



## Exploitation of Minority Community in Nasrin's Lajja: Marxist Perspective

Bimal Kishore Shrivastwa<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup> Tribhuvan University, Biratnagar, Nepal. Email: [bimalksrivastav@gmail.com](mailto:bimalksrivastav@gmail.com)

### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article History:

Received: August 15, 2022

Revised: September 29, 2022

Accepted: September 29, 2022

Available Online: September 30, 2022

#### Keywords:

Anti-humanism

Communalism

Communism

Exploitation

Minority

#### Funding:

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

### ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to examine the terrific effects of the economic exploitation and domination of the plebeian Hindu communities by the majority of aristocratic Muslim communities in Bangladesh in Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja*. The genesis of the novel lies in the demolition of the Babri Masjid in India by Hindu extremists on December 1, 1992, and its effects in Bangladesh thereafter. The destruction of the temples, burning down of shops and houses, and rape of the proletariat Hindu women clearly signify the exploitation of the proletariat by the capitalists. The research tool used to survey the issue is the Marxist theoretical perspectives elaborated by Lois Tyson and Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. This conflict is similar to the scenario of Marxism, which deals with the conflict between the oppressed class and the oppressor. The Hindu minority community can be compared to the exploited class and the Muslim fundamentalists as the exploiters. The chief finding of the research is that the lower class Hindu women were raped, and the proletariat Hindu males were beaten; their property was destroyed or looted by the so-called Muslim capitalists, taking advantage of the weakness of the plebeians. Nasrin has portrayed the harassment, discrimination, and persecution of lower-class Hindu people by the bourgeois Muslims in Bangladesh. It is expected that readers opting to approach Nasrin from the Marxist perspective can take the paper as a reference.

© 2022 The Authors, Published by IRASD. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)

Corresponding Author's Email: [bimalksrivastav@gmail.com](mailto:bimalksrivastav@gmail.com)

## 1. Introduction

In addition to the geo-political, religious, ethnic, and cultural differences, the differentiation of people in terms of class is also responsible for the exploitation of the minority community. It is not uncommon to observe communal violence in the South Asian communities set up in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India (Hasan, 2013). Despite the religious and cultural diversity in the Middle East regions, the problem of their stability has always been a major concern for humanitarians (Engineer, 1997). In his research paper on Nasrin's *Lajja* from a feminist perspective, Paudyal (2021) marked the religious and political turmoil impeding the liberty of the minority women in Bangladesh. Recipient of UNESCO-Madan jeet Singh prize in 2004 for the advocacy of non-violence, Nasrin always struggled for gender, social, and religious equality in Bangladesh. Nasrin fought against the repression of a Hindu minority, the mistreatment of Bangladeshi migrant workers by members of richer Muslim states (Zaman, 1999). Despite being a Muslim, Nasrin has also used her pen to write against the class discrimination and oppression exercised by the dominant Muslims over the marginalized Hindus in Bangladesh (Datta, 1996). Nasrin is often compared with Salman Rushdie because both authors were denounced by extremist native people because of their controversial issues (Kothaikani & Sathurappasamy, 2019). Despite being the bestseller, *Lajja*, published in 1993, is the most controversial novel of Nasrin. The event lasted for thirteen

days, but the novelist wrote it in seven days not, knowing that it would become a controversial and a bestseller in Bangladesh, Pakistan, India, and other parts of the world.

The rationale for the paper lies in exploring the motive of the exploitation of the poor Dutta family by the Muslim bourgeois from the Marxist perspective. *Lajja* chiefly depicts the aftermath of the demolition of the Babari Masjid, leading to the slaughter of the innocent Hindus and rape of the Hindu women (Yadav, 2020). The narrative of *Lajja* captures the terror and dilemma of the Dutta family, who belong to the poor Hindu community, living in Dhaka after the devastation of the Babri Masjid in India (Revathy & Senthamarai, 2020). The Dutta family consists of four members; Sudhamoy and his wife, Kironmoyee, live with their children, Suranjan (son) and Maya (daughter). Fearing the approaching ethnic conflict, Kironmoyee and Maya, her daughter, intend to migrate from Bangladesh for safe shelter, but Sudhamoy and his son, Suranjan, ignore their intention (Datta, 1996; Yadav, 2020). Kothaikani and Sathurappasamy (2019) analyze the trauma confronted by women in *Lajja* from a feminist perspective because Maya was abducted by Muslim extremists. The Dutta family looks for Maya but cannot find her. The Muslim fanatics might have raped and killed her. Seeking vengeance against Muslims, Suranjan drags a Muslim girl into room. He commits adultery with her though she turns out to be prostitute. In the end, Suranjan leaves her without any harm. Some research questions marked by the researcher are: Is communal violence, as imposed on the Dutta family, a matter of religious or racial conflict only? Or, how far do economic and class differences affect these issues? The chief objective of the paper is to note the impact of economic exploitation on the lives of the oppressed Dutta family after their manipulation by the oppressor. A careful examination of the novel, *Lajja*, reveals that the Hindu people of Bangladesh in general, and the Hindu women of Bangladesh, in particular, were oppressed on economic grounds.

## 2. Survey of the Reviews on *Lajja*

Nasrin's debut novel, *Lajja*, received some favorable and some controversial reviews from many critics around the world. Most critics from the international forum seem to support her voice raised through the novel. A group of critics has paid attention to the challenges confronted by Nasrin while addressing the issues of class and gender in *Lajja*. The critic, Zaman (1999), appreciated Nasrin for breaking the trend of marginalizing women in Bangladesh in these words: "Her book, *Lajja*, represented more geo-politics in the subcontinent than feminist views in Bangladesh". If Nasrin had not ventured to address the feminist issues, the conditions of many women in Bangladesh would still have remained jeopardized. Paudyal (2021) stated, "Nasrin's work introduced the paradigmatic shift to view the women's issues". Patriarchal norms have been suppressing women for a long time in Bangladesh.

Another critic, Datta (1996), observed the link between the dismantling of Babri Masjid by the Hindu extremists in India and its adverse impact on the innocent women of Bangladesh. It is male chauvinism and dogmatic religious practices that push women to remain passive in Bangladesh. Therefore, Nasrin is portraying the victimization of women caused by patriarchal norms. There are some critics who interpret communalism as the root cause of women's subjugation and domestic violence both in the Muslim and Hindu communities. Rao (2009) observed problems of the minority groups in *Lajja* in these words:

Nasrin strives to show how communal violence has been generated by the lunatic fringe in all communities, how innocent persons are duped into serving the ulterior purpose of communalists, and how extremist elements in the communities in fuse tension and hatred for their own ends at the cost of inter-communal harmony.

The religious anarchy led to the suffering of the minority groups in Bangladesh. Communalism, based on religious belief, is the principal motive for the domination of the minority groups by the majority groups. According to Yadav (2020), Nasrin, being a woman, speaks against the maltreatment of women or the manifold dominations imposed on women in the Islamic world.

When people become atheists, religion becomes chaotic. As a result, innocent people have to experience these horrible events. Pathan and Jasrai (2016) denounced the victimization of innocent people by communalism: "The spectre of communalism haunts

the Duttas, Sudhamoy and Kironmoyee, the couple and their son, Suranjan, and daughter, Maya". The destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, India, crushed humanity.

Pathan and Jasrai (2016) further say, "*Lajja-Shame*, the most controversial novel by Taslima Nasrin, is a bold attempt to redefine religion and humanism in the most dreadful manner". If the novel is controversial, Nasrin seeks to redefine humanity. Judging on the thematic aspect of *Lajja*, Banashankari (2015) commented, "The novel depicts the struggle of a patriotic Bangladeshi Hindu family living in a Muslim environment". Cultural and ethnic differences were the principal causes of the Hindu-Muslims conflicts in Bangladesh.

In this way, many critics have surveyed the novel, *Lajja*, from feminist, racial, and religious perspectives. But the critics have missed the opportunity to trace out the class differences as the motive for the reflection of conflict in the novel. Herein lies the research gap. This paper, therefore, seeks to address the gap and analyze the exploitation of the minority community from the Marxist perspective.

### **3. Methodology and Conceptual Framework**

The research is based on the theoretical framework of Marxist criticism elaborated by Lois Tyson, and Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. The primary source of this research was the novel, *Lajja* by Taslima Nasrin. To justify the working hypothesis, this paper applied an interpretative qualitative approach to research by using primary as well as secondary resources such as critics' and readers' reviews of *Lajja* collected from journals, and websites.

Marxist theory stands as a meaningful tool to interpret history or current events. According to Tyson (2006), "all human events and productions have specific material/historical causes". In Marxist terminology, the material circumstances refer to the "economic conditions" (Tyson, 2006), and the "social/political/historical atmosphere generated by material conditions is called the historical situation" (Tyson, 2006). Marxist theory places a special focus on the role of ideology. For Marxism, "an ideology is a belief system, and all belief systems are products of cultural conditioning" (Tyson, 2006). Or, an ideology is a "superstructure generated out of the socio-economist base" (Abrams, 1993). There are different manifestations of ideologies, such as capitalism, communism, patriotism, religion, humanism, and ethical systems. Marxism reminds us that we are always in grip of some repressive ideologies, and "subservient to the ruling power system" (Tyson, 2006). Marxist theory was propounded by Karl Marx whose main concern was over the rise of a capitalist economy, and the effect of capitalism on human values. Marx and Engels (1967) observed that the proletariat became dissociated from their products and labor after the rise of the capitalist society. Marxist critics speak against the commodification of human values. Tyson (2006) writes, "An object becomes a commodity only when it has exchange value or sign-exchange value, and both forms of value are determined by the society in which the object is exchanged" (Tyson, 2006). For Marxist thinkers, religion is also an ideology that forces the proletariat to tolerate the power relations created by her capitalists. The Marxist reading of the literature identifies the social and psychological problems produced by the material and historical realities. Both communism and individualism become handicapped in capitalism (Zubok, 2010). Communism is a principle of providing justice with equal distributions of social, natural, and cultural values to each member of society.

The Marxist approaches highlighted by Tyson and other critics are the valuable tools used to evaluate how the misconception of communism leads to communalism in Nasrin's novel, *Lajja*. A powerful community, Muslim, becomes the oppressor and oppresses the plebeian Hindus in Bangladesh.

### **4. Analysis and Interpretation**

Taslima Nasrin's *Lajja* can be viewed and analyzed as a communist manifesto which deals with the class struggle; the struggle between the ruling class and the ruled people. With the issue of the demolition of Babri Masjid in India, the Muslim fundamentalists in India and across India started killing innocent Hindu men, raping innocent Hindu women, looting their houses and shops, and burning them down. Communism is one of the ideologies produced by the ruling class to repress the minority (Tyson, 2006). Many Hindus living in Bangladesh had already migrated to India because of the fear generated by the demolition saga.

The struggling Hindu minority community in Bangladesh is seen as the struggle of working class people; and the Muslim majority of Bangladesh is taken as the capitalists. The capitalists possess absolute power to dominate the proletariat (Tyson, 2006). Kironmoyee, wife of Sudhamoy Dutta, is a representative of the working class people who are traumatized by the riots arising everywhere after the demolition of Babri Masjid. She says to her husband, Sudhamoy, "Let's go away to India. All our neighbors are leaving one by one" (Nasrin, 1993). Even Nemai said to him, "Sudha-da, the army is out on the streets. They are catching Hindus and killing them. Come, let us run away" (Nasrin, 1993). For generations, the Duttas had been landowners near Myemsingh, which was in Pakistan after the partition, but is now in Bangladesh (Datta, 1996). Sudhamoy's father had refused to escape from Pakistan after the partition, though most Hindus had left for India. He argued, "Why should I leave my homeland and go somewhere else? If I live it will be on this soil, and if I die it will be in the very same place" (Nasrin, 1993). Sudhamoy, who was a medical student at the time, believed in his father's rationale. Sudhamoy denies going away from Bangladesh. Rather, he continues working as a physician and gets involved in the national and secular movements that gained Bangladesh independence from Pakistan in 1971 (Yadav, 2020). The wife of Sudhamoy, Kironmoyee, also stays with him, though most of their relatives have moved to Calcutta in the time of urgency and riotism.

From the Marxist perspective, Kironmoyee and Nemai are the representatives of the poor people. The poor believe that "if they remain non-violent, they will find their reward in heaven" (Tyson, 2006). Kironmoyee and Nemai believe that they will find their place in heaven by adhering to the practices of the capitalists or the Muslim majority.

But Sudhamoy curses all the Hindu people who are leaving Bangladesh as "cowards" (Nasrin, 1993). Sudhamoy is determined not to leave the country under any circumstances. Rather, he fights against all the circumstances as a proletariat battles against the bourgeoisie. The existence of capitalism promotes commodification (Marx & Engels, 1994). Perhaps the Muslim majority in Bangladesh had the intention of repressing the Hindus as commodities by displaying violent acts. Neo-Marxists make strong resistance against the exploitation of the proletariats on their economic basis (Blackledge, 2004). Sudhamoy acts as a neo-Marxist. Sudhamoy's fight symbolizes the struggle of working class people against the capitalists for an equal distribution of rights. During the Hindu-Muslim riots evoked after the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947, Sudhamoy's father, Sukumar Dutta, "had been firm in his decision not to leave the country" (Nasrin, 1993). Sudhamoy demonstrates the same stance when he tells Nemai, "You go if you want to. I am not running away from my home" (Nasrin, 1993). The capitalists seek to hold all the positions and power in society so that they can rule the proletariat (Mishra, 2014). But Sudhamoy is not going to be ruled by the Muslim plutocrats in Bangladesh.

A catastrophe occurs in the novel, *Lajja*, when Maya, daughter of Sudhamoy and Kironmoyee, is abducted by Muslim fanatics. Marx and Engels (1994) opined that religion is "an opium of the masses", an ideology that assists the dominant to govern the marginal economically. After the abduction of Maya, the terror of the family is materialized. And this leads to a gradual forfeit in the nationalistic faith of Sudhamoy as well. Suranjan, son of Sudhamoy, had never claimed himself to be a Hindu, to be influenced by his father (Banashankari, 2015). He used to call himself "a human being and believed in humanism" (Nasrin, 1993). But after this disaster, he started considering that the aristocratic Muslims would not let him live easily as a human being. The inhuman behavior displayed by the dominant capitalist group upon weak and poor gives rise to the communal feeling (Postone, 2003). With these communal feelings, Sudhamoy too victimizes the female who had nothing to do with communal dispute.

It looks as if Nasrin is making a savage indictment of religious extremism and man's inhumanity to man. Extremism is also a type of ideology produced from the capitalist ground. According to Marxist thinkers, an ideology is a "superstructure generated out of the socio-economic base" (Abrams, 1993). Nasrin criticizes the capitalist males who have bullied proletariat women as weaker sex:

When it came to the young women, it was not a matter of Hindus and Muslims but a question of the weak always being bullied by the strong. Women were the weaker sex, and as such were oppressed by men, who were the stronger sex (Nasrin, 1993).

The minorities, whether belonging to the destitute Hindu or Muslim community, have always been dominated by the bourgeois majority in Bangladesh. Suppressing of the weak has become a part of society, and due to this condition, the higher class Muslims dominated lower class Hindus in Bangladesh.

The moment the Muslims in Bangladesh start "destroying the temples and houses of Hindus" (Nasrin, 1993), Suranjan also wants to destroy their mosques and houses. Realizing that Suranjan will do nothing to help the family, poor Maya goes to stay with a rich Muslim friend. Proletariat Suranjan does not like his sister asking for help with the Muslim oppressors. A few days later, when Sudhamoy is attacked by a heart attack, Maya comes back to look after him. But then some bourgeois Islamthugs invade the house and abduct proletariat Maya. In this tension and stress, Suranjan becomes revengeful towards the whole Muslim clan. Marx and Engels (1994) believed that "The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles". Suranjan's contempt for the aristocratic Muslims is his contempt for the capitalists and his struggle against them.

Suranjan determines to take revenge with the aristocrat Muslims by raping the Muslim girl as the Muslims were doing the same with the poor Hindu girls. He feels so revengeful that he drags a whore into his home. He abuses an innocent Muslim female who has nothing to do with the abduction of his sister Maya. The action can be noticed in this narrative:

He threw the girl on the floor and stripped her of all her clothes. Suranjan took quick, deep breaths as he dug his nails into the girl's flesh. He bit her breasts, one part of mind understanding that what he was doing was certainly not love. Relentlessly he pulled her hair; bit her on the cheek, neck and breasts. He scratched her waist, her stomach, her buttocks and her thighs with his sharp nails. The girl was only a prostitute, after all. He continued to hurt her till he could do no more, and then he raped her (Nasrin, 1993).

To Suranjan, the Muslim girl belongs to the capitalist community. He is longing to rape one of them, in revenge for what they have done to his sister. He intends to compensate for his sister's abduction by raping a Muslim girl. Suranjan's intention of raping the Muslim girl is a kind of struggle of the proletariat against the feudal Muslims in Bangladesh. Marxist literature reflects the contradictions of social life objectively (Jay, 1984; Tyson, 2006). We can compare Suranjan's battle against the Muslims as his struggle against the exploitation of the plebeians by the capitalists. Thus, this makes us clear that if the capitalists' exploitation is extreme, violence is bred. But, then, the women, representatives of the poor, have to suffer. Raged Suranjan retaliates by violently raping a Moslem prostitute.

In the novel, *Lajja*, we can vividly experience the division between the people with high socioeconomic status and the people with low socioeconomic status in Bangladesh. The proletariat Hindu community is an oppressed class ruled by the oppressor, the Muslim majority in Bangladesh. The ruler group seeks to isolate the ruled, to isolate the workers from their work in the capitalist society (Jay, 1984; Marx & Engels, 1994). The Muslim majority community is the representative of capitalist society, and the minority Hindu community is plebeians, or the working class people. The tragedy of isolating the economically deprived Hindu is narrated in these words:

How galling it was, he thought, to lose a case that had to do with one's own home? But if he were to look at the whole thing positively, it was obviously wise to have left the place with his self-respect intact instead of fleeing after losing the case. A cousin of his had lost his house despite valiant efforts to save it. He had lived in the Akur Takur area in Tangail and a Muslim neighbor called Jamir Munshi had claimed a yard of his land (Nasrin, 1993).

Nasrin shows the universal sufferings of the society by stating that the weaker and the poorer is always being bullied by the stronger and the aristocrat. Nasrin also reflects the suffering of the common Hindu women living under the unjust system of the Muslim aristocrats

in Bangladesh. The plebeian Hindu women were considered as the lower class people of the society. Taking advantage of their poor status, the proletariat Hindu women were gang raped and murdered brutally by the Muslim aristocrats. These women were the worst sufferers after or during the war or after the demolition of Babri Masjid. Nasrin makes a bitter criticism of such unfair practices exercised by Muslim capitalists upon the proletariat Hindus in Bangladesh.

#### **4.1 Resistance against Communalism**

We can mark Nasrin's raising her strong voice against the economic discrimination exercised on the basis of unfair communalism. *Lajja* is a response to the anti-Hindu riots that broke out in Bangladesh after the demolition of the Babri Masjid in India. The novelist seeks to remind the people of Bangladesh that the rise of communalism has bred financial and cultural problems for the Hindu minority. Secularism is no longer regarded in Bangladesh because the Hindu minority is badly treated by Muslim fanatics. Nasrin has criticized the maltreatment and communalism of the Bangladeshi communist people in *Lajja*. The characters, Sudhamoy, Suranjan, and Maya of *Lajja*, are communists because they have always followed the principle of classless society and serving all equally. The principle of communism is that it is always on behalf of social, political, and economic equality (Tyson, 2006). Moreover, communism believes in a classless society. We can note the communism in *Lajja* in such lines:

Most of Suranjan's friends were Muslim. None of them were overly religious, and they accepted Suranjan as a close friend even though he was Hindu. For instance, last year, Kamal had invited the whole family to his house. Suranjan did have Hindu friends like Kajal, Ashim, and Jaideb, but he was closer to Pulak, Kamal, Haider, Belal, and Rabiul (Nasrin, 1993).

Suranjan had never learned to differentiate amongst his friends on a communal basis; and most of his close friends were Muslims. Such feelings of Suranjan have been presented by Nasrin to show the principle of communism: "And, in fact, whenever Suranjan had been in trouble, it was Haider, Kamal, and Belal who had helped more readily than his Hindu friends" (Nasrin, 1993). True communists share the language, food, and socioeconomic resources equally (Pathan & Jasrai, 2016). Like a true communists, Suranjan and his friends share a common language and an economy.

But Sudhamoy and his family have suffered severely over the years as a result of their refusal to leave their country. And what is more, "they have had to sell their ancestral land for a pittance and move to Dhaka, where they live in a small house with no servants and little money" (Nasrin, 1993). In the same way, Sudhamoy believes that Bangladesh adheres to secularism. Despite being terrorized at every turn by Muslim fundamentalists, Sudhamoy, refuses to leave the country, unlike his relatives and friends. He favors secularism, humanity, and a classless society. The true spirit of communism rises when the members of society stop discriminating against each other (Tyson, 2006; Zubok, 2010). Thus, Sudhamoy is the representative of Nasrin's true communist figure.

Nasrin has sought to expose the generous face of communism that speaks against exploitation based on status and class. Sudhamoy, though stands as a communist, is an atheist. Atheism is a very common fashion among Hindu Communists to boost their intellectualism and liberal attitude (Bullivant, 2008). Sudhamoy even encouraged his family members to eat beef. The narrator relates, "They plotted to feed me beef", he had said to his father when he was asked why he was crying. Sudhamoy had laughed at this, and said, 'Is this any reason for you to cry? Beef is a delicacy (Nasrin, 1993). Suranjan is a true communist because he adopts secularism to maintain social unity in *Lajja*. A communist welcomes secularism for social unity without much consideration about the economic status and culture (Zubok, 2010). But the same Suranjan is treated as a proletarian and deprived of the right to live with dignity. He always struggles for social and economic equality. Suranjan's struggle as an ideal communist is narrated in these words:

He could not remember having ever prayed in his life. Nor had he ever visited a temple. Indeed, he had vowed to bring socialism to his country and, in pursuit of his dream, had gone out into the streets and given speeches, attended meetings. He had espoused the cause of farmers and laborers, lobbied for the socioeconomic upliftment of the country (Nasrin, 1993).

Nasrin tries to reveal the discrimination, domination, and exploitation of the minority weak community by the strong and wealthy Muslim community. The burning down of shops and houses of the poor Hindu, and the rape of proletariat Hindu women signify how the oppressors and Muslim capitalists traumatized the oppressed proletariat community in Bangladesh. Each society becomes problematic because of the unjust conflict between the exploited class and the exploiter (Marx & Engels, 1994; Tyson, 2006). Here, the Hindu minority community and the exploited Hindu women can be compared to the people with low socioeconomic status and the Muslim fundamentalists as the exploiter ones.

The economic exploitation in Bangladesh is so extreme that it sometimes manifests in riotism. When riots escalate, the Hindus of Bangladesh hide in fear. But Suranjan roams around the streets of Dhaka in a semi-trance. Communal fanaticism in South Asia has been responsible for the riots and violence (Hasan, 2013). Nasrin narrates, "His presence shocks his comrades who are organizing anti-communal demonstrations, yet take for granted that Suranjan should not appear in public" (Nasrin, 1993). He finds the practice of communal prejudice all around him in his society. Communal prejudice is also a superstructure borne out of the socioeconomic base (Abrams, 1993; Marx & Engels, 1994). Suranjan, who belongs to a Communist family, has no any faith in the Socialist party or in any communist leader. He even hears the leftist leaders swearing to chase the Hindu community away from Bangladesh.

Taslima Nasrin was highly critical of the opportunist and cowardly behavior of the Communist of Bangladesh. Hindu women were raped, Hindu males were beaten; their property was destroyed or looted; and their lives were made a nightmare of random terror and orchestrated tyranny once again.

In this way, Nasrin has highlighted the corrupt nature of the government, and the coward behavior of the communist people in the novel. The novel depicts the plight of minority Hindu characters in Bangladesh. In her novel, *Lajja*, Nasrin portrays the persecution of a proletariat Hindu by the Muslim bourgeoisie in Bangladesh. In this way, Nasrin makes a criticism against the Bangladeshi fundamentalist politics because this has been the root cause behind hierarchies in the Bangladeshi society in terms of the socioeconomic class. Socioeconomic difference is a chief reason behind the oppression and discrimination of poor people in Bangladesh.

## 5. Conclusion

Thus, Nasrin depicts the contradictory class relations and the class conflict between the proletariat Hindu and the bourgeois Muslim of Bangladesh in *Lajja*. Though the novel is based on the real events of demolition of the Babri Masjid, a noted mosque in India, and Hindu-Muslim violence provoked after the demolition, it is mainly caused by the ideology generated by the socio-economic structure of Bangladesh. The fiction portrays the conflict between the poor and the rich in Bangladesh. Like the Dutta family, most minority people are still surviving in poverty. The novel captures the class relations and the class interests of the bourgeoisie Muslims in Bangladesh. These bourgeoisie Muslims discriminate against the poor Hindu families and other weaker class people. Nasrin makes a severe attack against the exploitation of the proletariat by the Muslim fundamentalists. Indeed, the novel casts light on the oppression of minority communities, communalism, and class struggle in South Asia. The problem of the plebeian Hindu minority presented in the novel is just a symbol. Many people with low socioeconomic conditions in South Asian countries have been deprived of exercising their fundamental rights. They have been abused by the socioeconomic system created by the capitalists to rule the labor masses. Poor people have been fighting against the domestic violence imposed on them. Though set in Bangladesh, the book has a universal appeal. This can be transposed to any other setting— Nigeria, Urumki (China), Afghanistan, Lebanon, the Gaza Strip, India, Pakistan, Chechnya, Kyrgyzstan or Bosnia-Herzegovina. Nasrin's intention is obviously to attack the Bangladeshi fundamentalists and capitalists who misuse politics and power to rule the weak and poor unjustly. She is critical to the oppression because she intends to re-assert the identity, rights, and liberty of all the marginal groups in Bangladesh.

## References

Abrams, M. (1993). *Archetypal Criticism: A Glossary of Literary Terms* (7th ed.): Harcourt Brace & Company.

- Banashankari, M. L. B. (2015). Taslima Nasrin's Life and Works. *Literary Endeavour*, 6(4), 42-45.
- Blackledge, P. (2004). *Perry Anderson, Marxism and the New Left*: Merlin Press.
- Bullivant, S. (2008). Research note: Sociology and the study of atheism. *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 23(3), 363-368. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/13537900802373114>
- Datta, S. (1996). The Politics of Space: Taslima Nasreen and Her Works. *Wasafiri*, 12(24), 46-50. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/02690059608589511>
- Engineer, A. A. (1997). Religious fanaticism and communalism. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 32(14), 701-704.
- Hasan, G. S. (2013). The recent communal fanatical violence against religious minorities in South Asia: The contemporary legal approach of Bangladesh. *Indonesian Journal of Socio-Legal Studies*, 1, 32-40.
- Jay, M. (1984). *Marxism and totality: the adventures of a concept from Lukács to Habermas*: University of California Press.
- Kothaikani, R., & Sathurappasamy, G. (2019). Portrayal of Women in Taslima Nasreen's Lajja. *Language in India*, 19(3), 100-104.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1967). *Capital: A critique of political economy*: International Publishers.
- Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1994). *The communist manifesto (S. Moore, Trans.)*. Middelsex, England: Pelican Books Ltd.
- Mishra, C. (2014). Nepal and capitalism. *The Kathmandu Post*. Retrieved from <https://kathmandupost.com/opinion/2014/06/10/nepal-and-capitalism>
- Nasrin, T. (1993). *Lajja*: Penguin Books.
- Pathan, N., & Jasrai, M. V. (2016). Revered Blithe and Joyful Recollection of Communal Harmony in Taslima Nasrin's Lajja. *Research Scholar*, 4(2), 61-66.
- Paudyal, G. R. (2021). Religion and Patriarchy in Taslima Nasrin's Lajja: An Intersectional Approach. *The Outlook: Journal of English Studies*, 12(1), 24-33. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3126/ojes.v12i1.38750>
- Postone, M. (2003). Lukács and the dialectical critique of capitalism. In *New dialectics and political economy* (pp. 78-100). London: Springer.
- Rao, V. (2009). Pala Prasad."Syncretic Culture in Nasreen's Lajja and Tharoor's Riot". *The Indian Journal of English Studies*, 46, 92-100.
- Revathy, S., & Senthamarai, T. (2020). Gender Marginalization in Lajja. *MuktShabd Journal*, 9(7), 759-764.
- Tyson, L. (2006). *Critical theory today: A user-friendly guide* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.
- Yadav, S. (2020). Existentialist Perspective: A Study of Taslima Nasrin's Novel French Lover. *Smart Moves Journal IJELLH*, 8(7), 177-191. doi:<https://doi.org/10.24113/ijellh.v8i7.10674>
- Zaman, H. (1999). The Taslima Nasrin controversy and feminism in Bangladesh: A geo-political and transnational perspective. *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture & Social Justice*, 23(2), 42-54.
- Zubok, V. M. (2010). The rise and fall of communism. *Cold war History*, 10(3), 457-458. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/14682745.2010.493718>