

Cultural Hegemony in Zia-ul-Haq's Regime: A Marxist Approach in the Novel "A Case of Exploding Mangoes"

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Abstract

This study examines factors behind perpetuation of undemocratic military rule in a democratic country Pakistan by the character of Zia ul Haq in Muhammad's Hanif's novel A Case of Exploding Mangoes (2008). This research further demonstrates the way Zia ul Haq uses soft power to mold the social behavior and mindset of people in Hanif's novel. This study employs a non-empirical method to analyze the query of research under the theoretical groundwork of Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony (1929–1935) that he gave in Prison Notebooks. The use of civil society has been highlighted in this research as a means to manufacture the consent of the masses and rule over them by General Zia-Ul-Haq's regime. Close reading and textual analysis methods have been applied to interpret the chosen novel. The research examines the regime of General Zia-ul-Haq and how social institutions are manipulated to subdue Pakistanis and avoid their insurgence against the undemocratic military dictatorship. For data collection, the researcher probes into the novel and reviews related articles and previous research papers. This paper inspects how Muhammad Hanif dismantles the alternative facts about the reign of General Zia and history in Pakistan. This paper contributes to dismantling power dynamics in society and concealing unjustness. Post-analysis results reveal that ideology and media have been specifically exploited during Zia ul Haq's reign to shape the mindset of the public and get their consent to his undemocratic regime. Islamization of the state was done to get consent of the masses. Media and press were biased and were working to portray positive image of Zia's regime.

Keywords: Cultural Influence, Islamization, Media, Hegemony, Capitalism.

Introduction

The present article inquiries into the Marxist perspective of Muhammad Hanif's debut novel "the case of exploding mangoes" through the cultural hegemony theory of Antonio Gramsci. Muhammad Hanif is a British Pakistani writer, born in Punjab in 1964. After graduating as a pilot officer from Pakistan Air Force Academy, he went after the press as a career. Having worked for various renowned magazines and newspapers as a writer and columnist e.g. BBC, Newsline, Washington Post, and India Today, he is currently a journalist for The New York Times. Famous books by Hanif include A Case of Exploding Mangoes, Red Birds, Our Lady of Alice Bhatti, The Baloch who is not missing, and others who are. Out of these "a case of exploding mangoes" stood out and made it to be long-listed for the Man Booker Prize, shortlisted for the Guardian First Book Award, and won the Commonwealth Prize for Best Book and Shakti Bhatt First Book Prize.

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A Case of Exploding Mangoes (2008) is a colossal amalgamation of fiction and reality. Events shift from the narrator's Ali Shigri life and omniscient description of Pakistani Military dictator Zia ul Haq's life who ruled Pakistan for eleven years. The plot is set months foregoing the plane crash of Pakistan's sixth President Zia ul Haq, which killed all thirty-one people on board. Including senior Pakistani army officers, the United States Ambassador to Pakistan Arnold Raphel, and the chief of the U.S. military mission in Pakistan, Brigadier General Herbert M. Wassom. Embedded with suspense and mystery the novel has an open ending with readers wondering what would have caused the super fit Hercules C130 to go down right after it took off was that a mechanical failure, or because of a crow who was well fed by Zainab in the jail and carried her curse which she said against the man who put her in jail despite of her being innocent.

The sardonic tone of the novel, nonsequential plot, blend of fiction and reality, and gallows humor have made it a timeless masterpiece. The protagonist of the novel Ali Shigri, a junior under officer at Pakistan Air Force Academy wanted to avenge his father's suspicious demise, which he considered assassination by Major Kiyani, an ISI Officer upon the orders of General Zia ul Haq. His parts in the novel involve him making continuous plans to assassinate Zia with the help of his roommate Obaid. The book also sheds light on significant political and social changes in the country during Zia's regime which includes collaboration between the US and Pakistan following the Soviet's attack on Afghanistan, strategic imperatives of both countries in creating a close military alliance, especially in the shape of collaboration of Pakistan and US intelligence agencies. This paper delves into the perspective of Hanif's narrative which serves as a satire and critique of Pakistan's democratic system by highlighting the biases that prevailed in society through media and ideological means incorporating Antonio Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony.

Purpose of the Study

The goal of the study is to discern elements of cultural hegemony, and manipulative and ideological means used by Zia's government to rule and justify its illegitimate government in the novel. This article particularly focuses on the use of cultural institutions explicitly religion, media and press to establish the consent of lower ranking class. By deconstructing and comprehending various modes of domination we can thoroughly apprehend power dynamics within societies and how certain groups perpetuate dominance over others.

Rationale of the Study

Understanding power dynamics in a society assists us in being conscious of people who have authority, how it is preserved, and its effects on various classes within the community. Cultural hegemony controls media narratives and representations, and molds judgment and perspectives of the public. Analyzing it permits us to critically inquire into media messages and recognize biases, stereotypes, and negligence that support assertive ideologies.

Research Question

After perusing the novel, the researchers have come up with a certain problem that can be identified as.

1. How does Zia ul Haq's military regime continued for ten years in a democratic country Pakistan as mentioned by Hanif in the novel?

Literature Review

The following review assists in placing this research within the existing body of Marxist theory. It gives background information and situates this research work in relation to what has already

been studied about politics and domination in regard to the novel. A lot of research has been done on the novel since its publication, exploring various themes and aspects including the Marxist approach of ideology and state apparatuses, praetorianism, feminism, psychoanalysis, totalitarianism, postcolonial, post-modernistic and structuralist analysis, etc. This research fills the gap by highlighting a cultural aspect of domination within the context of Hanif's novel.

Recent Studies

According to Zeeshan and Khan (2024) research on eco-critical analysis of nature and political decay in Mohammad Hanif's *A Case of Exploding Mangoes*, Hanif's use of ecological themes serves as a powerful critique of authoritarian regimes and their impact on both the physical environment and the symbolic landscape of the nation. Their research emphasizes the importance of genuine environmental commitment in the face of political manipulation and propaganda.

Rahim et al. (2023) have analyzed the novel under the theoretical framework of Louis Althusser's ideas of ideology, ideological state apparatuses (ISAs), repressive state apparatuses (RSAs), interpellation, and most notably, the subject model this theory highlights the idea of a "mutual relationship between the subject and ideology". In their article, they have placed emphasis on the use of repressive state apparatuses (RSAs) in General Zia-ul-Haq's rule. In Althusser's viewpoint, the state works as a "machine" of repression that supports the bourgeois class and the "class" of affluent proprietors in the nineteenth century in keeping up to preside over the working class. This makes it possible for the former to use the state apparatus against the latter, a kind of capitalist exploitation known as surplus-value extortion. The foremost concerns of their research were to explore ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses that were manipulated to create conformist subjects during Zia's regime. Their research has mentioned that Zia overthrew the government of the Pakistan People's Party through the use of repressive state apparatuses against Bhutto. The paper concluded on the note that the authoritative potential of ideology leads people to become conformist subjects of a state. It gives emphasis to the use of social and religious institutions as devices to create subordinates. This paper highlights the distorted chronicle of justice under the self-created ordinances foisted by higher authorities in the name of Islam as an ideology of the state. It accentuates Muhammad Hanif's justification of ideological state apparatuses and repressive state apparatuses in the construction of the desired society in Pakistan.

Arafat (2020) in his article analyzed the totalitarian factors and colonial legacies practiced by General Zia in his autocratic jurisdiction and pointed up General Zia's exploitation of people by using Islamization and the doctrine of nationalism. His research has also foregrounded the fiasco and incompetence of dictatorial rule and focuses on the autocratic ways of such an authoritarian control. The article came up with various factors of totalitarianism like exertion of power, oppression, menace, homicide, kidnapping, and incarcerating those people who stood against these undemocratic policies. The paper also highlights the Colonial legacy in the form of a master-slave relationship between authority and the masses and censorship of media.

Khalid et al. (2023) have examined historicism principle to ridicule Pakistani politics during the Zia-ul-Haq government in order to show how reality and fiction interact in Mohammed Hanif's novel. They examined Hanif's usage of a combination of historical allusions and fictional elements to offer a crucial analysis of power struggles, corruption, and resistance within Pakistani society. Their study emphasized the notion that historical narratives are shaped by the cultural, social and political environments in which they are created within the framework of historicism theory.

Marxism

According to Karl Marx in the preface to his *Zur Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* (contribution to the critique of political economy).

Economic structure of society is the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and intellectual processes of life (Marx, 1859).

German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels instigated the theory of Marxism in the mid-19th century, an ideology and socioeconomic theory that then assisted in laying the foundation of communism. It argues that all human beings should have the privilege to reap financial rewards from their labor, but this is hampered in a capitalist economic system. The fundamental concept of the Marxist theory relies on class division of society and class struggle. The structure of capitalism constructs a societal split into two classes: the non-owning workers and the nonworking owners. Marx called this condition "alienation" and assumed that when workers retrieve the fruits of their labor, this alienation would be eradicated and class stratification would vanish. As per the theory of Marxism, all societies have the oppressors and the oppressed, and the oppressed are ultimately bound to resist and create a new society and economy.

Research Methodology

This research is reflexive and non-empirical in approach which is predicated on textual analysis and close reading of Hanif's novel "a case of exploding mangoes" (2008). Non-empirical research is a type of research that relies on existing facts, theories, or literature. Broadening the horizon and discerning various disciplines by hinging on existing theories and concepts has been a key role of non-empirical research. As of qualitative in nature this research is based on subjective interpretations of the researcher and relies on close reading. The mindful reading and tenacious inspection of a short material is known as close reading. To analyze the text of the novel, the theory of cultural hegemony under the Marxist school of thought by Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci has been used as a theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

To analyze the domination and regime of Zia ul Haq, cultural hegemony theory by Antonio Francesco Gramsci has been used, which he gave in his series of essays prison notebooks (1929-1935) when he was imprisoned due to being a vocal critic of Benito Mussolini and fascism. The Prison Notebooks are regarded as a primordial contribution to 20th-century political theory. According to Gramsci, consent to the rule of the dominant group is achieved by the spread of ideologies, beliefs, assumptions, and values through social institutions.

Gramsci has also mentioned his concept of cultural hegemony in his pre-prison writings.

The second usage refers more broadly to the organization of the cultural, moral and ideological consent of the population to the prevailing political and economic system through the institutions of the civil society, such as school, churches, parties, etc. (Gramsci, 1994, 38).

Antonio Gramsci extended the concept of cultural hegemony out of Karl Marx's theory that the dominant ideology of society reflects the beliefs and interests of the ruling class. It is worth mentioning that Marx dissects society into two major components: a base and a superstructure. The first constitutes the economic structure and the second by socializing apparatuses including language, religion, education, law, ideology, mass media, and the army. According to Gramsci,

the bourgeois established consent by controlling the superstructure, and the subordinate people were controlled to the extent that they did not even think of interrogating the dominant system of rule which they perceived as normal. The dominant groups efficiently deal with people and get their compliance to keep in place their rules. This is how the dominant groups are brainwashed and manipulated into accepting the economic, political, and social leadership of the dominant class.

Gramsci emphasizes the role of ideology. In his opinion, before the ruling class resorts to direct force and coercion, it seeks to make its rule acceptable to all classes. This is what Gramsci calls “hegemony” (Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p.2).

The cultural hegemony theory of Gramsci brings light on the role of civil society including academic and faith-based organizations, mass organizations, social movements, and campaign networks to establish the consent of the proletariat and maintain the domination of the bourgeois. Domination through cultural means is usually attained through social institutions, which enable the ruling class to strongly influence the principles, ethics, morals, norms, ideas, expectations, worldview, and behavior of the rest of society.

“A Case of Exploding Mangoes” in Light of Antonio Gramsci’s Theory

Social institution refers to a group or organization that has particular roles, standards, and expectations, that work to meet the social requirements of the community. Instances of social institutions are family, religion, government, media and education etc. In the novel, the government of Zia is shown to have control over the media and press. The media used to publish articles and news in favor of the government to win over people and tune them to think that contemporary government is working well for the welfare of society and mankind. Further religion was also used to get the consent of a majority of people. The illegitimate and undemocratic government of Zia took the support of religion to justify its rule.

Textual Analysis

Textual references from the book will justify the theory under discussion in the novel. The foremost consideration of research is to find how social institutions specifically media shown to be used by Zia ul Haq’s government in the book to establish the consent of the masses and helped him maintain his regime.

For Gramsci, the dominant classes maintain their rule through the use of cultural institutions to establish the consent of the subaltern classes. That is, instead of using force and coercion, the ruling class develops a hegemonic culture through the use of ideology to manipulate other classes into accepting their status as subaltern (Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p.2).

The theory of cultural hegemony by Gramsci emphasizes the ways in which civil society helps the ruling class to establish hegemony.

How Zia ul Haq Came Into Power

Muhammad Hanif’s blatant novel gives an account of the life of the second chief of army staff and sixth President of Pakistan General Zia ul Haq. He installed himself through the 1977 Pakistani military coup (operation fair play) when conditions of civil revolt arose as a consequence of anti-Bhutto commotion. It was carried out by Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, the chief of army staff, overthrowing the regime of Pakistan People’s Party’s leader Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He mentioned himself as the chief Martial Law administrator. The imposition of Martial Law with ‘operation fair play’ was a peaceful procedure and not a single bullet was fired like the coups of the past. People remained busy with their daily routine matters. No discontentment was seen from people against military interference. As per the words of Zia military had no

interest in political affairs, and Martial law was imposed to fill the political gap. Further, he mentioned that his sole aim was to organize free and fair elections which would be held in October of that year. Powers would be transferred to the public representatives. The irony was principles of democracy were not observed for many years. With the passage of time, Zia-ul-Haq slowly intruded more into politics. The objectives of the coup were extended from the election to the liability of the politicians by Zia.

Manipulation of Ideology to Establish Hegemony

Gramsci pays more attention to ideology and ideas. For him, as long as the ideas of the subaltern people are dominated, the dominant class will not need to use force and oppression to maintain its rule (Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p.5).

Despite being a dominating dictator, President General Zia-ul-Haq faced legitimacy issues, and maintaining tenure was troublesome for him. So, he had to adopt certain deportment to prolong his incumbency. President Zia brought in the 'Islamic political system'. He succeeded in keeping up his hegemony with the assistance of this system to debar the political parties. As Edward Said a Palestinian-American philosopher and academic asserts that it is through culture and ideology that the Western powers encourage particular thoughts which makes their invasion of the Orient legal. To justify his undemocratic rule and prolong his regime he made up his mind to culturally dominate the society and bolster the ideology of the masses as Antonio Gramsci described this concept in his theory of cultural hegemony. To achieve this goal he instigated Islamization in politics to get the consent of a majority of the population. This kind of power is distinct from rule by force because it allows the ruling class to exercise authority using the "peaceful" means of ideology and culture. As mentioned by the author in the following lines.

The generals who had called Zia a mullah behind his back felt ashamed at having underestimated him: not only was he a mullah, he was a mullah whose understanding of religion didn't go beyond parroting what he had heard from the next mullah. A mullah without a beard, a mullah in a four-star general's uniform, a mullah with the instincts of a corrupt tax inspector (Hanif, 2008, p. 32)

In the book, Zia ul Haq is shown to dissimulate his own interests under the ideology of religion and pretend to be a sincere patriotic personality. It is evident that the ideology of Islam was maneuvered to achieve popularity and approval of society so that they could be controlled and commanded. The real teachings of Islam were largely ignored as apparent from the case of blind Zainab. Despite being the victim of men's brutality, she was accused of being an adulterer as she had inadequate chunks of evidence to prove herself innocent and consequently convicted to be stoned in front of the public as a paradigm. The Islamic doctrine against adultery was misconstrued and Zainab is an example. This era is regarded as the origination of women's activism against Zia's repressive laws. He further addressed people that the imposition of Islam by the ruler of the Islamic State could not be challenged by anyone, ensured that his rule would ascertain bring in line with the situation of law and order, conducting free and fair elections and handing over the authority to the elected representatives. This process would be a 90-day operation. General Zia and his associates were quite aware that under the constitution of Pakistan 1973, it is treachery to depose the elected government and the retribution of treason was sentence to death. That being the case motto of Islamization was introduced by the military to establish the legitimacy of Zia ul Haq's regime and extend the duration of the tenancy of martial law the elections were delayed after 90 days and the accountability of the politicians was highlighted. The extreme of using ideology in domination can be seen from the 1984 referendum where Voters were asked whether they wanted to hold up the Islamist ideology of Pakistan. The referendum turned out to be a tool to extend Zia-ul-Haq's Presidential term by

five years. 98.5% of voters gave their consent in favor of Islamization, since it is Muslim majority region and voted in favor of a state that will be functioning in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah, ultimately meant voting for Zia. and his Islamization program continued as the predominant policy of his administration.

Gramsci insists on the role of ideology by which the dominant class maintains its rule and domination in society. For Gramsci, instead of imposing its rule by means of force and coercion, the ruling class seeks to establish the consent of other classes to their rule (Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p.2).

The same concept was explained by Gramsci where he gave prominence to the role of ideology to get benefit from the proletariat by the ruling class. According to Gramsci's perspective, the ruling class first makes its sovereignty acceptable by all social divisions of society and then it exercises direct force and oppression. This concept of Gramsci is called "hegemony" which is contrary to Marxist's out-and-out focus on sole utilization of power to dominate.

Exploitation of Media to Achieve Consent of the Masses

From Gramsci's viewpoint approbation to the sovereignty of the authoritative class is obtained by the dissemination of ideologies, beliefs, assumptions, and values through social institutions such as schools, churches, courts, media, etc. The writer has highlighted the use of media, print, and press by the ruling class in the novel to spread their agenda. As mentioned by the author.

The Information Minister knew how to handle these newspaper editors. General Zia had tried to cultivate these editors himself and found out that they were the kind of intellectuals who prayed with him devoutly then rushed off to get drunk in the hotel rooms that his government provided them, with the booze that the information Minister bought them (Hanif, 2008, p.87).

In the above lines extracted from the book, it is evident that the Media and Press were biased and controlled by the government. Editors, intellectuals, and media persons were paid to write and speak in favor of the government and show the masses the acceptable and reverent face of leading figures. As asserted by Gramsci society's intellectuals, are actually rooted in an affluent social class and relish great dignity. They serve the role of "deputies" of the ruling class, and instruct and motivate people to go along with the standards, norms, and laws established by the ruling class. A new tenure of censorship was witnessed, with the government now diligently involved in what was being printed. Zia-ul-Haq's regime from 1977-1988 is considered a dreadful era for press autonomy in Pakistan's history. The regime tightly controlled and censored media. Editors who would publish derogatory remarks against the government were subjected to the infliction of a penalty of ten lashes and were held captive for 25 years. Provincial governments were asked to carry out the censorship before publication through their administrations. Journalists who criticized the government faced imprisonment, flogging, and bans on their publications. Over 100 journalists participated in hunger strikes protesting the censorship in 1977-1978. Pakistan did not grow much economically during Zia's regime, remaining one of the poorest developing nations. The reign also promulgated an extremist Islamic ideology through state media, reviving censorship of radio, TV, and print. Gramsci described the power of ideology to reproduce the social structure through institutions such as religion and education

Social Welfare Program and Constant Efforts to Have a Positive Image in Media

According to Gramsci, cultural hegemony is the outcome of socialization, our involvement with social institutions, and our exposure to cultural narratives, all of which reflect the beliefs and values of the ruling class. In the novel one such scene is mentioned during the time when General Zia was not leaving the Army house even for state functions because of Code Red he was notified by the Information Minister that he was losing his acclaim among the public

because of a shortage of ideas to keep General in the television news headline. Just then Zia decided to arrange charity for widows. Here the writer has assembled an anti-public sort of storyline in which Zia is shown to be less bothered with public issues and more concerned for his popularity and imposter that he has created to be lovable among indigenous people. But the banner for the charity program says “president’s rehabilitation program for windows”. The name on the banner holds great irony and reveals reality as the window symbolizes watching outside. Zia has arranged this program not for widows but actually for windows this means that this charity was for flaunting and brandishing to bring him back in the eyes and hearts of people as people were bored from the repeated unchanging news. Establishing the consent of people by promoting and helping them is what Gramsci has mentioned in his theory.

It would be a nice change for the news agenda. People are losing interest in all the talk about the Soviets going home and our Afghan Mujahedin shooting at each other (El Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p.111).

This time without the television camera. General Zia’s movements became mechanical, he barely looked at the women when they stepped forward to receive their envelopes. He even ignored their blessings (El Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p. 116).

Formerly he was in a loquacious mood when the camera was on, he was having a light-hearted conversation with widows and was asking them to pray for his health. But as soon as the camera turned off, a drastic contrast was seen in his interaction with them with his movements became fast and abrupt. At one point writer has mentioned some stern words of Zia’s wife, “telling the world that this Man of Faith, The Man of Truth, this Friend of the Widows was nothing but a tit-ogler” (ibid, p.110).

In a satirical tone the writer has shown Zia’s concern for women as ostentatious through the words of the first lady.

Biased Media

Gramsci takes Marx’s division of the state into a base and a superstructure a step further when he divides the superstructure into what he calls political society and civil society. Civil society refers to those institutions that are not coercive, including all institutions used in the construction of public opinion. To put it in Gramsci’s words, “everything which influences or is able to influence public opinion, directly or indirectly, belongs to it: libraries, schools, associations and clubs of various kinds (Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p.5).

While Ali Shigri was in the dungeon of the Lahore fort, he got to talk with a fellow civilian neighbor through a small opening in the wall who was "Secretary General" of the All Pakistan Sweepers Union surviving in reclusive imprisonment for nine years a charge of an assassination attempt on General Zia. Ali was stunned at being mistreated by him because he thought civilians adored the army because of what he observed from his surroundings. As is evident from his words. “I thought civilians loved our uniforms. There are songs on the radio and dramas on television and special editions of newspapers celebrating this uniform” (Hanif,2008, p.123).

The Pakistan Times at that time was a puppet of the government and would print the praise and honor of the government. Mentioned in the book is one such incident when the editor of the Pakistan Times was nominated for a national literary award when he wrote extensive praise of Zia.

“He was particularly pleased with the three-picture strip idea that the Pakistan Times had come up with to illustrate the main points from the extempore part of his speech” (El Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p.87).

So the army cadets in the military academies would get the newspapers speaking in favor of the country’s regime to revive and maintain the sentiments of nationalism and patriotism in

youth. One of the aspects of cultural hegemony is to maintain the ideology of the masses and promote their values and beliefs. “The only newspaper that we get in the Academy is the Pakistan Times which on any given day has a dozen pictures of General Zia, and the only civilians who figure in it are the ones lining up to pay their respects to him” (El Aidi & Yechouti, 2017, p. 123).

Findings

“Gramsci pays more attention to ideology and ideas. For him, as long as the ideas of the subaltern people are dominated, the dominant class will not need to use force and oppression to maintain its rule” (Aidi & Yechouti, 2017).

As mentioned in the above lines that Gramsci in his theory has defined that in order to maintain the dominance the ruling class promotes the ideology of masses, the ideology of Islam has been manipulated by Zia’s regime as Hanif has mentioned in the novel to maintain his rule.

Hanif has incorporated a satirical tone throughout his book while expressing his views about Pakistan’s system of government. Findings are extracted based on the novel’s depiction of civil society’s utilization by Zia ul Haq to get access to an authoritative position with respect to Antonio Gramsci’s framework of cultural domination. This study revolves around ways Hanif has portrayed ideology, culture, and media in his book as a means to become acceptable in the public’s eye by Zia ul Haq who was in an illegitimate position of power and to avoid insurgence from masses due to illegal usurpation of government through the lens of Marxism.

Discussion

Keeping in mind the aspects of Marxism that highlight the class differences and struggles and the role of social institutions in maintaining the consent of the proletariat, the objectives of this research are devised. This study is based on extended opinions and facets of Marxist theory put forward by Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci in his famous series of essays “the prison notebooks” (1947). The research is organized on the concept of cultural domination by exhibiting a thorough analysis of “a case of exploding mangoes” by Muhammad Hanif. The outcomes of this study reveal that undemocratic rule in the democratic country Pakistan was kept up by Zia Ul Haq because he integrated Islamic laws in social, economic, and political domains and got support from a majority of the population as Pakistan is a Muslim majority country. Media and press were also under the control of Zia’s military regime which used to depict the side of the ruling class most likely to be appreciated and admired by people. Through such social institutions, Zia’s regime was shown to be heroic and stupendous and the ones who denied the authoritarian regime were suppressed and tortured. All these ideas are aligned with Gramsci’s theory of cultural hegemony. By dismantling the fundamental structures and means of domination, Hanif’s viewpoint in the novel provides us with a broader understanding of power dynamics in a society. The findings of this study affirm that the narrative of Hanif’s book strikes a chord with Marxist views, offering valuable discernment of Pakistan’s political and social history. Gramsci’s perspective of Marxism suggests that cultural domination is a tool that can conceal unlawful authoritarian regimes. A comprehensive example has been shown through Zia’s undemocratic rule for a considerable period of time. Zia’s strategy to rule is a depiction of Gramsci’s idea of domination through cultural means.

Conclusion

Accordingly, it can be put forward that this research has been intended to investigate the cultural, social, and ideological factors that contribute to establishing the consent of the public and maintaining power in society since his government was undemocratic in a democratic country. In this novel, Muhammad Hanif ingeniously illustrates the character of Zia as one who

manipulated ideology and social institutions to strengthen his feet in the domain of politics. Different instruments were used by the regime e.g. religion and media to maintain the dominance and hegemony over the citizens of Pakistan. The novel “a case of exploding mangoes” is one of Hanif’s literary works that criticizes dictatorial government. Repression, arrests, torture, corruption by high rank officials, manipulation, the obedience of the masters of first-world countries by the Pakistani government, and support of America and Pakistan for Afghani fighters against the Soviets have been shown in the novel through a blend of satire and humor. Besides Zia ul Haq figure, Hanif also describes Ali Shigri as the main character who tries to go against the authority and rules, his plans ultimately land him in trouble but he continues his efforts to achieve his goals. At the end of the story, he survives as luck made him get down from the unfortunate Pak One and his aim of seeing Zia dead was accomplished not by him, but by an incident whose causes are kept ambiguous by the author.

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