



**THE CONSUMER SOCIETY: A MARXIST  
CRITICAL APPROACH TO MARTIN AMIS'S  
MONEY: A SUICIDE NOTE AND DON DELILLO'S  
WHITE NOISE**

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## THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by Ahmed Mohammed Fahad FAHAD titled “THE CONSUMER SOCIETY: A MARXIST CRITICAL APPROACH TO MARTIN AMIS’S MONEY: A SUICIDE NOTE AND DON DELILLO’S WHITE NOISE” is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

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This thesis is accepted by the examining committee with a unanimous vote in the Department of English Language and Literature as a Master of Arts thesis. July 21,2023

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and all information included has been obtained and expounded in accordance with the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials, not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the aforementioned statement.

**Name Surname: Ahmed FAHAD**

**Signature :**

## **FOREWORD**

All praise and thankfulness are to ALLAH, the Almighty, who made it possible for me to finish my thesis by providing me with the opportunity and the courage.

I would like to thank my supervisor (Assist. Prof. Dr. NAZILA HEIDARZADEGAN for her positive attitude and insightful feedback. The chance to take her notes on my thesis with him was valuable.

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## ABSTRACT

Because people engage in consumer activities to build their identities and social standing, today's society is sometimes referred to as a "consumer society". This thesis examines the effects of consumption on people that are represented in the two novels: *Money* (1984) by Martin Amis' and *White Noise* (1985) by Don DeLillo.

The key concepts, including "consumer society" and "consumerism", have been the key themes within both of the novels, Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise*. Within this study, through critically analyzing these two fictional works by the two renowned authors from a Marxist lens, the key concepts will be assessed critically. This will further help to analyze the views of the consumer society that resolve within the current economy. Both the writers Martin Amis and Don DeLillo have been significant authors whose work has been celebrated for their attitudes towards society and its individuals.

The study reaches the fact that private consumption and purchase behaviors have a bigger effect on one's sense of identity and satisfaction than employment, work, and profession. By lowering their values of hard work and placing a higher value on consumption, people in contemporary society shift from being workers to consumers.

**Keywords:** Consumer Society, Consumerism, Marxism, Martin Amis, Don DeLillo.

## ÖZET

İnsanlar kimliklerini ve sosyal konumların oluşturmak için tüketici faaliyetlerinde buldukları için günümüz toplumuna bazen "tüketim toplumu" denir. Bu tez, tüketimin iki romanda temsil edilen insanlar üzerindeki etkilerini incelemektedir: Martin Amis'in *Para* (1984) ve Don DeLillo'nun *Beyaz Gürültüsü* (1985). "Tüketim toplumu" ve "tüketimcilik" de dahil olmak üzere temel kavramlar, Martin Amis'in *Parası: Bir İntihar Notu* ve Don DeLillo'nun *Beyaz Gürültüsü* adlı romanlarının her ikisinde de kilit temalar olmuştur. Bu çalışmada, iki ünlü yazarın bu iki kurgusal eserini Marksist bir mercekten eleştirel bir şekilde analiz ederek, anahtar kavramlar eleştirel bir şekilde değerlendirilecektir. Bu, tüketim toplumunun mevcut ekonomi içinde çözülen görüşlerinin analiz edilmesine daha da yardımcı olacaktır. Hem yazarlar Martin Amis hem de Don DeLillo, çalışmaları topluma ve bireylerine karşı tutumlarıyla kutlanan önemli yazarlar olmuştur.

Çalışma, özel tüketim ve satın alma davranışlarının kişinin kimlik ve tatmin duygusu üzerinde istihdam, iş ve meslekte daha büyük bir etkiye sahip olduğu gerçeğine ulaşmaktadır. Sıkı çalışma değerlerini düşürerek ve tüketime daha yüksek bir değer vererek, çağdaş toplumdaki insanlar işçi olmaktan tüketiciye geçerler.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Tüketim Toplumu, Tüketimcilik, Marksizm, Martin Amis, Don DeLillo.

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## **SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH**

Consumerism is often depicted as a belief in society, suggesting that personal well-being depends in large part on the level of personal consumption, mainly on the purchase of material goods. In addition, a consumerist society is defined by the people in it who spend greater time, resources, energy, and thought on consumption. This study is concerned with Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise* from a Marxist perspective. It focuses on the concept of consumerism, which has been heavily represented in both novels.

## **PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

This thesis aims to analyze how consumerist culture manifests itself in the modern world in the novels *Money: A Suicide Note* by Martin Amis and *White Noise* by Don DeLillo, the research indicates that socioeconomic circumstances determine social practices analyzing of the two novels, and thus cultural activities must be understood within the context of a society's economic situation. The research explores the impact of consumption on human capabilities for logical thought and human interactions and finds that these powerful instruments have decreased these capabilities, the study shows that in today's society, modern life is burdened by the damaging effects of consumer culture, where individuals are chained to false items and entertainment, which strip them of their identity. Consumer culture, in material items and artificial styles, grants immense power to those objects and styles, which enables materialism and artificiality in interpersonal connections. This study will help advance the understanding of consumerism and a consumer society from a Marxist perception. This will aid in charting the world's shift from a consumer-based society to a capitalist one.

## **METHOD OF THE RESEARCH**

Drawing on Marxist literary criticism, the thesis examines the texts to find out what circumstances have made people into commercial subjects in today's society. Utilizing these present insights, this study aims towards the incorporation of effective literary perspectives and thoughts through various authentic literary sources to present

effective ideas and concepts regarding the identified aims of the study. For this study to be efficient, only the most important ideas and perspectives regarding consumer society have been introduced through the secondary sources of previous research and studies. This will be effective in generating findings that can help complete the study.

## **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS DIFFICULTIES**

Consumerism shapes society and the overall social system. To understand the economic structures of the current society and how they work, the theories of consumerism have been approached by many scholars. There are different and contradictory opinions regarding the concepts of consumerism. This particular study utilizes the scope of two novels, Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise*, to understand the presented concepts of consumerism and how they align with the Marxist approach to consumerism. This scope of the study will aid in identifying how consumer behaviors integrated within the characters of the novel provide necessary guidance to understand the consumer behaviors that shape society and how it functions in the contemporary world. The schools of thought regarding "the consumer society" and "consumerism" are very wide. Various studies have also been produced that have generated more critical and pointed notions of 'consumerism' beyond Marxist economics. This study only deals with the analysis of the novels Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise*, from a Marxist perspective regarding the context of 'consumerism' and 'consumer society'.

# 1. THEORY AND CONCEPTS

## 1.1. Introduction

Consumer societies have been identified as emerging in the late seventeenth century and beginning to intensify throughout the eighteenth century. This happened mostly because of the increasing trade deals happening within the colonized countries by their colonizers (Subawa et al., 2020). An individual who buys things is identified as a consumer. Society encourages individuals to buy material goods with a trend of consummation is observed within this type of society. The consumer society is usually identified as encouraging waste (Stankevich, 2017).

Individuals belonging to the consumer society deal with buying bigger and better products. This approach to buying advanced products is a way of overspending, which creates waste. In addition, the roots of the consumer society are created by the cultural spectrums of consumption in which we live. This depicts a society in which a person's individuality or identity is determined by the number of products and services they consume through repeated purchases (Hoekstra, 2019). It has been identified that the notion of human beings as the consumer was shaped before the first World war. But it has evolved and become the main principal role of individuals within the consumer society.

In this context, consumerism becomes the main attribute of the consumer society. The relationship between consumer society and consumerism is strengthened by the straightforward definition of consumerism as a social and economic phenomenon that promotes the acquisition of material items in growing quantities (Campbell, 2021). The industrial revolution integrated the spread of consumerism. The trend started in England and later spread around Europe. The theory of consumerism states that the individuals who gain large quantity goods will be in better shape within the society and some economics also states that consumer spending generates growth in the economy. But in 1955, John Bugas coined the term consumerism as a substitute for capitalism to effectively describe American society (Zallio & Berry, 2017). This brings up Karl Marx's perspective on capitalism, which held that it was an economic system that gave the "bourgeoisie" access to the means of production while denying the "proletariat," or

working class, their independence within society. This is also the foundation of how Karl Marx viewed the system of consumerism (Astarita, 2018).

Martin Amis is a British novelist, essayist, and screenwriter recognized for his work focusing on the 'late-capitalist view of western society. The phrase late capitalism suggests the various phenomena that present how capitalism distorts human life. This has been perceived as absurd and presented by Martin Amis through his renowned satires and grotesque caricatures (Rai, 2019). The Marxist economy also suggests some warning regarding the late strategies of capitalism, where he suggested that in the later stage, the big corporation will practise monopoly within the global markets. Which can be connected to this context. Martin Amis in his different works also has heavily used the concepts of consumerism and consumer society. But within *Money: A Suicide Note* a very clear critique of the consumer culture and society can be detected. The studies have detected that the post-mordents approach within the novel is somehow aligned with the concept of consumerism (Doñate, 2017).

Like Martin Amis, Don DeLillo as an American novelist, short story writer, essayist, playwright, and screenwriter have been one of the significant cult writers. With the novel publication *White Noise*. This novel also presented him with the national book award for fiction. The novel by the author himself has been described as concerned with living in dangerous times. His postmodern perspective can be also seen as an approach to 'opposing systems' (Thajunnisa, 2019). It has been recognized by scholars that through writing the novel *White Noise*, Don DeLillo was protesting power, state corporations, and systems of consumption that directly relate to Consumer society and consumerism. Within the writing of Don DeLillo, a clear integration of Marxism and post-Marxism can be also observed. His works, including *Underworld*, *Cosmopolis*, and *White Noise*, have been observed by literary scholars (Bensalah & Bensalah, 2020).

This chapter will introduce important concepts. In this context, the important insight of Marxists' economy towards the concept of consumerism and consumer society will be evaluated. Also, through the effective insights generated from the above-mentioned analysis, Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise* will be critically analysed to point out the relevant elements of consumer society and consumerism.

Within both of the novels, the storyline has some significant identification of the current trends of consumerism. Moreover, within the story of *Money: A Suicide Note* the effective considerations of how media has shaped the perspective of the consumer can be effectively evaluated. The theory of Karl Marx says about the alienation of workers in a capitalist system, consumerist needs become the social forces and this is quite separate from the individual and can operate individually (Cole, 2020). Some brands and products become so powerful that they can bring a change to the social system and the general structure of society. Within the novel *White Noise* by Don DeLillo, the notion of consumer culture will be utilized. For this reason, within the novel, the character Willie is effectively immersed in consumer culture. This, once again, connects to the concept of consumerism from a Marxism perspective within the novel, as the character itself becomes what he consumes. In this context, the character of John in the novel *Money: A Suicide Note* will also be portrayed as a spending habit that effectively aligns with the Marxist analysis of consumerism. It can be seen that John buys drinks whenever an opportunity arrives, and he also pays the bellboy with whatever bill is available in his pocket. He also pays the prostitute without receiving services. It is also important that both of the novels also assess consumerism and the concept of consumer society by identifying the effect of media. This significantly connects the Marxist approach of consumerism with the modern-day contexts and generates the actual conduction of the economic consumption trends. Though both of the novels deal with consumerism, they have very distinct approaches which reflect within the storyline and character representation. But both effectively portray how alienation is a very relevant concept in the contemporary economy and how the consumption nature of the individuals exploits human dignity.

## **1.2. The Marxist's Approach Consumerism and The Evolvement of The Consumer Society**

### **The Rise of Marxism and Consumer Society:**

In simple terms, Marxism is defined as the theory of Karl Marx, which states how within society the differentiation of classes is the cause of all the struggles that the society faces. In bourgeois society, according to Marx, capital is autonomous and has

individuality, but the living person is dependent and has no identity (Ollman, 1976, p. 144)

The Marxist approach suggests how within society the struggles of the different classes, mainly capitalists or, the bourgeoisie and the workers or, the proletariat detect the economic relations within the capitalist society (Pashukanis, 2017). Marx believed that this conduction will inevitably lead toward revolutionary communism. Marxism also includes that capitalism thrives within society through the exploitation of the working class. To analyse it more effectively, we can assess that Marxism includes a dialectic approach that describes that everything has two sides. Marxism is socially, economically, and politically philosophical. Based on the main philosophical idea of Marxism, Karl Marx has presented important theories regarding, reification, commodities, fetishism, and alienation. In this context, the Marxist economy becomes relevant as it assesses the role of labour in the development of the economy (Thompson, 2019).

It is important to state that the concept of consumerism does not develop before the industrial revolution (Li et al., 2017). And also, Karl Marx does not directly define consumerism as the term itself was coined later in the future. However, it can be observed that the work of Marx revolved around the economic and social perspectives which can be analysed to be connected to consumerism. And further various developed insights of Marxism have focused on the developing concept of 'consumerism' and 'consumer society' (Majeed & Akbar, 2019).

This discussion also leads to the analysis of consumer society. Studies focused on the perspective of Karl Marx have suggested that the western Marxist sociologist, while generating the critical framework of consumer society, identified the consumer society as an objective and thus limited the study within the non-historical spectrums of sociology (Susen & Susen, 2020). And as a result, this contemporary framework of consumer society could not hold Karl Marx's historical and materialistic approach (Tang, 2008). For a very restricting approach toward consumer society, a significant critique cannot be observed within this framework. Based on the theoretical foundation generated by Marx in the 1850s, between 1857-1858 and 1861-1863, Marx presented insights through the Economic Manuscript of respective years that the capitalist governing model was complicated which made consumption an important element

within the socio-economic context (Avtonomov et al., 2018). And the perspective of Marx also suggests that through the approach toward the development of capitalistic production, consumption fetishism developed within the consumer society (Subawa et al., 2020).

The current theoretical approach towards the consumer society is also directed towards modern western societies which suggests that rather than being focused on the production of commodities, individuals within the society are focused on the organized consumption of materialistic goods mostly for leisure (Boldizzoni, 2020). Jean Baudrillard, in his classic text named *The Consumer Society*, focuses on the context of consumption and how it has been effectively generated within contemporary culture. Baudrillard, within the theory of consumerism, suggests that classes of different commodities of consumption are created through some significant images and symbols (Baudrillard, 2018). Within this context, some important characteristics of consumer culture have been also recognised by scholars, which will provide a more integrated idea about how the concepts of consumerism and consumer culture have become a notion of the general life of individuals within the economic society. The identified characteristics are also significant as they effectively depict the current notions around the topics of Consumption, Consumer Culture, and Consumer Society. Within the characteristics, one of the most important attributes can be identified to be the transformation of the needs and behaviours of consumers. It has been previously assessed that in modern society, the consumer's needs for non-valuable but advanced products have been identified. Commodity fetishism, aestheticization, alienation, and commodity fetishism are also some of the current attributes of consumer culture.

### **1.3. The Marxist's Approach to Consumerism and Evolvement of The 'Consumer Society in The UK And USA**

Various studies have identified that Marx's insight about the commodity centrality of capitalist labour was prophetic. In this context, Marx's theory of commodity fetishism theory is very significant. Within this theory, a commodity is an external item, a thing that, by its qualities, satisfies human desires of any type (Marx, 2018, p. 125). And after this commodity is exchanged for something else. Marx further explains that the commodity remains simple as long it is connected to the use-value. It can be

identified that through the Commodity Fetishism theory, Marx analyses certain relationships, mainly the relationship between production and exchange. Marx assesses that, within the economic disciplines, the routine worship of commodities is a significant win for capitalist politics (Lavalette & Ferguson, 2018). The overall perspective that became one of the significant elements of consumerism is that the purchase of a commodity somehow becomes the purchase of a person in the disguise of their labour.

Further, the theory of alienation by Karl Marx provides some more significant insights into the consumerist perspective. Alienation, according to Marx, is the practice through which the workers themselves feel foreign to their products or the products created through their labours (Cominel, 2019). This theory effectively presents how within the capitalistic system of production, the working process is isolating, dehumanizing, and disenchanting. In the time of Karl Marx, alienation was established through the insufficient consumption of the labourers as they had to maintain an animal level of consumption. However, after the Second World War, the consumption trends changed as the capitalists added labourers to many consumptions.

The consumer theories in which consumerism has a significant scope are mostly indebted to Marx. Roberta Sassatelli's effective analysis of the customer culture has not referred to Marx, it can be said that the perspective of Marxism has a significant impact on her studies. She explains following Marx's perspective that within the consumer society, consumers no longer apprehend which commodities are of use to them. And for these reasons, the consumers end up buying the things that will eventually help the capitalists within the society who have played roles in the organization, production, and circulation of the commodities or products. And this insight effectively outlines the perspective of consumerism in which the consumers are encouraged to buy things that do not generate any use or value (Landa, 2018).

In this context, considering the Marxist approach towards consumerism, identifying how consumer society evolved within the western world, specifically USA and UK, will provide further scope for analysing the theoretical approach of this study. As it has been identified earlier that consumer society emerged in the late seventeenth century. And became very much intensified in the 18th century (Wrightson, 2017). The emergence of consumer society happened in the United Kingdom. The consumer societies were rising through the colonies around the four continents and mainly through

the trade deals made by England. This also increased the country's sugar consumption by 20 factors (Riello, 2017). The industrialization that happened within the UK also led to the overconsumption trend that continues to date. Industrialization in the UK was liable for the emergence of many factories and mines. The economic freedom of that time within the UK also helped these factories to produce many products on a broad mass level. During this time of the industrial revolution, income gaps were also identified within the society. This shows that a particular group had the most capital, whereas another group struggled (Vale et al., 2018). This also effectively aligns the emergence of the consumer society in the UK with the Marxist approach towards consumerism.

Carole Shammas at the University of California at Riverside states American consumerism began in the 18th century. England's trading of goods between colonies sparked consumption trends in America. Though it has been identified that the notion of the consumer society started before the first world war but took effective shape in America in the form 1920 (Igo, 2018). But this also resulted in the hoarding of capital in the hands of one class. While the poor classes became poorer. In this situation, after some time, various socialist values emerged. And following this, the middle class emerged. They stated that in both the UK and the USA, the emergence of consumer society started in the 18th-19th century (Blin, 2019). But approximately in the 20th century, within the western world, individuals' actual role became being and consumer. In this context, in both USA and UK, the trends of overconsumption emerged. And this led to the current state of consumerism. Where every individual lives as a consumer and divulges themselves within the spectrum of the finest goods consumption. We can observe the history of evolvement of consumerism in both the UK and the USA as effectively connected with the Marxist approaches. We can see that in the earlier centuries when the consumer society developed, it was mainly a way for the capitalists to gain their share of the profit. For example, as the UK made a colony, they effectively generated trade deals around the world. But it only gave the upper class or Bourgeois economic affluence when the lower classes struggled to make ends meet within western society.

Through the overall discussion, it can be understood that the social and economic order which encompasses the consumer society is consumerism. As for the effects of

consumerism, the current trends of consumption are growing towards over-consumption, which is leading towards wastage of commodities and fulfilling the pockets of the productions, whereas the laborers still to an extent remain alienated towards their produced goods. Also, it becomes very obvious that the notion of this perspective which is shaping the current world can be easily observed in the ideas and theories of Karl Marx, which created the phenomenon of Marxism. So, it can be also stated that the current theories of consumerism and consumer theory are effectively rooted within the Marxist approach. The most effective insight which can be generated from the Marxist theory is that consumption in contemporary society has become a complex social phenomenon that does not revolve around the value-oriented consumption of individuals which represents Marx's basic use-value. The problem is integrated upon the fact that the current consumer society is only concerned with consumption to display the commodities as the commodities become the main identity of the individuals. In this aspect, individuals are assessing personal value, even their value, as individuals through commodity consumption. This can be also assessed as the last stage of capitalism through which the late capitalist absurdism can be connected to the evolved concept of consumer society.

Based on this evaluation, it is clear that the economic society has become a means of pursuing commodities to increase prestige, standing, and identity. Which is harmful and inefficient. As a result, the commercialization of individuals is also happening as individuals are taking a major and only role of the consumer within the global society. Through following these relevant insights presented by the various significant studies the novels, Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note* and Don DeLillo's *White Noise* will be critically analyzed through the Marxist perspective. This assessment will help understand how both contemporary authors have observed consumer society and consumerism. In the next section, by evaluating the storyline approach and character representation approach of the two authors within the novel *Money: A suicide Note* and *White Noise*, the main perspectives regarding consumer society and consumerism will be acquired. In this practice, how the representation of the concepts aligns with the Marxist perspective will be evaluated to generate relevant information regarding the objective of the study.

#### **1.4. Marxism And Consumerism in Contemporary Literature**

The printed materials becoming widely available was another effective impact of consumerism. We have identified that in the 18th century within the western world a significant number of journals and books were published. Also, fictional work, i.e., novels, emerged within society in the 18th century. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Samuel Richardson's *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded* were the first identified novels of English literature (Blamires, 2020). Following this, within the present literature, a significant number of approaches toward Marxism and consumerism can be observed (Alola et al., 2019). It has been assessed that, like any other integrated theory, Marxist theory has influenced art and literature at a proficient level. As a result, within modern contemporary literature, a substantial approach toward Marxism can be detected. *Things Fall Apart*, *Heart of Darkness*, and *A Doll's House* are some of the most recent works consisting of Marxist ideologies (Gould, 2019). Following this, various and significant approaches to consumerism can be observed. Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho*, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, Fredric Pohl and Cyril M. Kornbluth's *The Space Merchants*, Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note*, Don DeLillo's *White Noise* are some of the most celebrated works of consumerism (Thajunnisa, 2019). It can be identified that following the approach towards Marxism and other socialist ideologies has also presented a gateway for addressing the concepts like consumerism.

Marxism in the current literature is utilised within the context of class and the conventions about the class. The focus of Marxist ideology in this context becomes more important. Also, within the scope of contemporary literature, the approach toward the literary theory of consumerism is increasing. As a result, many works and literary writers are focusing on how, within this society, consumption is becoming an economically admirable phenomenon. But at last, this consumption emphasizes generating economic profit for a certain class. In this context, the Marxist approach links with the theme of consumerism within contemporary literature (Mair et al., 2020). Most of the works of literature consider the theme of Marxism and consumerism as they suggest that, within the capitalist society, individuals can not comprehend the actual need for material goods. As a result, they consume what is not needed. As a result, the community which focuses on circulating and producing the material goods gains profit. Many contemporary works

of literature also consider how modern social media is becoming a leading source that invokes the trends of consumerism.

Both of the novels, including Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note*, and Don DeLillo's *White Noise*, also consider this contextual prospect of consumerism. In both of the novels, the Marxist inclinations of consumerism can be also effectively identified. By focusing on the relevant elements of consumerism within the novels, the novels can be analysed focusing on the Marxist scope. For this, in the following sections, the effective consideration within the novels *Martin Amis's Money: A Suicide Note*, and *Don DeLillo's White Noise* are effectively evaluated. This will aid the study in identifying the critical themes of consumerism and consumer society that are presented within both works.

## **2. CONSUMER SOCIETY IN MARTIN AMIS'S *MONEY: A SUICIDE NOTE***

### **2.1. Introduction to The Novel and The Novelist**

Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note* was published by Amis in 1984. Since its publication, it is widely accepted and viewed as one of the best examples of twentieth-century fiction in terms of its incisive indictment of capitalism and consumerist society culture. This chapter focuses on how consumption has affected modern society and this influence is clearly shown in the characters of the novel, especially John Self, the protagonist. It reveals the truth that money, consumerism, and commercial advertisements become the obsession that overwhelmed people in the twentieth and drive them toward the loss of their true selves.

The novel revolves around the character of John Self, an alcoholic addict, junk food, and a pornography binge-watcher from London. He also suffers from anorexia and a ringing in his ears. He contemplates producing a film that he calls "Good Money" or "Bad Money," and this necessitates him to be on constant travel between London, his homeland, and New York, which represents the city of his dreams. It turns out that Fielding Goodney, the producer with whom he works on the film, has framed him. (Amis, 1984, p 363).

The chapter starts with a brief introduction to the well-known novelist Martin Amis and his writings. Further, the chapter discusses consumerism in the novel. The chapter ends with a conclusion centered on the aim of the study.

Kingsley Amis's son Martin Amis is a British novelist, who was born in Oxford in 1949 but currently lives in New York. He attended schools in the UK, Spain, and the US before attending Exeter College, Oxford, where he received a 'First Class Honours' of English degree. It is impossible to overlook the role of his father's literary influence when studying Martin Amis's work. Kingsley Amis, Martin's father, had an enormous impact on his son's writing and sparked a discussion about the nature of reality and fiction in the late twentieth century. Martin Amis frequently mentions that his father, Kingsley Amis, has had a deep impact on his writing, even if he has taken a different style of writing and established a new field of study in literary studies. The irony that

permeates his work, as well as his controversial depiction of some themes, such as social struggle and ethnic and racial strife, reveal this fact (Stolarek, 2012)

As one of the most influential writers of current times, modern capitalist culture is depicted in his stories, which veer between realism and postmodernism. Under Margaret Thatcher's leadership, the British government focused away from expanding the welfare state and toward privatization, marketing, and consumerism, resulting in a spike in commercialization. Increasingly, the media and advertising are promoting a system of the free market and individual entrepreneurship in which greed serves as a fundamental driver while government policies shift. In his novel, Amis examines the terrible consequences of this need for an ostentation (Brian Finney, 2008).

While Amis was employed by the 'Times Literary Supplement' as an editing assistant, his first book, *The Rachel Papers*, was published in 1973. The novel won the 'Somerset Maugham Award' for the best novel, and it was followed by the publication of his other novel, *Dead Babies*. Between 1977 and 1979, he served as Literary Editor of the *New Statesman*, during which time he published his third novel, *Success*. Many critics consider Amis to be one of the most forward-thinking writers in English literature of the contemporary period. He gains the popularity of 1980s authors like Julian Barnes and Ian McEwan. His fiction also reflects the influence of American writers namely, John Updike and Philip Roth (Brian Finney, 2008).

Consequently, of his many journeys to the US, which he described in several of his writings, the most notable of which being *Money: Suicide Note*, Amis established himself as a transatlantic writer. To create this narrative, he draws on his previous experience working in Hollywood as an assistant scriptwriter. The American influence on his uneducated English protagonist, John Self, was visible in this novel. In *Money* by copying techniques from the American novelists he most loved. American values infiltrated British culture, and the Self was nurtured on a regular diet of popular entertainment, advertisements, and pornography. After *Money*, Amis' novels feature scenes or characters set in the United States.

He criticizes both modern affairs in British politics and the influence of American cultural standards on the common people in the United Kingdom. In this work, the American impact on his ignorant English protagonist, John Self, could be seen through his eyes. In *Money*, he adapted strategies from the American authors whose

work he most admired. The principles of the United States have influenced British society (Brian Finney, 2008).

Neville Kirk (1994) talks about the hedonistic culture that is growing in the postmodernist era. Humanity is being ignored in front of luxurious factory production. He contends Amis is a writer who writes about contemporary issues. That is why most of his works deal with socio-political changes and their effects on people. Consumption in the twentieth century is taken as an integrated part of freedom, which contributes to alienating humans from fellow human beings. This period has given unlimited goods to its customers and consumption has become more passionate than needed in this age, which is presented in this novel.

The novel's plot takes place in London and mostly New York. John Self, the protagonist as presented by Amis, is a filmmaker who prepares for his "controversial TV ads for smoking, drinking, junk food, and nude magazines" (Amis, 1984, p. 78). Besides attending meetings with the producer Fielding Goodney and the actors, Self is also taking part in the production. His primary responsibilities will be to comply with the neurotic wishes of the actors and actresses, as well as to smooth things up among them. It is not only alcohol that contributes to the protagonist's problems; it's also all the vices of modern times like junk food, immorality, and open credit. Despite his few talents, Self devotes all of his time and energy to this endeavor, which he views as the gateway to great wealth and success, as well as a means out of the past. Losing his mother and the maternal affection of his aunt dominated his childhood, and his adolescent years were spent at a striptease tavern, which became his home. As for the protagonist's current situation, money dominates his desire to fulfill his lover Selina Street, his father's, or his car's unrelenting requirements. With no idea what he's getting himself into, the story's uninformed protagonist gets dragged into a web of deception, intrigue, and treachery. Self is given a chance to redeem himself through his friendship with Martina Twain and Martin Amis as things get more confused. The writer's persona makes an appearance as a character in the book, giving self-help script advice and indications about his actual life and the perilous state of being a fictional character. Fielding Goodney has set up a conspiracy against Self, who has remained deaf to all the warning signs he has given him throughout the story. Filmmaking is a non-existent concept. An insane financial scheme was all that it was. When Self discovers that he has

been signing checks and documents without realizing it, he must return to London. Then, he tries suicide and survives (Campanon, 2004).

## **2.2. The Modern Society Overwhelmed by Money and Consumption.**

*Money: A Suicidal Note* was published in 1984 and this era was largely influenced by late capitalism, which created high importance on consumerist culture. According to Fredric Jameson's theoretical insight that after the Second World War modern society or late capitalistic society is culturally dominant as he writes after the wartime shortages of consumer goods and spare parts had been filled and new products and new technologies (not least those of the media) could be pioneered, the economic preparation for postmodernism or late capitalism started in the late 1950s (Jameson, 1991, p. xx).

Modern consumer society is portrayed in *Money* through the character of John Self, a 35-year-old British working in television advertisements who has recently been assigned his production by American producer Fielding Goodney (Brian Finney, 2008).

Early in the novel, after meeting a writer named Martin Amis, the film's protagonist, John Self, engages Amis to write the screenplay, which is also titled "Money". After proposing to the fictional Martin Amis an extremely large check for the work, he was successful in convincing Amis to accept the contract. Amis refuses to pay the check and instead requests that it be returned. John Self is knocked out cold by Martin Amis after an open physical fight in which the two men had been at odds from the opening of the story (Vatanpour, 2020).

The discussion shows that the novel is about hurdles on the way to success and the fall of this film director whose dream is to earn more money by directing a film titled "Good Money" or "Bad Money". John Self is a young man known by a few people as a director in England. Martin.

John Self represents a consumer who is "consumed by consumerism." He disparately wishes to move to his dreamland America and produce a film to earn money. The novel events took place in England and America. Martin Amis describes the protagonist of the modern consumer society of twentieth-century addict John Self, "I am not allergic to the twentieth century, I am addicted to the twentieth century" (Amis, 1984,

p. 91). Sina Vatanpour describes John Self as a consumer who "serves the two handmaidens of capitalism simultaneously, like Ouroboros, the devouring serpent that bites its tail" (2020, p.288). This description implies that John Self is an anti-hero who becomes fat and unattractive consumes too much alcohol and food, and watches pornographic material who also happens to be a woman abuser who enjoys fighting. He stimulates consumption as well as a captivated consumer who has lost control of his actions.

According to James Deidrick's opinion about the novel, "Money can be read exclusively as a satirical novel, attacking the influence of capitalism on consciousness" (Deidrick, 2004, p. 77). Amis' novel, *Money: A Suicidal Note* reveals the role of money and the way it has overwhelmed people's lives from nearly all aspects. John Self the title of the novel, which is money, can tell directly about the main concern of this novel, America is portrayed as an attractive society because of its high levels of consumerism. He feels like being lived America is the beginning of great success and all he can do is to get money in different manners.

America is land with success in its ozone, a new world for the go-getters and newcomers, a land where fortune grins and makes the triple-ring sign...Yeah." (Amis, 1984, p. 207)

America symbolizes the Self's personality and his dream of prosperity in comparison to London. America acts as a mirror that reflects the Self the image he desires. When he visits New York City, he is inspired by the city's atmosphere, "a different proposition in New York, pulled together, really on the ball" (Amis, 1984, p. 96). London, at the opposite extreme of the spectrum, becomes a symbol of despair, "didn't feel like anything. It just felt like I was in London again, dumped out of the sky into nothing weather" (p.51). The most depressing imagery comes when he talks about London's weather. "London is an old man with bad breath. weariness catching in his lungs" (p. 85). The sky there seems to be "shades of kitchen mist..., like an old sink full of washing-up" (p. 159). England becomes a symbol of the lack of a future, a tumultuous wasteland in which the concerns and anxieties of Self are once again mirrored. America portrayed in *Money* is a creation, a double or an imagined reflection formed according to the desires of John Self, the protagonist. Since he is unable to understand the norms of symbolic interchange between the subject and its counterpart, his repeated failure and fate might be explained in this way (Campanon, 2014).

Money is the motivation that causes John Self to act in such an outlandish manner. Even the film that Self has been requested to make in America has been given two different titles: first "Good Money", then "Bad Money." Fieldings Goodney offers Self his finest business and investment for Self's film and then stabs Self in the back at the end of the film. They are all driven by a desire for money. Selina Street, who has relationships with other men as well, abandons Self but returns when she urgently needs money. Rather than paying Self massive amounts of money to direct a film, Goodney employs actors to pose as financial sponsors for the project and has Self-sign agreements that hold him entirely liable for all the money that has been lavishly spent on the production. While Self is in New York, Goodney employs a screenwriter to make a script and pretends to be an unidentified speaker (Frank the Phone) to tease him about the disappointments he encounters there, many of which are set up by Goodney. Lorne Guyland is an aging actor obsessed with his looks, appearance, and virility and has a fear of aging. Selfish and arrogant, he changes the script, making his character the most important and masculine, and demands all kinds of sex scenes. On the opposite, Spunk Davis represents the way of life before people become victims of consumer society. He is completely the opposite character. He does not drink alcohol, does not smoke, sniff, gamble, eat junk, and never has sex. He spends his time on charity work, meditation, and mind control and is completely consumed by religion (Amis 1984).

In describing the novel as a reflection of the American modern society, which creates big consumers, Sina Vatanpour (2020) writes that Money is a product of its time, which means that it mirrors "the neoliberalism and finance capitalism of the 1980s," which reshaped people's relationships, individuals, and communal thought. Using the hidden power of the market, ordinary people were transformed into overnight millionaires on Wall Street, just as the philosopher's stone did (Vatanpour, 2020, p.278).

Talking about his condition, John Self says, "Sometimes I think I am controlled by someone" (Amis, 1984, p. 305). The novel in this sense refers to people that are oblivious to everything other than their financial gain and live a life of decadence, consuming everything from junk food and luxury goods to drugs and alcohol and filthy content. This suggests that those characters are obsessed with consumerism and money spending.

Modern society is considered a subject of consumerism. Human beings have lost their intrinsic significance as human beings. Money is the most important factor to gain availability of all of those commodities. Characters in novels consume trash because they are glorifying the commercial culture of this generation. Fast money has caused individuals to consume fast food since they have very little time to relax, eat, and think obtaining quick money. The influence of consumerism is revealed in John's physical appearance,

My clothes are made of monosodium glutamate and hexachlorophene. My food is made of polyester, rayon, and lurex. My rug lotions contain vitamins. Do my vitamins feature cleaning agents? I hope so. My brain is gimmicked by a microprocessor the size of a quark, costing ten pee and running the whole deal. I am made of junk. I'm just junk. (p. 265)

Self's inattentive body is addressed by a long list of physical flaws, such as decaying teeth and an abnormally high body fat percentage. One of his most powerful symbols of the disintegration of both his moral character and physical health, and that he has treated himself with drugs, exemplifies his refusal to deal with the underlying causes of his issues. Daniel Lea states that "the impact of capitalism is not restricted therefore to the world with which the individual interacts but is assimilated into the physical as well as the psychological constitution" (Lea, 2005, p.6).

Fredric Jameson refers to consumerism in the social sense as consumption refers directly to our behavior toward these kinds of reified things that occupy our thoughts and float above the deeper nihilistic abyss caused by our powerlessness to determine our fate (1991, p. 317). Throughout the novel, the characters show the consumer society in many activities. They are attracted to practically anything available in the market, and they devour almost everything available to them. They are attracted to machines, junk food, sex, pornographic films, and money. They are also addicted to drugs. They are ecstatic about consumerism. Self's lifestyle, along with Goodney and Selina, is filled with fast food, porn, drink, and hallucinatory experiences. John Self's head is filled with money, but his body is in agony. Self's body is deteriorating because of the massive quantities of junk food, drink, cigarettes, and coffee that he used to consume. Junk is not just related to food; it is related to all the products of this century that are harmful and dirty for the body and the psyche. There are no hard and fast rules when it comes to the borders between one's self and the world in which he lives. He is corrupted both psychologically and physically because of the junk culture that invades and pollutes his body (Lea, 2005).

In a tennis play with Fielding, Self's physical ability betrays him to stand even a few minutes,

The ball came screaming over the tape, skipped a beat, regathered its tilt and momentum-and punched me in the face. I topped over backward and my racket fell with a clatter. For several shocks, I lay there like an old dog, an old dog that wants its old belly stroked. (Amis, 1984, p. 38)

Despite being a director, Tamas Benyei writes of John Self as "not a capitalist, not even an entrepreneur. He is left impotent by the circulation of money. He is a consumer instead. According to his hyperbolic lists, "Self is the self-conscious, self-hating, monstrously metaphorical representation of the economy of waste, a golem of consumerism (Bényei, 2006, p.48). He serves as a symbol of modern society whose most notable feature is consumption.

The condition of John Self shows that it is impossible for people living under consumerism to escape being overwhelmed because various nations import manufacturing from various regions of the globe. People living in the late capitalism era have grown alienated and self-centered because of the emphasis on the market economy and mindless consumerism.

### **2.3. Consumerism, Advertising, And Identity in Money: A Suicide Note**

As the economic system moved its focus away from benefit system advancement and toward the privatization of business, advertising, and marketing. Consumerism increased and the importance of advertising and media coverage emphasized materialistic symbols of excessive consumption as a method of obtaining social status because of the economic shifts.

Fredrick Jameson believes in the connection between consumerism and media, claiming that under the system of consumerism, the comparison between advertisements and the market is strengthened, rather than being comparable. While the media provides consumers with advertisements about the products, the consumer's option is then "re-baptized as a "free choice". (1991, p. 275). The modern consumer culture has been profoundly impacted by the widely held notion of celebrity, which has had a significant impact on people's behavior and attitudes. The only way to get at this picture is via the use of fictional signifiers that deceive. The most acceptable method of demonstrating

adversity culture's detrimental and deceptive impacts on individuals is through the use of money to encourage consumerism.

People who are preoccupied with their images depend on the purchase of costly material objects to achieve financial success, such as wealth, high social status, and celebrity. The ideals of material consumption, wealth display, and money are all intertwined with one another in modern society. According to Peter Child's statement: "it speaks to the commercial avarice of the 1980s through the growing strong popular cults of celebrity and renown" (Childs, 2012, p. 369). One of the most notable characteristics of modern society is the prevalence of consumer culture in society. Because of industrialization and excess production, manufactured goods are promoted using advanced transmission media.

Characters in the Money: A Suicide Note are deafeningly obedient to advertising and media. People these days live in a state of delusion caused by alcohol, drugs, and fast food and an obsession with self-image, which they attempt to present perfectly through advertising. The characters and narrative of the novel are a reflection of the contemporary social climate. An individual's self, morality, integrity, and personal restraint are thought to have been lost because of the procedure. The growing prevalence of economic freedom and privatization is satirized in this work as a criticism of capitalism. Many people's lives and viewpoints have been affected because of the alluring and attractive practices of the capitalistic society. When people were freed from the dreary atmosphere of late capitalism in Western civilization, their self-confidence, morality, and honesty diminished dramatically.

Shape up, John. It's an embarrassment. It looks terrible to the financiers. Take the floor at the Gustave. Hire a jet and have a weekend with Butch and Caduta in the Caribbean. Buy a case of champagne and pour it all over your dick. Spend. You're no use to me when you fly, coach. Fly supersonic. Fly sharp end. God damn it, Slick, fly right. (Amis, 1984, p 368)

He makes advertising for a low-quality television show and photos of ladies in skimpy clothing. Goodney Fielding, a failing actor from the United States, is producing the film, which he hopes would make him wealthy and renowned in the film business. He persuaded himself that he would have to invest heavily to become well known. Emily S. Rosenberg (2012) states that the commodities and manner of life available in Marketing throughout the late twentieth century had a substantial influence on people in America, their popular motto becomes "Buy More, Prosper More". In the early 1900s,

advertisers repeated this refrain that would soon become interchangeable with the economic success and security of the nation, and later of the world. They depended on their ability to stimulate ever higher levels of buying and consuming, and thus ever higher employment levels and prosperity (2012, p.p.42- 43).

John Self's excessive manner of consumerism justifies the necessity to represent the image of a film director. Vatanpour's (2020), explanation is that John Self epitomizes the "Golden Boy of the 1980s", an image who lives a life characterized by an overabundance of money, drink, romance, and drug, among other things. He has all of the money he needs, and all of his costs have been covered. This is showed by what he says:

My clothes are made of monosodium glutamate and hexachlorophene. My food is made of polyester, rayon, and lurex...My brain is gimmicked by a microprocessor the size of a quark and costing ten pee and running the whole deal. I am made of junk\_ junk; I'm just junk (Amis, 1984, p 369)

Because of the ambiguity implied by his given name, Self has been subject to false and superficial adoration. He succumbs to Fielding's ploy because he lacks self-control and is tempted by the star image he projects. Self-created and self-obsessed, he cannot identify Fielding's nefarious intentions.

Man has become a product, a consuming machine, and his individuality has been reduced to the status of a commodity. As a pornography addict, John Self exhibits the instincts of an "animal, eating, drinking, dumping and sleeping—" and that's it" (Amis, 1984, p. 369). While using materialistic symbols to satisfy his carnal cravings, he turns himself into an unnatural product with no regard for his dignity, self-respect, or ability to regulate his impulses or think for himself. He possesses a human body, but he lacks a human soul.

As the story develops, the chapters take place in different locations, with Self-settling into either London or New York. He spends a significant portion of the novel struggling with his spiritual homelessness and his growing frustration at his inability to locate a place of belonging that gives him a solid history and a feeling of historical origin (Lea, 2005).

The modern era's identity revolves around material consumption. To feel like a part of the group, individuals rely on consumption to reinforce their sense of self-worth. Throughout the novel, consumption is closely related to identity and the absence of real

roots. Everything is a commodity in the modern consumerist world. Even the females are treated as though they were food to be consumed. There is no longer a sense of humanity in the world. In the same way that Self compares his lover to costly Fiasco, her identity is expressed by manufacturing output, "it costs me more money than little Selina ever could" (p. 261). Because they both cost money, they have the same worth in the Self's existence. Relationships are no longer for making a family; Selina only pursues Self when she is experiencing financial difficulties. Self has an insatiable desire to gain a large sum of money, not only to live a comfortable life ending with mirage and children, but also to purchase the time of a young lady to spend with him. It shows that a female's identity is a commodity to be consumed. People with money can afford females, and those who are poor must work hard to gain enough money to experience the same pleasure. In a consumerist society, the concept of self-identity is crucial since the value of consumerism contributes to the flourishing of the culture of independence.

Even though the market is brimming with commodities and human beings take such commodities for granted. Commodities have risen to the position of the closest friends to humans. Because materialistic ownership has traditionally served to present themselves to others, rather than establishing harmonious relationships with them, they have focused their efforts on achieving commodities and opulent items. Human beings have become a part of consumer culture in this era of consumerism; they consume everything that is made accessible to the public. A person's relationship is equivalent to a commercial transaction. Seeing the world through the lens of profit and loss allows us to appreciate every lovely feature of human existence. Humanity is being overlooked in the face of lavish industrial output, according to the report (Kirk, 1994).

After reaching the heights of joy and spending sprees, Selina abandons and learns that Goodney is a charlatan in disguise. Using borrowed funds, he has funded his lavish life while also paying for the fake film production and the actors. He has been sustaining his dreams and fantasies by pulling large sums of money from his bank accounts regularly. John Self becomes "like his name, is both payee and payer, creditor and debtor" (Vatanpour, 2020, p.290). The pattern corresponds to his dual roles as an uncontrollable customer and as an advertising who encourages purchases, "the lost-self-concept works so forcefully on us- perhaps we all experience it. We may all be feeling a sense of loss as we race ahead into the future (Gregson, 2008, p 269).

Self realizes that Frank who has been scaring him on the phone every night since the beginning of the novel, is Fielding himself. Later, Fielding dresses as a woman in the last meeting with John Self, which takes place in a dark alleyway, to conceal his actual identity. Fielding, in his many guises and many sounds, denotes a masquerade, a "self" that is both many and empty at the same time. Creating a public image of being a rich film producer, which does not match his true financial situation, allows him to play the confidence game. He is inextricably linked to the double visuals of identities; he creates images for the screen, and he appears in many personalities, as if he is an actor in a film.

An inauthentic and immoral moment is reflected in the fragmented identity of John Self. The discovery of the truth regarding the real identity of John Self's biological father comes with the beginning of his fall,

If you're a girl, then you are your mum and your mum is you. If you're a boy, then you are your dad and your dad is you. So how can you live seriously if you don't know who you are? I supplied it all. The confidence trick would have ended in five minutes if it hadn't been for John Self. I was the key. I wanted to believe. I wanted that money so badly. Me, and my no-confidence trick. (Amis, 1984, pp. 392–393).

In London, Barry Self acknowledges he is not Self's real father. Within a short time, John Self expressly links counterfeiting with his fictitious paternal ancestry with the help of his fictitious ancestors; John Self can express his confusion about his identity and lack of self-esteem oneself. "It's in me all this. My father's father was an oft-busted counterfeiter" (p. 253). Because he lacks a parent and an origin, he has become analogous to money, which has no connection to the real existence of his being.

The novel's subtitle, "A Suicide Note" becomes clear at the end of the story. In the prologue to the novel, Amis writes his commentary about this title:

This is a suicide note. ... Usually, the note is the thing. You complete it and then resume your travel time. It is the note and not the life that is canceled out. Or the other way around. Or death. You never can tell, though, can you, with suicide notes? To whom is the note addressed? To Martina, to Fielding, to Vera, to Alec, to Selina, to Barry—to John Self? No. It is meant for you out there, the dear, the gentle. M. A. London, September 1981. (Amis, 1984).

Self's real father was Fat Vince. The whole story is such that at last Self does not exist, which can be related to his suicide. The other angle to this title is the Marxism perspective, "dollar bills, pound notes, they're suicide notes" (Amis, 1984, p. 116). As the name suggests, a suicide note denotes money. Money can change any relationship. Money consumes all social structures. As money breeds into money, no one can find its

origin. Money can buy any relationship, can ruin any friendship, or can change a good person into a bad one. power, fame, love, or any other worldly commodity on this globe, money is important to get them. Because culture and ethics are not founded on money, they are not given any significance. To fulfil people's desires, the consumerist culture undermines moral ideas, ethics, and cultural traditions.

In Vatanpour's explanation, "suicide note" implies that John Self is going to disappear as soon as the reader put the book down. Alternatively, it may refer to Self's suicide when John attempts suicide. Nonetheless, the end suggests that John is entering a new phase in his existence and realisation of his real identity; shame and terror have battled over his life. Suicide is won by shame. Even though you still fear shame, shame is more powerful than fear. Shame ultimately prevails in suicide, but you wouldn't want anyone to witness it. (p. 386).

After discovering his actual father, who turns out to be Fat Vince the bartender at the Shakespeare tavern, John's Self-obsession with consumerism begins to shift dramatically. He decreases his consumption of explicit content and alcoholic beverages, which had associated with the illusion of money and power in his life.

Towards the end of the story, John Self appears sitting on the ground expecting the coming of Georgina his girl. A woman thought of him as a beggar, and she throws some coins for him. Martin Amis intentionally uses the coin currency in this situation because a metallic coin with a real substance is the opposite of script money. This is crucial, as the coin that falls on his lap becomes a symbol of a return to reality.

The return to the true self can be seen when the Self finds the name of his birth father. The result is his obsession with the consumption of food, drink, and his fascination with advertising has left him. His departure from the worlds of advertising and film is remarkable.

Amis satirises the capitalist system of the twentieth century through the character of self. At the end of the narrative, Martin Amis speaks in the narrator's voice:

Maybe money is the grand conspiracy, the great fiction. The great addition: we're all addicted and can't break the habit now. There's not even anything very twentieth-century about it, except the disposition.... Regardless of how hard you try, the money conspiracy will always win. It's only open to those who want to join. (Amis, 1984, p 365).

For the modern citizen, there is no way out of money and consumption that he finds himself in. Amis describes money and consumption as a conspiracy by which we are all overwhelmed. Self has completely overwhelmed by the pleasures provided by marketing to satisfy his desires. He considers money to be a symbol of his status and identity. It is simple to witness the toxic and devastating consequences of self-indulgence in one's own life.

Consumption culture is shown in a pessimistic tone, and this image represents the situation of postmodern society in general. He is a postmodern person who will go to any extent to build a famous image that is both false and deceptive to fulfil his compulsive need for fame. His isolation and disinterest in the other members of the community result in a result, and he has no desire to create or maintain any connection that is not centred on financial gain.

### 3. DON DELILLO'S WHITE NOISE

#### 3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, a Marxist critical approach to Don DeLillo's *White Noise* will be analysed to understand the consumer society within the novel. For this purpose, the nature and definition of consumer society in Marxism, the role and place of consumer society in Marxism, the phenomenon of consumption culture, related themes to consumer culture, and the relationship of consumer culture to identity and self-image will be studied in detail.

Don DeLillo's sixth book, *White Noise*, which received the 1985 U.S. National Book Award for Fiction, was his breakthrough book in a commercial sense (Inci, 2015, p. 01). *White Noise* is a masterwork by modern American author Don DeLillo. The story, which centres on the main character Professor Jack Gladney and their regular family life, was filmed in the so-called College-on-the-Hill in a little town in the centre of the United States. The novel, which is regarded as a masterpiece of ecological writing, is mainly concerned with natural disasters brought on by industrial civilization in the post-industrial period, the American social crisis, and the spiritual bewilderment of contemporary people (Zhao, 2016, p. 01).

The civilization of post-industrial America is determined or shaped by the media, market, and advertising. Media, market, and advertising are acting as the economic base because "economic base is the material means of production, distribution, and exchange and it determines and shapes the things of the superstructure (at, ideas, law, economy, civilization, etc.)" (Barry, 2002, p. 157). Modern consumer-focused propaganda has emerged as advertising. *White Noise* is a series of three commercials that play nonstop on television and feature Babbette reading tabloids and advertising while telling tales to a group of blind individuals. The media inform her about Dylar, too. Besides the street and the media, advertisements may be found anyplace. Across borders, advertising is a global phenomenon. Commercials for Coke may be seen everywhere in the globe, and in her dream, Jack's daughter Steffie finds herself thinking about a Japanese car manufacturer. These days, many individuals just know two things about the world: "where they live" and "what television shows them to see" (DeLillo, 2009).

In DeLillo's book, the title "*White Noise*" refers to all background noise, including that from radios, televisions, ultrasound equipment, microwaves, and other sources. *White Noise* means a disturbing sound that penetrates modern society and is a metaphor for current existence. People are unable to process this knowledge because their brains are overloaded with random accumulations of disordered information; as a result, they negatively encode the information rather than viewing it positively. The abundance of knowledge makes people anxious (Zhang, 2005). *Noise* means something that no one enjoys hearing or experiencing, so it is best to stay away from it whenever possible. It is the signal that people attempt to protect themselves against. People's delicate minds are assailed by the white noise of contemporary civilization, which finally causes them to become numb. This is a consequence of modern civilization. "The media constantly reproduces logos and pictures, and sign languages and advertising are all around us. A fixed sense of loss is produced by the excessive production of marks and images (Mike, 2000). People regularly become unable to discern between the actual and the virtual, due to the constant barrage of advertising, flood-like waves, and white noise. The author of the book profoundly and impulsively exposes the emptiness of post-modern culture, which depicts a current toxic human environment (Zhu, 2005) by meticulously detailing the sounds that surround us daily.

American author Don DeLillo was born in New York City, USA, on November 20, 1936. He also writes plays, essays, screenplays, short stories, and essays. His writings have addressed a wide range of topics, including global terrorism, politics, economics, the Cold Weapons, mathematics, performance art, sports, television, nuclear war, and the intricacies of language (Wikipedia, 2022). In 1985, after years of success as a cult author, DeLillo finally broke through to the mainstream with the release of *White Noise*, for which he was awarded the National Book Award in fiction. 1988 saw the release of the bestseller *Libra* after *White Noise*. For *Mao II* in 1992 and *Underworld* in 1998,

DeLillo was a nominee for the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction on two separate occasions (Pulitzer Prize Fiction, 2022), and "won the PEN/Faulkner Award for *Mao II* in 1992 (receiving another PEN/Faulkner Award nomination for *The Angel Esmeralda* in 2012), won the 1999 Jerusalem Prize, was granted the PEN/Saul Bellow Award for Achievement in American Fiction in 2010, and won the Library of Congress

Prize for American Fiction in 2013" (Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction Awarded to Don DeLillo, 2013). In a 2005 interview, DeLillo said that writers "must oppose systems" (Nance, 2012). And, again, in another interview, he said, It's crucial to write against authority, corporations, the government, the entire consumption system, and mind-numbing entertainment. I believe that by their very nature, writers must be opponents of anything that authority tries to impose on them (Panic Interview with DeLillo, 2005).

Postmodernism and modernism are both evident in DeLillo's writing. Nevertheless, it's crucial to keep in mind that DeLillo himself claims he is unsure of whether his writing is post-modern; Not [postmodern] at all. The last guy to ask is me. I would put myself in the long tradition of modernists, starting with James Joyce and continuing with William Faulkner and others. That's been my role model all along (Singer, 2015). He has claimed that jazz, foreign films, and abstract expressionism have had the greatest influences on his creative output. In many of his writings, including *White Noise*, which is notable for its satire of academia, DeLillo examines postmodern themes including novelty intellectualism, the breakdown of the family, uncontrolled consumerism, hidden conspiracies, and the possibility of rebirth through violence.

Following WWII, the United States experienced an extraordinary period of consumerism, characterized by groundbreaking innovations in product packaging and marketing. Codes, spectacles, and simulacra have supplanted the use or trade value of commodities in today's society, which is dominated by immaterial forms of production (information, communication, media, and advertising). According to Emilse Hidalgo, "Marx discussed the use-value and exchange-value of commodities. Contrarily, Baudrillard claims that commodities can also have status or symbolic worth. In *The System of Objects* (1968) and *Consumer Society* (1970), Baudrillard examines the opportunity that consumption has taken the place of production as the key organising principle of society. He makes the case that consumer goods are part of a signifying system that goes beyond their purely pragmatic or utilitarian value (Hidalgo, 2004). Signs in today's consumer culture increasingly reflect the author rather than the world around them. In the age of the simulacrum, nothing is genuine or original; all that exists are copies and representations of representations.

### 3.2. The Effects of Modern Consumption on *White Noise*

Don DeLillo highlights consumer society, also known as the culture of mass consumption, to make strong political statements. He does this not out of scorn or contempt, but rather to show how mass production and advertising have influenced many aspects of daily life and the role they play in homogenising identity. Supermarkets and shopping malls are cited by DeLillo as emblematic representations of the consumer society.

The idea of commodification is crucial to DeLillo's writing, particularly in *White Noise*, where it plays a noteworthy role in his depiction of a consumer society. Commodification, according to Norman Fairclough in *Discourse and Social Change*, is defined as the procedure by which social domains and institutions whose focus is not on creating items for sale in the narrower economic sense come to be set up and understood in terms of the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities (Hidalgo, 2004, p. 21). Cultural or instructional products that are created, advertised, and sold to customers are a relatively new economic phenomenon.

Commodification, then, is the metaphorical transfer of the vocabulary of markets and commodities into other categories of discourse or the colonisation of institutional discourse systems by speech patterns related to the creation of commodities. This shift in metaphor is more than simply a rhetorical flourish; it's part of a larger effort to reorganize reality according to market principles. Regarding the consumer, who may take a passive position as the unwitting or unintentional "target" of advertising or an active position as a discriminating consumer aware of his "needs" and the growth of a massive market where everything is for sale by the consumers' expectations. DeLillo worked in advertising before he became a writer, so he is familiar with how the industry can intrude upon people's lives and corrupt their subconscious to make them "happy consumers." *White Noise* is heavily influenced by the commercialization of language and the subliminal manipulation of customers in the marketplace.

*White Noise* is a representation of the impacts of late capitalism on society, and it depicts a social body that is marked by the disintegration of the real and a flow of signifiers coming from the information society (Wilcox, 1991, pp. 346-347). This idea is demonstrated throughout the book by the protagonist, who is a professor of Hitler's Studies. He does this by demonstrating how he has territorialize not only his social and

cultural bodies but also his physical body. These bodies come together to form his identity. One particularly egregious illustration of this can be seen in the novel's depiction of the "day of the station wagons" (DeLillo, 2009, p. 5).

Socially and culturally that has been organized and territorialist by late capitalism treatises is constructed within the text as soon as Gladney lists the consumer goods that students have brought with them to the "spectacle" in his description of the "College-on-the-Hill," of the station wagons. This occurs as soon as Gladney lists the consumer goods that students have brought with them to the "spectacle." Discourses of late capitalism utilize the spectacle as a "means of unification" to categorize and territorial social, cultural, and physical bodies (Debord, 1992, p. 7).

According to Gladney, this "fundamentally spectacles" movement is a "collection of the like-minded ... a people, a nation" that is also late-capitalist and has consequences on the physical body (DeLillo, 2009, p. 4). To illustrate the impact that student lifestyle choices have on their bodies, Gladney uses examples such as "stereo sets, radios, personal computers ... the hairdryers and styling irons ... the controlled substances, the birth control pills, and devices; the junk food is still in shopping bags" (DeLillo, 2009, p. 3).

The following is a list of objects whose primary objective is to change, regulate, or manage a person's actual physiological functions or state of health; this list demonstrates the informationalization and digitalization of the late capitalist social body. Both "controlled substances," and "birth control pills and devices," are included in this category. In a nutshell, the book portrays a machine of late capitalist society that does more than simply code and produces bodies; it also territorializes the biological fluxes of the physical body in connection to its social and cultural surroundings. In other words, this machine does more than just code and produce bodies. The management of the body and medical treatment are both tightly related to social standards; nevertheless, they are "less biologically authoritative related to survival than a social imperative related to position" (Baudrillard, 2018, p. 139).

Social and Culture in which late capitalism has involved in the territorialization of physical bodies are immediately identifiable through the depiction in the text of a parental body distinct by "conscientious suntans," "well-made faces," and "diet trim" as well as a student body in which medical objects have become consumerist. Both of these

bodies are examples of how late capitalism engaged in the territorialization of physical bodies. The writer is then given an introduction to the main character of the piece, who is described as follows; "I am the director of the Hitler Studies program at College on the Hill, "It seems to go against the flows of the machine that late-stage capitalism uses to try to territorialize material goods. The Hitler Studies Program was established in North America in March 1986" (DeLillo, 2009, p. 4).

In the novel, Gladney identifies himself in terms of contemporary philosophy and Kant's thought to establish a connection to the subject matter of these two philosophies. To protect himself from the territorializing fluxes of the late capitalism machine, which have led to the "end of interiority" (Baudrillard & Violeau, 1987, p. 113), he has directed his "modernist impulse toward authentic selfhood" (Wilcox, 1991, p. 350) toward learning about Hitler. This is so that he can avoid the "end of interiority" (Baudrillard & Violeau, 1987, p. 113). His wife's rejoinder at his assertion that he would not "go down in history" was "go down in history," in response to his argument that "but you've got Hitler" (DeLillo, 2009, p. 45). Despite Gladney's "feeble presentation of self," it would appear that he is eventually susceptible to and axiomatized by the appropriate processes of late capitalism (DeLillo, 2009, p. 16). This is because axiomatizing all social flows through appropriation is an essential component of late capitalism. Two of the most important ideas that are discussed throughout the book are his connection with Murray Siskind and the bodily changes that have been brought about by consumerism.

Siskind seems to have a stronger "savour the flux of pictures and signs [and the] media images and spectacles [which] multiply, frighten, and enthrall" attitude than Gladney, who is dependent on a value system that encourages individuals to "stability (Wilcox, 1991, p. 349-351) "separating the signal from the noise (looking for an indication of the flow's essential nature)" (searching for an indication of the fundamental nature of the flow) The moment in which Murray serves dinner to Gladney and Babette is indicative of the late capitalism because of its amazing ostentation of gluttony and abundance (Baudrillard, 2018, p. 25) and electronic data and information flow in euphoric forms (Wilcox, 1991, p. 350). In the medium, there is an abundance of sacred formulas (DeLillo, 2009, p. 51).

As a result, Murray is a stand-in for the material form that has become intertwined with the currents of late capitalism. In this environment, "there is no longer

any perfection or complexity" and Murray finds satisfaction in the virtualization of the social body (Baudrillard & Violeau, 1987, p. 12). Gladney believes that there is something "close to mystical" in the "waves and radiation" of television, even though she might have been imitating a TV voice (DeLillo, 2009, p. 51). The Cecilia, the Cressida, and the Corolla are all examples of Toyota's lineup of tiny automobiles. Regardless of where the sound of the word originated, it transported me to a state of complete and utter transcendence (DeLillo, 2009, p. 155).

Gladney is getting closer and closer to a true, clear, and stable interpretation of the late capitalist socius's flows as he works to provide a "stable meaning" to Steffie's resonating "verbal spell or ecstatic chant." This occurs as Gladney attempts to provide a "stable meaning" to Steffie's resonating "verbal spell or ecstatic chant" (DeLillo, 2009, p. 155). Despite this, Gladney admits that it is useless because of the informational and digitalized methods of production that are prevalent in late capitalism. She concludes that it is "just an ordinary car" with "a simple brand name" attached to it (DeLillo, 2009, p. 155). It is a computer-generated transnational name that is essentially pronounceable by everyone to put it in the simplest terms (DeLillo, 2009, p. 155). Gladney loses his sense of authenticity, stability, and autonomy when he engages with television's "operational screens [and] terminals." He is then reterritorialized as "some vast, useless body" within the medium's "pornography of circuits and networks," in which a certain form of particularly imperative communication: a message-consumption message is delivered (Baudrillard & Violeau, 1987, pp. 18-22). (Baudrillard, 2018, p. 123). a signal that will become apparent when he goes shopping at the mall.

Gladney's body is significantly impacted by the mall, which Baudrillard describes as the "heart of consuming as a total arrangement of everyday life," because it is where everything is taken over and replaced in the ease ... of an abstract bliss. In other terms, a mall is a place where everything is taken over and surpassed in the comfort of abstract happiness (Baudrillard, 2018; p. 29). According to Gladney, "I shopped without restraint; I shopped for the sake of shopping," and as a result, "my feelings of self-worth and confidence increased." By going through this, I could converse with a previous iteration of myself and gain a deeper understanding of who I am right now (DeLillo, 2009, p. 84).

Gladney's body is determined by where it is situated within the mall because of the "categories of commodities" and "generalised neo-culture" as well as the "configuration of space [and the] symbolic landscape" of consumption (Baudrillard, 2018, pp. 27–28). (Goss, 1993, p. 18). Gladney "tries to remember where [he'd] seen the Cream of Wheat" in "Walking in a Fragmented Trance" (DeLillo, 2009, p. 325), allowing the bodily flows to entangle with the flows of consumption and production in the late capitalism system. Gladney's body is entangled with the production and consumption flows of late capitalism. As a consequence of this, his whole-body acts as a "monitoring screen." for the food that he consumes. In the 12th edition, Baudrillard (1987).

According to Dan Lowe, Karl Marx's ideology of capitalism is "wide-ranging and immensely influential, notably in philosophy and sociology." Marx is well-known to the majority of people because of his two blistering critiques of capitalism. The first of these objections contends that capitalism is inherently alienating. The second of these objections contends that capitalism is intrinsically exploitation (Lowe, 2015). Now, in the remaining chapter, the relationship between identity, self-image, and alienation will be discussed in the context of the idea of consumption.

Marx is credited with developing the idea of alienation, which he subsequently dubbed the theory of alienation. It is a commonly held belief that the advent of new economic structures in the middle of the nineteenth century corresponded with the beginning of the phenomenon identified as alienation. In a nutshell, the worker has the impression that he or she is disconnected not only from the industrial process but also from the end product and, eventually, from themselves (Marx & Struik, 1964). People are said to become dehumanized in Marx's theory when they are exploited by capitalists and when they grow alienated from the products they generate (Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844).

Giddens & Held (1982) investigates the Marxist concept of alienation and the transformation of the worker into a commodity as a starting point for his discussion; The alienation of the worker in his output denotes that it opposes him as an autonomous power, lives independently of him, and is alien to him. Additionally, it implies that his labour acquires an external life and becomes an object. The life he gave the thing comes back to him as a hostile and foreign force (Giddens & Held, 1982, p. 14). Secondly,

Giddens expands upon Marx's theories; he is only conscious because he is a member of a species, which means that his own life is an object for him. Man establishes himself as a conscious species-being through his work on inorganic nature, which includes building a world of objects through his effort (Giddens & Held, 1982, p. 16). In this sense, work, whether it be making music or constructing a building, is fundamental to the human experience. In Marx's words, this view reduces human beings to "material objects" as the commodification of human life as a species (Marx & Struik, 1964).

Herbert Marcuse, reinterpreting the Hegelian and Marxist ideas of alienation and reification, defines it as the individual losing the capacity to grasp and modify subjectivity when it comes under the control of alien powers and objects (Marcuse, 1964, p. 28). Marcuse contends that the stresses imposed by industrialization and capitalism lead to alienation in workers, who eventually learn to see themselves as mere extensions of the things they create or possess. That same year (1964), in the same book, he makes the following points; the folks identify with their possessions; they discover their soul in their car, hi-fi, split-level house, and kitchenware (Marcuse, 1964, p. 11).

A further important tenet of Marxism is that consumer goods systematically distorts people's experience of existence. The authors Horkheimer and Adorno (2002) highlight the relationship between advertising and consumer culture; differences are driven home and spread; something is offered to everyone so that no one can escape; consumers are broken up as statistical material into red, green, and blue zones according to income group (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, p. 97). A large part of the responsibility is for satisfying customers' distractions via advertising. They provide further detail; the advertising and cultural industries are combining both technically and economically. In both, under the pressure of efficacy, the technique is evolving into a psycho technique, a method of controlling people. Everything is geared toward intimidating a consumer who is perceived to be unfocused or uncooperative (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, p. 133). According to their argument, consumerism has a significant impact on both the body and the spirit; Tyranny does set the body free under the private monopoly of culture before starting to work on the soul (Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002, p. 105-6). Through the propagation of fictitious demands, individuals get trapped in the realm of consumerism and advertising and are pressured to make purchases.

According to Dan Lowe, as per the modern perspective, an individual embodies four important concepts: continuity (also known as a "temporal sense of self"); integration (also known as "being a whole"); identification (also known as "being like others"); and differentiation (also known as a "boundary between self and others"). These characteristics of identity are demonstrated by this definition: In the development of self, there is coherence, consistency, unity, and stability (Lowe, 2015). The postmodern person becomes characterized by discontinuity and fragmentation, and a blurring of the lines between the inner and outside worlds, reconstituting [his or her identity] in a world of pictures or signifiers is representative of a commercialized and technologically advanced culture that separates subjectivity from social process (Dunn, 1998, p. 65). A person's identity in today's consumerist and technologically advanced mass culture shapes their idea of who they are as a person.

To build false identities in the light of consumption, Gaunlett (2002) argues, people now rely on fabricated pictures, rather than their own experiences. In this age of manufactured identities, people have forgotten their true selves and instead believe wholeheartedly in their phony ones. If what Duvall says is correct, because the very thing that makes it possible for us to understand the world through visual images also serves to replace its history with a collection of consumable images that are disconnected from their sources and susceptible to the political whims of their creator (Duval, 2008, p. 80). Considering this concept, we can observe how some items and pictures used by the characters in *White Noise* become an extension of their thoughts.

To further demonstrate how the items are linked to erroneous identification, consider Jack's (the protagonist) misunderstanding of Hitler as a marketable intellectual good in the US academic sector (Boxall, 2006, p. 119), Jack's wife Babbette takes a medicine called Dylar to alleviate her fear of dying. When it comes to his self-perception, Jack dresses the part of a hero on campus by wearing dark spectacles and a long robe and proudly displaying a copy of *Mein Kampf* (Halldorson 148). He wants his appearance to define who he is, which furthers his growing sense of alienation. So, Jack's outfit ends up being the "dream of depth" (Halldorson, 2007, p. 148). Jack attempts to establish his identity and get respect through Hitler because he enjoys the impression of power, depth, and significance it gives him. Murray, one of his friends, writes: "On one level, ..... works" (DeLillo, 2009, p. 287).

In his book, Gardiner (2002) talks about when the commodity completely controls daily life, the spectacle debuts on the global historical stage (Gardiner, 2002, p.109). Even more so than Elvis Presley does for Murray, Jack is dominated by his product, Hitler. They're both looking for control, significance, and depth in the social positions and images they project to the world. The novel's protagonists are always preoccupied with consumer goods; "Dacron, Orion, Lycra Spandex" (DeLillo, 2009, p. 52), "Krylon, Rust-Oleum, Red Devil" (p. 159), "Tegrin, Denorex, Selsun Blue" (p. 289). In the course of their everyday lives, random brand names pop up and serve no discernible purpose. Advertisements appear often in our daily lives, as Jean Baudrillard explains, a trademark for the corporation is shamefully placed at the bottom of four pages of beautiful prose (Baudrillard, p. 165).

There is a lot of uncertainty in people's daily lives because of advertising and branding. When individuals are confused and lulled by advertisements in their daily lives, they may not notice danger or take appropriate action. Jack, on the way to drop off his son at school, observes a lady assisting a group of kids in crossing the street. He makes up a part for that lady in a soup advertisement. Steffie, on her part, has been known to murmur, "Toyota Celica," when under the influence of sleep medication. Advertising plays a key part in this culture, shattering and destroying characters' identities (Bloom, 2003).

Robert Bocoock (1993) provides the following profile of today's consumers; "Modern consumers are physically passive but mentally active" (Bocoock, 1993). Rather than being considered as the act of only meeting basic bodily demands, consumption is increasingly understood to be a mental experience that must be anchored in the brain and the mind. The fact that Babette is feeling bad about purchasing wheat germ may indicate that her mind is preoccupied. Because she is so concerned with her physical health, she is always using the stairwells at school. Choices are also in Babette's thoughts as, "Either I'm taking ..... I run up the stadium steps" (DeLillo, 2009. P. 53). From a Marxist point of view, it may be argued that Babette is psychologically concerned about the fact that the object she purchases shapes her conduct.

Moreover, the family consumes massive catastrophe which is portrayed in the novel *White Noise*. As the Gladney family sits in front of the T.V. on a Friday evening;

That night, a Friday, we gathered in front of the set, as was the custom and the rule, with takeout Chinese. There were floods, earthquakes, ..... we wish for more, for something bigger, grander, more sweeping (DeLillo, 2009, p. 64).

According to Emilse Hidalgo, "Another central aspect of DeLillo's *White Noise* is the relationship between consumption and identity" (Hidalgo, 2004, p. 13). Appiah (2001) contends that each person's identity has two dimensions: a collective dimension and a personal dimension, and that these two aspects interact in a dialogic way to form our identity. The characteristics of a group as a whole their race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, etc. give rise to the many subgroups that make up society. Intelligence, wit, charm, and avarice are all aspects of a person that might be considered part of the personal dimension, but they are not the foundation of any particular sort of collective identity.

The premise of *White Noise* is that one's sense of self is a product of their social environment and that the symbolic tools necessary to express that environment may be found in popular culture. The role that our modern society expects of its members is that of consumers, and society members are similarly assessed on their capacity and willingness to fulfill that duty (Bauman, 1999). In the first sentence of the book, Jack recounts the station wagons pulling up to the College-on-the-Hill, demonstrating the significant influence that advertising and consumer culture have on the formation of identity. Television and commercials provide people in the consumer culture with the means to use symbols to define themselves. Baudrillard calls this "status value." It is attached to things like clothing, automobiles, body language, cosmetics, and hairstyles. The first paragraph's use of the definite article shows that all students are buying the same things in large quantities, which emphasizes the homogenizing nature of consumerism. Not naming any specific pupils or parents and avoiding any quantifiers, for example "some students," "a few parents," "one or two students," alludes to a group identity in which there are no individuals but just those who are "spiritually akin." In fact, since "the only thing more terrifying for the self than isolation from the community and alienation from its surroundings is feeling isolated from the community and alienated from its surroundings, this scene could be seen as a representation of the desired state of consumer fulfillment (Hidalgo, 2004).

Having a sense of financial inclusion is closely related to having a sense of social inclusion. The following is from Chapter 10 and describes how an ATM, a metaphor for

the whole financial system that controls people's lives, verifies and authenticates Jack's basic existence;

In the morning, I walked..... was in accord, at least for now. The networks, the circuits, the streams, the harmonies (DeLillo, 2009, p. 46).

There's more going on than just a money transaction between Jack and the machine. In other words, it confirms Jack's legitimacy as a member of this world. There is no foundation for a consumer society or a capitalist economy apart from the banking system and the credit card industry. Fears of isolation and hopelessness are allayed, and social peace is achieved via the financial system.

DeLillo's portrayal of the world is that of a consumer culture, where everything related to the money system is accepted as genuine and actual. By applying the language and vocabulary of a market economy to other sorts of discourse, all sorts of discourse educational, religious, medical, and philosophical are becoming commodities. The result is a reorganization of our understanding of reality and of educational, religious, professional, and metaphysical practices based on a market model, that is, the construction of reality as a megamarket where everything is for sale and subject to measurement, quantification, mass production, and mass consumption. The life-credit analogies and the sacralization of supermarkets as the new sources of satisfaction are examples of how this ideology manifests itself. Language commodification is an essential stage in the process of its naturalization, since the logic of capitalism's growth dictates that the whole world become a market.

As a result, DeLillo paints a picture of a society in which nothing exists without the trade of commodities, and everyone and everything is entwined in it. Everything either consumes itself or is eaten. *White Noise's* mystification of the commonplace might be regarded as a response to modernism, which connected rationality with a better awareness of one's circumstances and the conviction that no mysterious, unknowable forces are at play. However, in *White Noise*, this tendency is halted, if not reversed, as places like supermarkets become the pinnacle of the enigmatic. The ordinary has taken on fantastical qualities, indicating that science and technology have not completely "read" the social world. Modernism physically located the romantic idea of mystery and the unknown in remote areas like Africa or America. It is the center of a global economic circuitry that supports consumer society, according to postmodernism. Rural areas are

no longer the home of mysteries and the odd, but rather the urban core. Postmodernism is characterized by this re-enchantment of the world, particularly of the ordinary, and *White Noise* is a prime example of this. On the other hand, DeLillo's *White Noise* portrays the tale of an empty, yearning ego that is plagued by a dread of death once we see below the dazzling surface of things.



## CONCLUSION

Money: A Suicide Note, was published by Martin Amis in 1984. Since its release, it's been generally praised for its insightful condemnation of capitalism and consumerist culture. This chapter focuses on how modern society's consumerism has affected John Self, the novel's protagonist. It shows how money, materialism, and advertising pushed individuals to lose their genuine identities in the 20th century. The story focuses on John Self, a London junk food and pornography binge-watcher. He has anorexia and tinnitus. He considers creating "Good Money" or "Bad Money," and must fly between London, his home, and New York, his ideal city. His co-producer, Fielding Goodney, framed him. (363, Amis) The chapter begins with a brief introduction of Martin Amis's works and it addresses new consumerism.

Kingsley Amis's son, Martin Amis, is a novelist. Originally from Oxford, he now resides in New York. Before joining Exeter College, Oxford, he attended schools in the U.K., Spain, and the U.S. His father's writing was an influence on Martin Amis's work. Kingsley Amis, Martin's father, influenced his son's work and launched a late-20th-century controversy between reality and fiction. Martin Amis often emphasizes his father's influence on his writing, even though he has chosen a distinct style and created a new area. As one of the most influential writers of current times, modern capitalist culture is depicted in his stories mix realism with postmodernism. Under Margaret Thatcher, the British government concentrated on privatization, marketing, and consumption, increasing commercialization. Media and advertising increasingly promote a free market and individual entrepreneurship in which greed drives government decisions. Amis' story explores the dire effects of ostentation (Brian Finney, 2008).

The novel is set in New York and London. John Self is a filmmaker who makes "controversial TV ads for smoking, drinking, junk food, and nude magazines" (Amis, 1984, p. 78). Self is engaged in the production and meets with Fielding Goodney and the performers. His main duty is to accommodate the neurotic actors and actresses and to smooth things up between them. The protagonist's difficulties are caused by booze, junk food, immorality, and unrestricted credit. Self-devotes his time despite his meager abilities.

As it has been discussed earlier that *Money: A Suicidal Note* was released in 1984, during late capitalism's consumerist phase, that's why, After World War II, modern civilization or late capitalist society is seen as culturally dominant in the novel. *Money* portrays modern consumer culture from the perspective of John Self, a 35-year-old British TV commercial professional who recently got his production.

John Self is "consumed by consumerism." He wants to relocate to America and make a film. England and America are the settings for the story. "I am not allergic to the twentieth century, I am addicted to the twentieth century," says Martin Amis' protagonist John Self. Sina Vatanpour says John Self "serves the two handmaidens of capitalism simultaneously, like Ouroboros, the devouring serpent that bites its tail" (2020, p.288). This description indicates that John Self is an anti-hero who eats too much drink, food, and pornographic stuff.

Novel characters consume trash to praise modern consumerism. Fast money has made people eat fast food because they have little time to relax, eat, and ponder. John's appearance reflects materialism. Self's inattentive body has deteriorating teeth and heavy body fat. His use of pharmaceuticals as a treatment demonstrates his refusal to address the root causes of his problems. Characters exemplify consumer society throughout the narrative. They eat everything on the market. Machines, junk food, sex, porn, and money entice them. Drug addicts. Consumption thrills them. Self, Goodney, and Selina's lifestyles include fast food, porn, booze, and hallucinations. John Self's body is in anguish despite his wealth. Self's body is degrading from junk food, beverages, cigarettes, and coffee. Junk includes all non-food goods.

For the relationship between consumerism, advertising, and identity, the economy is seen as having shifted from benefit system advancement to business, advertising, and marketing privatization. As a result of economic upheavals, consumerism expanded, and advertising and media coverage emphasized materialistic symbols of excessive consumption to gain social prestige.

The notion of "celebrity" is influential in modern consumer culture and people's behavior and opinions. Only deceptive fictitious signifiers may reveal this picture. *Money* is the best way to show adversity culture's harmful and misleading effects on individuals. People (as a celebrity) who are image-obsessed buy expensive material

goods to gain money, social position, and the title of "celebrity". Modern civilization values materialism, wealth, and money.

At the end of the novel *Money: A Suicide Note*, it is found that Amis satirizes 20th-century capitalism through himself. Modern citizens can't escape money and consumerism. Money and consumerism are a conspiracy, says Amis. Self-marketing has entirely satisfied the Self's desires. His status and identity are tied to money. Self-corrosive indulgence and its destructive effects are easy to see. This dismal depiction of consumption culture reflects postmodern society. He's a postmodern person who would do anything to establish a fake, deceitful image for fame. His alienation and indifference to the community result, and he has little desire to form or sustain non-financial connections.

DeLillo paints a picture of the world in the novel, *White Noise*, that is reminiscent of consumer culture, one in which everything that is connected to the monetary system is acknowledged as being genuine and real. Because the language and vocabulary of a market economy are being applied to other types of discourse (such as educational, religious, medical, and philosophical), these other types of discourse are gradually becoming commodities. The result of this is a reorganization of our understanding of reality as well as educational, religious, professional, and metaphysical practices that are based on a market model. This results in the construction of reality as a mega-market in which everything is for sale and is subject to measurement, quantification, mass production, and mass consumption. Examples of how this ideology manifests itself include the use of analogies like "life credit" and the glorification of supermarkets as the new sources of satisfaction in society. The commodification of language is a crucial stage in the process of its naturalization. This is because the logic of the expansion of capitalism dictates that the entire world become a market.

As a consequence of this, DeLillo shows a society in which nothing can exist apart from the exchange of commodities, and in which this exchange is intertwined with everyone and everything. Everything either eats itself or is consumed by something else. *White Noise's* mystification of everyday could be seen as a reaction to modernism, which linked rationalization with an improved and comprehensive understanding of one's living circumstances, i.e., the conviction that there are no enigmatic, unknowable forces at work. Modernism linked rationalization with an improved and comprehensive

understanding of one's living circumstances. However, in *White Noise*, this tendency is halted, if not reversed, as places like supermarkets become the pinnacle of the mysterious. This is because of the novel's focus on sound as a form of communication. The seemingly mundane has taken on fantastical characteristics, which is a sign that science and technology have not "read" the social world in their entirety.

It is believed by postmodernists that it is at the center of a global economic circuitry and that it is the foundation upon which consumer society is built. Mysteries and other strange occurrences can no longer be found in rural areas and have instead moved into the heart of major cities. This re-enchantment of the world, and especially of every day, is what differentiates postmodernism, and it is exemplified in the work *White Noise*.

*White Noise* by Don DeLillo, on the other hand, tells the story of an empty, yearning ego that is beset by a fear of death once we look beneath the glittering surface of things. Once we do this, we realize that things are not what they appear to be.

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