue far from cutting the literary work off from reality, can expose the way reality is"(189). But , for Adorno, this reality is not photographic as far Lukacs and at the same time the duty of an author isn't saving to the objective pre-existing in the society Adorno clearly states that "art is the negative knowledge of the actual world"(189).However, according to David Forgucs, Adorno by negative knowledge "doesn't mean non-knowledge. It means knowledge which can undermine and negate a falls of reified condition" (189).

One of the Adorno's themes was civilization's tendency to self destruction. In their widely influential book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1947), Adorno and Horkheimer located this impulse in the concept of reason itself, which, the enlightenment and modern scientific though had transformed into irrational force that had come to dominate not only nature but humanity itself. Adorno concluded that rationalism offers little hope for human emancipation, which might come instead from art and the prospects it offers for preserving individual autonomy and happiness, the enlightenment use of reason is used by culture industry for their benefits. Their view about cultural industry is:

The cultural industry perpetually cheats its consumers of what it perpetually promises. The promissory note which, with its plot and staging, it draws on pleasure is endlessly prolonged, the promise which is actually all the spectacle of, is illusory, call it actually conforms is that the real point will never be reached that to be dinner must be satisfied with menu. (213)

Their view is that, art culture and beauty is commodity under capitalism. They defend art against mass culture. Tradition of mass production ought to be distinguished via art and literature for them.

The culture industry instills a sense resignation orientating the consumers to “the everyday drudgery ... which the whole culture industry promises may be compared to the daughter’s abduction in the cartoon: the father is holding the ladder in the dark. The paradise offered by the culture industry is the same old drudgery, ‘culture industry’ ” (140). Horkheimer and Adorno lament that “criticism and respect disappear in the culture industry; the former becomes a mechanical expertise, the ladder is succeeded by a shallow cult of leading personality” (157). Such a state of submission rules out critical distancing, which makes them acknowledge that “the triumph of advertising in the culture industry is that consumers feel compelled to buy and use its production even though they see through them”(162). The prominent writer Adorno and his friend conceptualize mass media as the part of society and focuses on how socio-economic imperatives have made them function as instruments of social control and thus serve the interest of social domination.

Similarly, another prominent critic and theorist, Terry Eagleton in his famous book *Marxism and Literary Criticism* observes:

Books are not just structure of meaning. They are also commodities product by producers and sold on the market at a profit. Drama is not just a collection of literary text; it is capitalist business which employs certain man (authors, directors, and actors, stage hands) to produce a commodity to consume by an audience at a profit. (55)

It, hence, becomes crystal clear that, in Eagleton's view, capitalist commodity art and literature they use art and literature saleable object in the market. They don't understand the good aura of real art. Writers are hired by the publishing house to produce commodities which will sell.

Eagleton's opinion towards modernist as well as post modernist development in art and culture is that it makes boundary over the all political socio-economic relevance. Eagleton observes that "the depthless, styleless, dehistoricized, detected surfaces of post modernist culture are not meant to signify an alienation, for the very concept of alienation must secretly posit a dream of authority which post modernist find quite unintelligible"(386). He argues that such attempts to disengage art and culture from socio-economic determinate lead them to unprivileged humble position. Art becomes nothing but the production of any commodity. Marxist literary theorists, in this way, straight forwardly acknowledge the literature relevance to the socio-economic situation of a society despite lots of diversity among themselves.

Marxist philosophy believes that man is a social being that determines his consciousness which also determines the nature of his literary works. Orthodox Marxist theory of art insists that primary function of art is to serve the working class representing their falling and heightening the class struggle. The common idea of all Marxist critics is that the literature can be best understood with in a large framework of social reality.

If we go through the text surfacely, it is not easier to get the sense of commodification i.e., selling and buying which generally takes place in the capitalistic system. When it is observed minutely, we get the newness in the meaning of commodification that how the human values and feelings are commodified. So, commodification does not only take place in the capitalist system. Human values and sensibilities are commodified at any cost or in various ways and conditions. Thus, this text tries to reflect the new trend in the sense of commodification.

Pierre Macherey, a French Marxist theoretician, has developed a theory of literary creation which remarkably differs from other Marxist theories. *The Theory of Literary Production* (1966) is Macherey's most substantial theoretical work which discusses about production of art and ideology. He stressed the supplementary claim that a literary text not only distance itself from its ideology by its fiction and form, but also exposes the contradictions that are inherent in that ideology by its silences or gaps – that is, by what the text fails to say because its ideology makes it impossible to say it. Such textual absences are symptoms of ideological repressions of the contents in the text's own unconscious. The aim of Marxist criticism, Macherey asserts, is to make these silences speak and so to reveal, behind what an author consciously intended to say, the text's unconscious content that is, its repressed awareness of the flaws, stresses, and incoherence in the very ideology that it incorporates. For Macherey, the author of any text does nothing more than working out with already existed materials such as language, genres, ideology etc. The production of literature, for him is inseparable from social practices. Macherey is of the opinion that creation of literature basically is a linguistic phenomenon.

Louis Althusser, whose views on art and literature are rather different from traditional orthodox Marxist theoreticians, is influenced by the structuralist and post-

structuralist movements that dominated the whole European intellectual atmosphere during 1960s.

He revolutionized Marxist theory, especially the theory of ideology. For all of us who live in a society that is good on top, Althusser shows us how to make sense of the literature and the culture we produce and read in that society. It is only on the basis of this kind of understanding, he argues, that we can contribute to changing it. Luke Ferretter, a critic, says, "As long as the live in a society based on a capitalist economy, in which goods are produced in order to be sold at a profit, we will not be able to understand the literature and culture of that society without thinkers like Althusser" (Ferretter 1).

In "ideology and the state", his most arresting essay, Althusser has developed the theory of reproduction of ideology. According to him the "ideological state apparatuses" which include the church that is religious institutions, the family, the media that is radio, television, press etc, and cultural "ideological state Apparatuses" which includes literature, the arts, sports etc. play very powerful role in reproduction of ideology. In his famous essay entitled *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus*, Althusser remarks Marx' notion of ideology:

an imaginary assemblage, a pure dream, empty and vain, constituted by the Days' residues from the only full and positive reality, that of the concrete history of concrete material individuals materially producing their existence [. . .] represents the imaginary relationship of individual to their real conditions of existence. (Althusser 153)

Further he differentiates between the ideologies that belong to the private and public domain. According to him, the state apparatus contains the government, the administration, the army, the police, the courts, the prison etc. which primarily

function by violence whereas ideological state apparatus function by ideology. He also adds that state apparatus and ideological state apparatus, however, may function both the violence and ideology:

. . . The (repressive) state apparatus functions massively and predominantly by repression (including physical repression, while functioning secondarily by ideology" . . . "the ideological state apparatuses function massively and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondly, by repression, even if ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic."

(Macherey 56)

Ramon Selden, in his account of *Contemporary Literary Theory* considers Althusser under "structuralist Marxism", and recognizes his abiding influence on Marxist literary theory mainly in France and Britain. Selden tries to justify the relation of Althusser's works with structuralism and post-structuralism. According to him, for Althusser, art is not simply a form of ideology. It can be located "somewhere between ideology and scientific knowledge." He does not think that it merely expresses "the ideology of particular class" (62).

Cliff Slaughter in *Marxism, Ideology and Literature* discusses Benjamin's Theory under quite inappropriate title "Against the Stream: Walter Benjamin."

Discussing his concept about art and literature Slaughter states:

Benjamin directed his polemical writings against and those who drew from Marx's progress only the conclusion that writers should 'take the side' of working class in conceiving their subject matter demonstrating some automatic progressiveness of the productive forces which must be Victorians against the production relations . . . To imagine that a

common sense adoption of 'progressive' themes within existing literary forms constitutes a revolutionary line in art and literature was considered by Benjamin to be pure nonsense. (Slaughter 174)

According to him, Benjamin was of the opinion that it was essential to do so but it was not sufficient to appropriate the conquests of the art and literature of the past.

Friedrich Jameson is a versatile Marxist critic well established among the contemporary literary intellectuals. Although Jameson is generally apprehend "as the American exponent of Marxist criticism, his works also display an intellectual powerful grasp of the whole range of structuralist and post-structuralist theory" (Lodge 372), observes David Lodge in *Modern Criticism and Theory*.

In his book, *The Political Unconscious Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*, he views that, narrative is a 'socially symbolic act'. It shows how Marxist readings need not read literature merely as a reflection of its particular context. It is not matter of learning something of the historical context and then reading the text off against that as a form of background.

Jameson reflects the idea that historical subtext is 'extrinsic' to the work: something which he, not the text, bring to bear upon it. As he writes, "A definition we think as paradoxical only because such theoretical strategies have tended to be situated as oppositional to one another. Formal patterns in the work are read as symbolic enactments of the social within the formal" (Jameson 77).

Raymond William's cultural materialism utilizes criticism of literary texts and other cultural forms to promote a general socialist vision. He does not believe in structuralist and post-structuralist theories although he positively responds the late twentieth century developments in art and literature. He does not approve the general

concept that realist novels have seized to exist and literature has made departure from reality. He insists that twentieth century novels still holds to reality.

According to him, there is much similarity between art and ordinary day to day communication. Art, in his view, is active powerful expression of human experience and what is often called creative imagination is the capacity to find and organize new descriptions to experience, and is common to all, therefore, an artists work becomes art only by his extra ordinary skill in transmission of this experience. As William believes in arts affinity to reality, he disproves the idea that any artist's activity is purely creative or an artist creates something entirely new.

The major thrust of research is to find the hidden heart rending realities of proletarians in Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag*. As the poignant pictures of common class get manifested, Ha Jin becomes the spokesperson to the proletarians. He grows up in community where powerless Chinese people have no history as powerful have. He presents proletarians as the important characters but their voices remain in a latent form and are obliged to remain so. Through scrutinization of Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag*, the suppressed voices are revealed. Considering Marxism as the deign perspective to analyze the text, the objective and hypothesis is formulated accordingly.

The first chapter of the research consists of introduction to Ha Jin and social context of *Under the Red Flag* in which it was written. This chapter reveals Ha Jin as an advocator on behalf of proliterates and their contribution to establish bourgeois in power. This chapter also introduces the theoretical modality i.e. Marxism in order to reveal the commodification of human subjectivity, values and extreme exploitation of proliteraes. The second chapter consists of the textual analysis. This chapter, with the support from distinct Marxist critics, proves *Under the Red Flag* as an anthology of

capitalist monopoly over proliferates by acquiring the idea of subjectivity and human values disregarded. The third and the final chapter consists of new insights for the development of Marxist criticism by revealing the objectification of labours, human values and morality. At the end of the thesis, the dominant authors and their works have been cited under the title works cited.

II. Commodification of Human Subjectivity in Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag*

The researcher applies Marxism as a theoretical perspective to shed light upon the rebellious disposition of Ha Jin, the protagonist. The research also makes thorough observation on the issue of commodification of human subjectivity as it is the prominent issue regarding its theme. The entire narrative of *Under the Red Flag* is dominated by the commodification of human values either of males or females. The working class people are presented in such a way that matters much with money than subjectivity and self. The human values of the proliferates are seized in such a way that they are not able to find it out. So, through the voice of Ha Jin, the research explores how the working class proliferates are commodified for the benefit of their masters. For this, "The Richest Man" preserves the protagonist Li Wan materializing everything, even the norms of Mao. "Emperor" is the presentation of commodification of labour value. In "New Arrival" Jia Cheng reduces the female value of Ning as commodity. "Fortune" promotes the utilitarianism by depicting the miserable condition of Tang Hu. "The Richest Man", "In Broad Daylight", "New Arrival" and "Fortune" from Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag* proves the basic logic of the research.

Ha Jin's short story "The Richest Man" materializes the human values. Li Wan, the main character of the story counts everything and everyone on the basis of material prosperity that is how his inner instinct is materialistic. The ill treatment of Li to his family members, prove that nothing is important for him than wealth. His formulation of rules to his wife also extends the virtue that no one is allowed to spend more than he wants. The observation on the following extract provides the initial motif of Li Wan towards his wife, "He made a rule for his wife that she must not put in more than four tiny dried shrimps when she cooked noodles; instead of buying a packet, he always bought four or five cigarettes at a time; he stored a lot of corn husks

at home as toilet paper" (68). Li Wan's expectation is nothing more than his utilitarian concept. For Wan, his wife is important if only she makes use of food according to his rule and choice. She is not allowed to make more than four tiny dried shrimps when she cooks noodles. Here, his wife's subjectivity and will does not work.

According to the Marxist criticism, the proletariat are obliged to follow whatever the rule master creates. So, her will does not count before the bourgeois power. Wan's cunningness also provides a basis for exploring the bourgeois intention since he buys four or five cigarettes at a time but hides a lot of corn husks at home. His unwillingness to share the corn also extends his superior feeling. Regarding the dominating motif of bourgeois, the prominent Marxist critic, Lois Tyson argues, "dominating the consciousness of exploited groups and classes which at the same time justifies and perpetuates their exploitation" for the sole purpose of "promoting the interests of those in power" (Tyson 58). Tyson relates how the utilitarian concept operates bourgeois and creates obligation for the proletariat, a kind of hegemony to dominate their consciousness. His Jin's story "The Richest Man" corresponds with Tyson's "promotion of interest of those in power" as Li Wan presents himself as an utilitarian bourgeois letting his wife do according to his rule and desire and only for his personal benefit in a full-fledged way. He is not treating the human beings as humans but just as an object and the human values and feelings neglected.

The brutal treatment from the bourgeois to the proletariat like Ha Jin results in sacrifice. His suffering due to the crime of following Mao suggests that he does not like to be commodified merely for the sake of bourgeois. The bourgeois rule and treatment becomes clear from the following extract as Hou addresses the crowd, "See, how he used the words?" Hou said to the crowd. "He's blaming Chairman Mao. He starved because he loved Chairman Mao. If he hadn't loved him, he wouldn't have

starved." People remained silent, their faces showing confusion" (74). The revolutionary voice of the Ha Jin is swept away by the sudden blow of Hou's words. The truth-speaker Jin is made mere puppet because of his of poverty. His starving suggests that, money has become the center and if he needs money, he has to leave his argument, he shall not raise voice against the suppressors. Mao, on the other hand stands for the revolutionary instinct inside him which makes him suffer more. While he is guided by reasons, he cannot convert himself into utilitarian. The confusion and silence of the crowd suggests that they are also suffering from the same kind of problem but their heart-pounding voices are suppressed due to the fear of starvation. Thus, commodity becomes the center of everything.

The commodification of human minds and bodies vividly explore the fact that for subsistence the females are obliged to sell their bodies. Their subjectivity, will and reason do not count in front of the bourgeois arrogance. The following quotation explores how the poor women are obliged to sleep and sell their body for the wish-fulfillment of the bourgeois, "How many men has she met then? A hundred? For things to eat and wear, and for money?" (82). In its extreme form of capitalization, the selling and buying of human bodies is not a new phenomenon and it successfully blurs the boundary between a human and an animal. The commercialization of human bodies to the level of commodity reflects the inhuman and crisis of humanity. This form of exploitation according to Marx is shameless, direct, substituted naked and brutal exploitation. Karl Marx points as, "In one word, for exploitation, veiled by religious and political illusions, it has substituted naked, shameless, direct, brutal exploitation" (475). We come to know how the human bodies are in one or another way rejoiced by proliferates. The strategy of bourgeoisie is not to exploit directly rather making a proliferate obliged or trapped. The obligation of the female is they

simply sell their body for money and things to wear and eat. The commodification of human bodies replaces the 'self' and 'subjectivity' of the humans since their value is no more than an animal. The central role of commodity in defining a human body is extreme form of exploitation as well as over-commodification to the level of prick. Universal norms and values of human beings are merely taken as commodity. Actually, in the capitalist and feudalistic system, human beings are treated as the commodity.

The food drought haunts the poor. The extreme form of exploitation and subjugation of the virtue, self and dignity appears in its peak. This is how we can observe the defeat of proletariates' dignity as the boy is obliged to take peanut and butter spat by bourgeois. Nig, here stands for bourgeois rule and exploiter whereas the boy surrenders before Nig and waits until she spits on his waiting tongue. The following quotation makes the fact clear, "In a few seconds she spat out a lump of peanut butter and placed it on the boy's pointed, waiting tongue. He swallowed the peanut butter and raised his eyes to look at Ning" (83). The waiting tongue for the lump of peanut stands for extreme form of poverty whereas Ning's status as she is spitting on the boy's tongue makes the boy forget his dignity and commodify himself. There is no difference between the dustbin and the boy's tongue as Ning's intention was to spit for proving herself superior to the boy. Regarding this, Karl Marx justifies that a man can liberate himself if he has wealth. He asserts, "The real intellectual wealth of the individual depends entirely on the wealth of his real connections. Only then will the separate individuals be liberated from the various national and local barriers" (Marx 163). Here, Marx justifies that a human body cannot liberate itself from the bonds of proletariates until he depends entirely upon his own real intellectual wealth. The national and local barriers as suggested by Marx are simply the situation

of being obliged to respect bourgeois' rule, power and will. The subjugation of proletarians' will, power and intellect for the sake of a bread and cloth takes the extreme form of exploitation by the hands of bourgeois regime and power.

The poor and the women are more commodified whereas the rich and men are not. Male treats women as a commodity, as a thing that can be purchased from the market. Thus, the importance of female is compared to commodity. The poor is considered to be serving the masters, if he makes mistake, then there is no mercy for him. Ha Jin asserts, "Please don't take her away. It's my fault. I haven't disciplined her well. Please give her a chance to be a new person. I promise, she won't do it again" (5). It is the poor who gets victimized by the hand of capitalists. The poor man has to beg in front of the master for mercy. Meng becomes helpless in front of the capitalist bourgeois. The another interesting thing is that poor are obliged to act according to their status. The following remark makes it clear that a poor is obliged to obey the rich. The poor is merely commodified and ignored for not having enough wealth. Ha Jin again asserts: "What's your class status?" a square-faced young woman asked in a sharp voice. "Poor Peasant," Meng said, his small eyes tearful and his cupped ears twitching a little. "Please let her go, sister. Have mercy on us! I'm kneeling down to you if you let her go" (5). Here, we can observe how the justice is provided to general people by the bourgeois who hold power simply because they hold the greater wealth. He begs with the bourgeois representative to let his mother go, but he cannot receive mercy. The bourgeois arrogance commodifies and objectifies the poor because they cannot resist. Taking the benefit of poverty, the bourgeois rule according to their choice as they think that there is no another power to threaten their decision.

The women are also obliged to involve in prostitution in order to make their living possible. We can observe how Meng's wife involves in prostitution merely for sustaining her life. The so called bourgeois also charge her of prostitution as:

"I don't know. He told me he was a big officer."

"Did you take money from him?"

"Yes."

"How much for each time?"

"Twenty yuan."

"How much altogether?" In Broad Daylight "11

"Probably five hundred." (6)

The poor people are in one or another way trapped by the bourgeoisies. Either the poor is victimized for not possessing wealth or if he/she makes an attempt to earn, then it counts as a vile conduct. We see that Meng's wife is not interested in prostitution but she is compelled to do so. It is her obligation to perform such work because her life sustains out of that profession. If she does not earn money, then she has to die. It is the capitalist society that creates a situation in which a poor is obliged to do anything in order to survive. The capitalists who are concerned with the surplus do not hesitate to commodify the poor peasants. The most interesting thing that the researcher notices is Meng's wife punished by the society. The society formulates the rule that prostitution is not good, but the same people who advocate against prostitution go there in order to celebrate the physicality and help to flourish such profession.

Ha Jin explores the commodification of women in capitalist society as, "Take this, you Fox Spirit!" A stout young fellow struck her on the side with a fist like a sledgehammer. The heavy blow silenced her at once. She held her sides with both hands, gasping for breath" (8). Here, we find that a stout young fellow gives fist to the

poor women. The heavy blow suggests that she is silence with its force or power. It also indicates the central position of money; the human values are largely ignored. The physical as well as mental tortures are common in a capitalist society.

In the capitalist society, husband becomes furious with his wife when she refuses to have physical relationship with other men simply for making money. The husband merely wants money and for that, he decides to use his wife as a means to earn money. The woman is obliged to earn money by selling her body. Jin asserts how a husband commodifies his own wife as:

"Do it to her! Teach her a good lesson," her husband yelled. They grabbed her and carried her onto the brick bed. She struggled and even tried to kick and hit them, but like a tied sheep she couldn't move her legs and arms. Daiheng pinched her thigh as Ming was rubbing her breasts. "Not bad," Ming said, "not flabby at all." (26)

The rich people want to buy female bodies so that they can take physical pleasure. The physicality of women is considered as a income source for males. The enforcement suggests that it is obligatory for women to sell their bodies not for their own benefit but for the benefit of males. We can also observe how a woman is exploited sexually. The grabbing, holding and pinching are some of the evidences which suggest the use of force by males in order to play with the female body. The question of dignity, respect and privacy and all other human values are messed up while commodifying the human values.

When the issue of buying or selling comes, bargain takes place most of the time. The capitalist society commodifies human values so as to eke out the cheapest one with bargain. The language that rich use in order commodify the human values are generally harsh and heart touching. The poor are in one or another way obliged to

respect the rich not because it is their wish rather; it is their obligation for they are not worthy of good price. Ha Zin asserts:

Just for all those, humph? Why didn't you come here in the first place?" Liao's cheeks turned red. "Forgive me just this once, all right? Next time I'll come to you first." Leng paused, then added, "But to be fair, I'll pay you better. How about fifteen yuan a mating? You know, five yuan more. You can buy two bottles of sorghum liquor for that money. (32)

The subjectivity of the poor people counts with money. When the money becomes much important than human value, dignity and privacy, we can trace the possible danger of commodification. Here, Leng tries to persuade saying that he pays five yuan more for mating. He even tempts that a poor can buy two bottles of sorghum liquor with that money. If we observe from the humanist point of view, we can trace the most inhuman elements in his voice. The commodification of women goes nearly to the point of prostitution. A woman is likely to be a means of income generation for males. Women's status is lowered to the level of machine for a husband counts money not her suffering, dignity and loyalty.

We can also observe how the dignity, privacy and ritual significance of marriage is commofied by the capitalists. Those who hole money think that they can make different weddings in each week. It gives the idea that a woman is no other than an animal. Their status is lowered to the status of pig as Ha Zin explores, "I arrange weddings for you every week, aren't you grateful? You ought to be. You happy pig, your children are spread everywhere. You should work harder for me, shouldn't you? (34). The physical pleasure becomes centre of all for rich and money for the poor. The capitalist tries to persuade saying that he is arranging weeding every week suggest

that he comes to suck a woman's breast every week for his physical satisfaction and gives some money in replace. The denunciation of females to the status of pig suggests how women are judged by the society. Karl Marx comes with the notion of bourgeois that compares a worker with an animal. He writes:

The life of the species, both in man and in animals, consists physically in the fact that man (like the animal) lives on inorganic nature; and the more universal man is compared with an animal, the more universal is the sphere of inorganic nature on which he lives. Just as plants, animals, stones, the air, light etc. constitute a part of human consciousness in the realm of theory [. . .] (Marx 75)

Actually, proletarians are chained like birds, they are bound inside the pigeon. They do not get chance to fly even when they are in critical situation. In the same way, the reference of dog shows that proletarians are obliged to bear the load given by bourgeois.

The rich men do not understand the inner feelings of the poor instead, they commodify for making profit. The birth of a baby is also not taken into consideration for its value. The sexual exploitation of women obliges them to bear child not once, twice or thrice but for several times. The males stress women for not working hard in order to satisfy their physical hunger. Karl Marx in this regard quotes the need of hard work in order to satisfy the masters, "The prolongation of working hours is supported by Karl Marx as, "The burden of toil also increases, whether by prolongation of the working hours, by increase of the work exacted in a given time" (Marx 479). It suggests that since bourgeois are concerned with the accumulation of wealth, the proletarians should work hard or work for extra hours. This very idea applies when the narrator explores the motif of working hard for his master.

The food scarcity becomes the everyday problem for the proletariat whereas the bourgeoisie celebrate everyday with the syrup of wine. The commodity or wealth becomes the determining factor for one's social and religious status. Those who hold money are considered to be lucky not for celebrating their richness but the poorness of the proletariat. The word of command of the bourgeois becomes the respectable for the proletariat simply because of his wealth. We can observe how Jia comes to commodify Lei, "Every day he drank a cup and soon became Jia's wine buddy. Jia would smile and say, "Little Lei, you're lucky, Uncle has money and can buy you wine" (85). Here, the prosperity is compared with the luck. In the capitalist society has greater power over people as Uncle has money he can easily exercise his power over Lei. Jia cajoles Lei that his Uncle owns money and can serve good to him. The existence of a man depends on the accumulation of wealth, as Lei's uncle owns money he exists otherwise his existence is almost impossible.

The overload of work for the poor is common in the capitalist society. We can observe the burden of overload for Ning as:

His wife put the child on his back. She had bound feet, and the vegetables were heavy enough for her. Together they were walking back. On the way home they never stopped talking to the child, asking him questions and teaching him to name things. Ning remembered that her husband and she had not walked together on the street for at least nine or ten years. (89)

We can trace how Ning's husband is obliged to put his child on his back and she is bound to carry vegetables which is heavy for her. The overload is not the new phenomenon for them since they are practicing the same thing from nine years. Marx also regards the subjugation of the proletariat as, "The more man subjugated nature by

his labour and the more the miracles of the gods were rendered superfluous by the miracles of industry, the more man were to renounce the joy of production and enjoyment of the produce in favour of these powers" (78). We find that the poor people are obliged to accomplish the assigned tasks. The bourgeois always enjoy their life whereas the poor remain always victimized. The habitual workload also suggests that these people are enjoying their work. They are subjugated in the service of their masters.

The relationship of human being depends upon money matters. When the Grandson does something wrong or he does not make income, he gets kicked by his own grandfather. We can observe how the rich ones treat the poor as Zu treats his own grandson, "Immediately we rushed to the windows to watch. "Take this. I'm going to break your legs too. Zu kicked Grandson in the hips and stomach. Don't kick me!" (100). We can also observe that the Grandson is begging with his father for lessening the punishment as he request his grandfather not to kick him. The cruel treatment of Zu to his own grandson is also suggested by his kicking on hips and stomach. This reveals that there is no sense of mercy in bourgeois mind. Their mind is occupied by the materials and wealth. That is why, the grandfather neglects his grandson. It proves that for grandfather his grandson is not a useful object than his money or wealth. The extreme form of exploitation and punishment suggests that poor people are ruthlessly beaten up by the bourgeois power. The commodity, for them, is the most important of all. The feeling of humanism is absent in the capitalist society.

Even the Grandson of Zu is obliged to sign on the paper. It is by coercion the capitalist do everything on their favor. They do not concern with the humanistic side rather; try to accumulate wealth by hook or crook. We can take a look on how

Grandson yells back, he asks for help but not one dares to help him until Zu is present:

"Ouch!" Grandson dropped to the floor, holding his sides and yelling,

"Help! They're killing me."

"Shut up!" Zu ordered, and pulled him to his feet. "Now tell me, did you do it or not?"

Grandson nodded. "Sign your name here then." Zu took him to a desk and pointed at a sheet of paper. (101)

It becomes clear from the above extract that even Grandfather shows no mercy on his own grandson. Zu stands for the bourgeois as he flogs his own grandson; it seems human feeling absent in him.

We can also observe proliferates watch their capitalist bastard picking apples. The Grandson here stands against his own Grandfather for he is much selfish. The selfishness of Zu is nothing more than for his desire of accumulating wealth. He asserts, "Enjoy picking apples at Willow Village, you bastard of a capitalist-backer," Grandson shouted at Benli (105). It clarifies that bourgeois always show their interest to accumulate wealth at any cost. They do not bear the humanist feeling; cruelty rules their mind and heart. Due to this reason, the Grandson gets whipped by Zu. We can take support from Karl Marx regarding the norms, values and systems of society which revolve around the power and politics of bourgeois which is generated through product i.e. money. Here, Marx also regards the relationship of bourgeois and proliferate as, "It defines the relationship of wages to profit" (Marx 70). It reveals that the human relationship is judged according to the accumulation of money, wealth or profit.

It is the extreme domination and exploitation of poor by the bourgeois like Zu, which creates hatred in the mind of proliterates. When the proliterates cannot tolerate the extremities of bourgeoies, they try their best to revolt against their master. We can observe the revolt arising from the proliterates as: "you son of a black-hearted rich peasant, don't stand in my way, or else we'll smash your old man's head next time he's paraded through our village" (109).The poor proliterates who are commodified by the bourgeois, raise their voice against the authority. Though they cannot reveal in front, they try to gather in one flock and go against their master. They curse their master as black-hearted. Due to the intolerable pain given by the bourgeois, the proliterates desire for immolation. Their desire gets accelerated by the collective voice.

Even the grandson revolts against his grandpa. He even assigns bum to his grandpa. Due to the cruelty of Grandpa, the proliterates cannot get their profit. The accumulation of power and wealth by his grandpa makes the villager suffer more. Here we can observe the revenging motif of grandson against his own grandpa, "Get up, you bum." He clutched his collar and pulled him up on his knees. "Today you met your grandpas. You must kowtow to everybody here and call us Grandpa, or you won't be able to go home tonight" (110). It is the mass which makes possible to raise their voice against their masters. The grandson takes help of the villagers who were exploited by his grandfather. Then, they tackle in mass with the Zu.

Not only that, as a revenge, the grandson orders his grandpa to eat some of the horse droppings. We can observe how the proliterates treat with bourgeois when they cannot tolerate the extremities:

"All right, if you don't, you must eat one of these." He pointed to the horse droppings a few paces away.

"No!"

"Eat the dung," Grandson ordered, and whacked Big Hat on the back with the fork. (111)

We see the revenge of proliterates against the bourgeois like Zu. Zu, who is the representative of capitalist authority, gets punished. As a revenge, the proliterates treat Zu as he used to treat them earlier. One of the proliterates reveals how he was mistreated by the bourgeois as, "Once I was caught by Big Hat's men at the millhouse and was forced to meow for them. How we missed our old glorious days! As time went by, we left, one after another, to serve different emperors" (113). It reveals that a proliterate is supposed to do whatever the capitalist wants. We see the compulsion for proliterate whereas the capitalists like Zu does everything on behalf of him not the proliterates. Karl Mark asserts, "The labourer lives merely to increase capital, and is allowed to live only in so far as the interest of the ruling class requires it" (485). We can observe how the labourers in capitalist society concern on increasing the capital whereas the surplus is taken by their masters. The labourers get very little amount of surplus. The unequal distribution of surplus creates hierarchy in society. It is because the bourgeois are guided by the motif of wealth and commodity.

The social scenario also revolves around the theme of commodification of human values. When a human is considered inferior to the commodities or wealth, then the human value reduces. We can see how Da Long is judged according to his material possession as: "See, you're forty-three now. At your age lots of men have already made their fame and wealth, but you're still a cart driver, commanding only a couple of scabby horses" (116). We perceive that Da Long's life is considered not valuable since he has made no fame and wealth it is not because he is not a loyal. The human value when compared with the fame and wealth ceases to exist. Though Da Long works hard, he is considered as inferior according to his material possession.

The value of a man in capitalist society is judged according to their wealth. The comparison of man with 'beast' suggests the valueless existence of man. The extreme form of exploitation by the capitalists is explored as:

Why so many men? Men are beasts, have to stamp each other, bully each other, kill each other, eat each other. All the village leaders suck our marrow and drink our blood, don't they? The share of fortune is basically the same for everyone. Some people are better off because they've stolen others' shares. (122)

We see that men are given the animalist qualities. The capitalists are drinking the marrow and drink of blood of the poor. Due to the unequal distribution of shares or wealth, there arises the conflict. It also reveals that since wealth became the center of everything, some exploited the others. The miserable existence of poor people is the result of some better people who stole the shares of others'. We can take support from Louis Althusser as, "However, the whole classical Marxist tradition has refused to say that Marxism is a Humanism. Why ? Because practically, i.e. in the facts, the word Humanism is exploited by an ideology which uses it to fight, i.e. to kill, another, true, word, and one vital to the proletariat : the class struggle" (22). It stresses on the class struggle for proletariates' freedom. Althusser also regards that Humanism is not possible in Marxism. Humanism, according to him is exploited by an ideology i.e. bourgeois ideology.

The whole town hates Li because of his misdeeds and exploiting motif. The poor are always exploited by Li which makes their lives unbearable. Ha Jin asserts, "The whole town hated Li, whose stinginess and extravagance made people's lives unbearable" (69). It suggests that Li stands for the bourgeois power who dominates his people. Li commodifies the human labour; he time and again exploits the poor. It

is not uncommon to exploit the poor in capitalist society since money becomes the center of everything.

The readers can notice the proletarians being exploited physically. The physicality of the poor is served to the bourgeoisie as, "My wife had to take care of him day and night. He allowed nobody in the house to have a good sleep. A selfish brat from the beginning. (118) Tang reveals how he asks his wife to serve the master whole day and night. The master leaves no one to sleep peacefully. Tang also curses him as 'a selfish brat'. Zhen, the wife of Tang, serves her master at night which suggests her devotion towards the master.

Tang reveals how his master treated him from the very beginning. He explores his pain with Bea. The misbehavior of the master makes him ashamed of himself. Since Tang is older than his master, he comments that it is almost same as a son has shat on father's neck, "He shat on my neck. I never carried him again. Everybody in the village laughed at me. A son shat on his dad's neck. Son of a rabbit, he's been shitting on me all these years! . . . My fortune is going down day by day, while his fortune is growing like grass" (118). Tang explores his pain for being a poor while he sees his master's fortune growing. The degradation of his fortune suggests that he is a poor fellow. It is due to the extreme exploitation by his master, Tang is obliged to live a miserable life. He is commodified by his master and the surplus goes for his master not to him.

Despite of Tang's devotion to his master, the master does not count his service. The master is guided by the idea of accumulating wealth and does not think of doing something on Tang's favor. It is not uncommon to notice his master behaving him rudely because in capitalist society, objectification and commodification of human

values are common. The behaviour of the master makes Tang unhappy. That is why, he explodes with his dissatisfaction.

Towards the end, we can perceive the sprouting hands for the revolution and change. The poor are seen to be enlightened not because they learn it but they bear it. The extreme form of exploitation and punishment teaches them to tackle with the bourgeoisie power. The power is only possible by the joint task. The peasants have to unite themselves in order to make their voices heard. The researcher also notices the resistance from poor. When the peasants unite they feel their power and punish the bourgeoisie for their earlier deeds and misdeeds, the exploitation and brutal treatment. Ha Jin's *Under the Red Flag* stands as a general surgery of the Marxist values in the capitalist society. It uncovers the hidden realities of society where a poor stands helpless whereas the rich ones celebrate the happiness. Jin's portrayal of the then society of China at the time of communism stands as a milestone for understanding the relations between the bourgeoisie and proletariat. The relations, production, commodification, objectification, exploitation, accumulation of wealth and revolutionary motif are some of the ingredients that constitutes *Under the Red Flag*.

III. Critique of Objectification in *Under the Red Flag*

Ha Jin's novel *Under the Red Flag* covers the wide range of possible thematic ideologies one of which is objectification; sewing its deep root in Marxist philosophy; the human beings and their work values and dignity are reduced to mere object. This very object is nothing than the commodity itself. There is also some hierarchy while objectifying the human beings as they were already divided into bourgeois and proletariates. His short stories "The Richest Man", "New Arrival", "In Broad Daylight", "New Arrival" and "Fortune" are studied in this research.

Ha Jin's short story "The Richest Man" materializes the human values. Li Wan, the main character of the story counts everything and everyone on the basis of material prosperity that is how his inner instinct is materialistic. The ill treatment of Li to his family members, prove that nothing is important for him than wealth.

In "New Arrival" Jia Cheng reduces the female value of Ning as commodity. Meng's wife is not interested in prostitution but she is compelled to do so. It is her obligation to perform such work because her life sustains out of that profession. It is the capitalist society that creates a situation in which a poor is obliged to do anything in order to survive.

Emperor is the replica of the subjugation upon the labours by the authority. The depiction of the marginalized people of the Chinese society in the text of Ha Jin finds its correspondence with the dimensions of Marxism.

"The Richest Man" chronicles the history of a selfish man who is habituated to survive exploiting others. The problem in his short stories is the subjugation of the common class by the so-called upper strata of the society.

Ha Jin's another short story "In Broad Daylight" we can see helplessness condition of Meng. Meng's mother is made naked and tortured for she committed

crime of involving in prostitution. We can observe how the justice is provided to general people by the bourgeois who hold power simply because they hold the greater wealth. Taking the benefit of poverty, the bourgeois rule according to their choice as they think that there is no another power to threaten their decision. It is her obligation to perform such work because her life sustains out of that profession. If she does not earn money, then she has to die. It is the capitalist society that creates a situation in which a poor is obliged to do anything in order to survive.

The study comes to the conclusion that objectification of human minds and bodies. It explores the fact that for subsistence the females are obliged to sell their bodies. Their bodies are objectified and taken as materials that one can purchase with money. The dominance of drought of food haunts the poor ones. The physicality of women is considered as an income source for males. The enforcement also suggests that it is obligatory for women to sell their bodies not for their own benefit but for the benefit of males.

The study affirms Ha Jin's humanitarian ethos in showing the sense of helplessness of the peasants and his critique of such objectification and commodification by the bourgeois. The objectification of human values ranges from the minute details of physical exploitation to the internal hegemonic power operating in the peasants' minds. The researcher traces the overwork of peasants and labourers which significantly contribute in order to built the masters' wealth whereas the peasants remain the same. The dissatisfaction of the master creates a big problem for them to tackle with. So, they have to obey whatever the master commands. The use of simple language in Jin's stories carry the pathetic tone resulting from the poor peasants' voices whereas the harsh and commanding voice of the bourgeois idols or capitalists dominates the others'.

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