



“Such is life”: A Marxist Attempt to Comprehend the “Injustice” and “Unfairness” of Capitalism in Peter Carey’s *True History of the Kelly Gang*

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Abstract— *Marxism locates all forms of art within existing social conditions of economic and politics, even as it approaches the art-object as an important element within social relations through which particular meanings are standardized and held up as good taste in order to marginalize and ignore other meanings. Marxism sees this battle over meaning as reflecting a battle between dominant and oppressed sections of the society. The essence of the Marxism was undeniably the core of Karl Marx’s own intellectual trajectory throughout his life, and his friend and German philosopher Friedrich Engels brought the practice of Marxism as a concept into popularity. Marxism is inextricably associated with the idea of Capitalism where the bourgeoisie class of the society controls the means of production. The present approach of the paper is to inspect closely True History of the Kelly Gang by Peter Carey that describes the autobiographical narration of a real life Australian bushranger, Ned Kelly through the lens of Marxism with its emphasis on Capitalism. Ned Kelly wanted to write his life’s historical account for his unborn daughter in order to reveal the truth and reality behind the injustices and enduring struggle that he suffered at the hand of the society. The physical existence of the Kelly family, especially Ned Kelly has been exploited by the wealthy and powerful people of the time. This study mainly aims to conceptualize Peter Carey’s True History of the Kelly Gang from a Marxist point-of-view. It proposes to understand the embedded features of Capitalism as well as different concepts associated with it in the novel True History of the Kelly Gang.*



Keywords— *Australian Novel, Ned Kelly, Marxism, Karl Marx, Capitalism*

I. INTRODUCTION

Marxism refers to the phenomenal thoughts and revolutionary ideals of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels based on social, political and economic dimensions of the society. The philosophy of Marxism was primarily propounded by Karl Marx himself who, together with Friedrich Engels shaped it in the 19th century. The theory of Marxism is indispensable for understanding the baleful traits of Capitalism and therefore, the observation that “Marxism itself becomes a methodology and framework only with the rise of capitalism” (Anshen, 2017) is substantiated to be important within the context of the world. The exacerbation of the existing social order is destined to transpire in the presence of Capitalism where the

“social capital”, as Marx termed the total amount of the capital on the basis of privately owned wealth and property, is only possessed by a small number of capitalists who maintain this economic structure through the exercise of labour exploitation of the rest of the mass of the people. Thus, the institution of Capitalism creates a special social system that is based on the components of class struggle and private proprietorship of production power. Marxist criticism of Capitalism stresses on the class struggle between two groups of the society- the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Capitalism supports the glaring unequal position of these two sections and ensures the supremacy of elitism. If the governmental infrastructure of a state is formulated for the well-being of all but fueled by Capitalism, then the

mechanisms of that state are bound to act in alliance with the people who are dominant and influential in the economic sphere, neglecting the commoners' principles and rights. As a result of this social difference, the relation between the owners and the workers causes class conflict. The tussle of the exploited and the exploiting is evident in the very roots of history of the world. This struggle between the marginalized and marginalizing groups can be traced since civilization started to develop. The famous remark from the monumental work entitled as *The Communist Manifesto*, originally *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels can be suggested that: "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (1848/1969). Hence, in the period of Capitalism, this disharmony intensifies to such an extent that generates chaotic condition between these two bodies of the society. Marxism and literature are interconnected with each other. According to Marxism, both literature and writer are products of the socio-economic paradigm of the time. It has no relation with the aesthetic world to be enjoyed passively. It believes that the best way to write a literary text is in a realistic manner. As the "base" is established by the bourgeoisie centered on their economic power, similarly the "superstructure" which displays culture, art, ideology, literature, everything that contain within the society are maintained for the sake of bourgeoisie values. With this view, literature evolves in close association with Capitalism. Thus, a writer can either intentionally or unintentionally reinforce the notion of Capitalism while producing a literary text. A writer who incorporate the socio-economic condition of a particular time as a part or whole to a text of fiction or reality can determine its capitalist context as well. Therefore, it is essential to identify the nature of the text that whether it talks for or against the system of Capitalism. *True History of the Kelly Gang* is such a piece of literature that is stored with capitalist sense where the writer has knitted the whole story is such a way that strongly voices against Capitalism. Throughout the narrative exploration of the novel, the Marxist criticism of Capitalism can be conceptualized in a brilliant manner. The life of the protagonist of the novel, Ned Kelly is nipped in the bud by the capitalist structure of Australia as he was "the terror of the government being brung to life in the cauldron of the night" (Carey, 2004/200, P. 347). Ned as an ordinary human being "wished only to be a citizen" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 356) but the absolutism of the authority designated his life into the direction of devastation. The Irish convicts of the time including the Kelly family in the penal colony of Australia was ostracized and denied of public interest- a general notion of Capitalism where the resources of the state are limited to the ruling class rather than the ruled section of the society. The novel

is charged with multiple layers of Capitalism through which audience can easily understand what Ned Kelly tried to convey as it was his main motive. Each of the events of the text highlights the discrimination of the oppressor towards the Kellys who belonged to the oppressed group that resulted in the emergence of one of the most notorious bushrangers of Australia- Ned Kelly who had no choice than to embrace the path of crime.

II. NARRATIVE STRUCTURE

Peter Carey has divided the novel *True History of the Kelly Gang* into thirteen parcels. Each parcel provides insight into the life of Ned Kelly who was a famous Australian bushranger in the 1870s. The novel details the journey of Ned Kelly from childhood to death in the form of letters written by Ned to his daughter which seems to be an attempt to justify the workings of the colonial system that lead him to take up the tag of an outlaw. The text starts with Ned's first person narration about the background of his parents. His father, John Kelly was a convict who had to settle into the colony of Victoria, Australia from Ireland. There John wedded Ellen Quinn who soon gave birth to Ned Kelly. From the very first parcel of the novel, the mistreatment of the authority is worth noticing. However, after the death of Ned father in prison of Avenel, the upbringing of Ned Kelly and his siblings in poverty hardened the existence of the family. Then the family moved to Greta to stay in close contact with their relatives. Ellen desired to make a better future by selecting some lands through the use of the Land Grant Acts. Moreover, she started to run a "shebeen" (unlicensed inn) where she had to engage herself with many illicit love affairs to support her family because there were intimidations in every corner of the society. At the age of 14, Ned Kelly's life took a turn when he came into the contact with one of the suitors of her mother, Harry Power who was a well-known bushranger of the time. Under the supervision and guidance of Harry Power, Ned soon became a professional bushranger around the city. He took part in a number of cases of stealing and robbery with Harry Power until Ned had an argument with Harry Power. At last, he returned home to make an honest living and later, Power was arrested by the police. But, by the time passes, the police force and squatters had already formed a notorious picture of Ned. Thus, the events depicted in the novel begin to flow against Ned Kelly who never found any glimmer of hope to cherish a moment of bliss. One such major incident was when Ben Gould, a traveling hawker deceived Ned on the matter of a stolen horse that landed up Ned in jail for 3 years. After his release from prison, Ned started to work in a sawmill at Kilawarra but there he also got involved in a bare-knuckle boxing match with Wild Wright who earlier tricked Ned into a mare theft case. Such several conspiracies

and wretched episodes against Ned left him in a state of complete mental, emotional and physical ruin. His fate even did not stay with him, shattering him into a million irreparable pieces. During this phase, Ned met Mary Hearn through a Constable named Alex Fitzpatrick. Both Mary and Ned fell in love with each other and married with a desire to live a peaceful life. But an unexpected twist happened in the story when Alex Fitzpatrick was attacked by the Kellys as he proposed to marry Kate Kelly, Ned's teenager sister with a wicked intention. But Ned immediately denied this suggestion of Alex because of his characterless nature. This incident brought about Ellen Kelly's arrest and the final manhunt episode in the novel. Moreover, Mary Hearn became the victim of tortures of the police who suspected her to have known about Ned's hideaway but in due time, she left for San Francisco from Australia where Ned's daughter came into the world. The main members of the Kelly Gang- Ned Kelly, Dan Kelly, Joe Byrne and Steve Hart committed various crimes like the murders of the policemen at Stringybark Creek and the bank robbery at Euroa. They also formed a group of the marginalized poor locals by helping them with financial support and needs. But the Gang's situation did not improve and they tried to surrender with the possibility to change their topsy-turvy circumstances but unfortunate enough, their heart piercing voice fell upon the ears of an oppressive regime as insignificant specks of dust in the grand scheme of their callous domination. Their heart-rending wails had no importance to the oppressive government. In a monumental clash that shook the very foundation of Australia overnight, Ned Kelly and his allies decided to give a last fight against the formidable police force at Glenrowan. The rebels with their hearts ablaze and a burning determination valiantly roared against the authority. But their final stand brought about the denouement of the Kelly Gang. Thomas Curnow, a school teacher who was kidnapped by the Gang along with other hostages, assured Ned Kelly to look into his writings and therefore, was released by Ned. But he later, informed the police about the plan of the Kelly members. As a result, the police managed to secure their position and destroyed the gang. Dan Kelly, Joe Byrne and Steve Hart took their last breath at the battlefield whereas Ned Kelly had been defeated and taken to the Melbourne Jail where he was hanged till death. Ned expressed his deepest regrets and profound gratitude in the concluding section of his letter, penned with a mixture of sorrow and determination. He knitted together the threads of his life story, illuminating the moments of pride, shame, and resilience that led him to this pivotal moment. But Ned's last words "such is life" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 377) suggests his final thoughts are not of defeat but of the legacy he leaves behind. He knows that his

name will live on, a legacy that transcended his own mortal existence. Thus, a tale of perpetual and enduring struggle of Australia's famous outlaw against poverty, injustice, insult, etc. have been portrayed by Carey in *True History of the Kelly Gang*. However, the awe-inspiring defiance of the Kelly Gang would forever etch their names in the annals of history as legendary figures of resistance.

III. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Carey's Critique of Capitalism in *True History of the Kelly Gang*

Capitalism is an economic structure formed, established and developed by the bourgeoisie class of the society who immensely hold the private proprietorship of the wealth of the society. The process of formation of Australia began in the period of Capitalism. Also, the capitalist system in Australia developed during the "Great Transportation" which took place between 1788 and 1868 when more than 162,000 people were extradited to the penal colony of Australia from Britain and Ireland. Among them, one third of the convict population was of Irish origin. The higher strata of the society as well as the free settlers commenced voyaging from European nations to Australia and settled in different parts of the penal colony. They started to claim as much land as possible throughout the country of Australia unlawfully by using their power and wealth. They came to be known as "squatters". These men of substance gradually took economic, social and political control of the land and became the most domineering and influential segment of the country. These capitalists took benefit of the poor by exploiting their labour power. On the other hand, "Selections" came into existence when a number of Land Acts were introduced in 1860s. These acts were passed for the miners who were turned to farmers because they suffered from economic crisis when the gold mining was enclosed only for the use of the companies during the era of Gold Rush (1851-1914). The reference to the "Duffy Land Act" of 1862 in the first parcel of *True History of the Kelly Gang* was a similar land act of the time which allowed a new prospect for the poor farmers to select any land of the country according their choice. The act comes with the allotment of land plots on credit which can be paid off for a tenure of eight years. Ned Kelly's mother found this as an opportunity to ensure a bright future for her family. But Kelly's father was well-aware of the fatal consequences of it. He pointed out that "the great Charles Gavan Duffy was a well intentioned idiot leading poor men into debt and lifelong labour" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 26) because the moneyed squatters soon played many manoeuvres for their own benefit against the poor farmers. They introduced "dummying and peacocking" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 206) -

a process to acquire arable land by setting up fake agents or farmers who worked for the wealthy squatters. The very evidence of this cunning plan of the squatters can be heard from the mouth of Ned Kelly: "...how the squatters made a game of the law getting the best land for themselves. I pointed out how Mr Whitty had used dummying and peacocking to illegally gain his holdings on the Fifteen Mile Creek" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 206). There is no doubt in the fact that the squatters with their loaded dice managed to manipulate the local officials who favoured the rich and despised the poor. In Parcel three, Harry Power told little Ned the story of James Whitty that how he tricked the Devil by following the clever advice of his wife and received plenty of land. Thereafter, Whitty became one of the large and wealthiest squatters of the land overnight. Whitty's meteoric rise from an economically devastated creature to the man having in possession of "10,000 acres and 3 famous Angus bulls" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 88). So, the "hunky dory" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 88) condition of Mr. Whitty underlines the contemporary corrupted and contaminated the social, economical as well as the political condition of the time. Mr. McBean, a powerful magistrate and landowner having in possession Kilfeera Station, a vast area of lands was robbed by Harry Power and Ned Kelly. Though Ned tried to prove himself innocent but his attempt went in vain and eventually, the Kelly family had to undergo the consequences of it. It throws light on the fact that one having deep economic pockets is bestowed with power. The person can easily have the accessibility over the underrepresented people. The capitalists always aim at creating the wind of the state in their favour. They affirm that the wind should help them to sail forward instead of backward so that they can smoothly enjoy the privileges of the country. The mode of operation of Capitalism illustrates the stark contrast between the privileged and the disadvantaged. In Parcel eight, Kelly recalls an incident when the richest farmers were forced to cut down their crops because they faced a hard year in farming. But Mr. Whitty with his special and secret networks in government succeed to occupy "the common ground" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 205) where poor farmers were prohibited to enter and use. Moreover, whoever's horse found grazing there was seized unlawfully. Gradually, they began to drown more and more in the quicksand of the foul tricks of the wealthy squatters. The drought hammered the poor selectors of Australia including the Kellys with an iron fist. But the squatters continued their feasting who dwelled on a higher place of impenetrable existence. As Ned narrates: "The drought were hard on this country but the squatter did not have to punish it the way a small selector did so all his acres was a contrast to my mother's where the grass were eaten to the roots" (Carey, 2004/ 2000, P. 209). Moreover, Ned Kelly

and his brother Dan Kelly became victims of the abusing of Whitty. At first Constable John Farrell who was the son-in-law of Whitty accused him for stealing a mare of Henry Lydecker. When the matter was taken to the court, Mr. Lydecker gave statement in support of Ned's innocence and the case was dismissed. As a sign of gratitude, Ned gifted him a "wild scrub bull" (Carey, 20004/2000, P. 206). The moment Whitty got this news, he falsely claimed the bull to be his own. Then a series of allegations of stealing bull and calves were charged against Ned but none of them was true. Whitty's harassments towards the Kellys were not done yet. Once again, Whitty impounded the horses of Kelly family but this time Kelly notes "all I done were break the lock at the Oxley Pound and take back what I legally owned this did not seem a crime to me not then or now" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 207). Unfortunately, the next day Dan was taken into police custody where he was persecuted severely by Constable Flood. In this context, Paul Eggert comments that:

In the Jerilderie Letter, he wanted to defend his own actions and to expose the corruption of police such as Fitzpatrick in the small country towns: police who, he believed, worked in collaboration with the rich, large landholding class (the so-called squatters) to frustrate the legitimate aspirations of small landholding selectors. Recent drought had increased the pressures. In this situation, horse- and cattle-duffing (rustling) and other forms of small-scale illegal activity were fatally attractive. He was frustrated; he and his class were oppressed. (2007, P. 126)

Capitalism strengthens power dynamics throughout *True History of the Kelly Gang*. The squatters' unscrupulous performances towards the Kelly family serve as harrowing instances of the exploitative nature of Capitalism. At the same time, the police force, being the right-hand of the squatters explicitly displays oppressive tactics such as beatings, wrong arrests, etc. of the Kellys, further exhibiting a clear manifestation of the dominance of power over the powerless.

3.2 The State- Its Law, Order and Jurisdiction: The Instruments of Capitalism in The Novel

Friedrich Engels in his *Anti-Dühring*, formerly known as *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science* mentions: "The modern state...is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists..." (1947/1878) In a capitalist society, the state plays the role of an instrument of class exploitation. The bourgeoisie uses the state as a machine of coercion to suppress the proletariat class. In Capitalism, the state plays an oppressive role to protect the long-term interest of the capitalists. Therefore, they grow stronger and

stronger economically, socially and politically. Vladimir Lenin in his book *The State and Revolution* has rightly stated that the state is a powerful organization which is practiced to exploit the suppressed people in a violent and forceful way. Similarly, the main agents of a state- the governing body and law protect the needs of the bourgeoisie who run these vehicles over the proletariats. The most noteworthy declaration about the state is that it cannot be formed with a governing body. The government controls the state and similarly the former is ruled by the capitalists of the nation. The thirteen parcels of the novel bear the evidence of the persecution of the Irish descendent, marginalization of the vulnerable at the hands of the colonial organism of administration. Also, the police is used like marionettes by the rich landlords. In the end of Parcel six, a friend of Ned Kelly's brother-in-law Alex Gunn named Wild Wright came riding a chestnut mare which was soon lost. Wright who took one of the horses of the Kellys advised Ned that he could keep the horse if found out until his return from the journey. But Wild Wright hid the truth that the mare was stolen. As a result, Constable Hall caught Kelly red-handed when he was riding the horse. Both got engaged in a brutal fight and few days later, Kelly was sentenced to three years of imprisonment. But Wild Wright who was the main culprit received only eighteenth months prison sentence and Hall who attempted to murder Ned Kelly was transferred. Even the law justifies the acts of the might as right asserting the dominance of power over moral or ethical considerations. Moreover, in the colonial period of Australia, the law and order of the state was maliciously manufactured by the capitalists in an insidiously diabolical manner that it was "blind" to the poor, rendering them utterly invisible and disposable. That is why when Ned failed to locate his legally owned "30 thoroughbred horses" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 188), he "learned they were stolen and the thief was beyond the law he was Constable Flood of Oxley" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 188). But, finally the uttered words of Kelly- "It were the end of my quiet life that is for sure" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 200) signals the readers about the upcoming storm in the life of Ned Kelly with the arrival of the character Constable Alex Fitzpatrick who strangled his life to death. The denial of the marriage proposal of Alex Fitzpatrick with Ned's sister Kate ignited the fire of rivalry between him and the Kelly family. Ned knew that Alex was "the so called LADIES' MAN" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 235) and hence saved his sister from falling into the constable's trap. Thereafter, Fitzpatrick fabricated a number of terrible arrangements against Ned Kelly. At first, Fitzpatrick threatens Mary Hearn and then allegedly pushed Dan Kelly into a false accusation case of Mrs. Goodman. But Ned boldly claimed that Dan was not in the district when the incident took place. So Fitzpatrick pretended to help him but the

moment the matter was brought to the court, he fell into the trap of Fitzpatrick which eventually resulted in the imprisonment of Ned by the magistrate. Ultimately, the police issued warrant against Ned Kelly "for the theft of Whitty's horses" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 245) and "another against Dan Kelly & Jack Lloyd on the basis of evidence that they RESEMBLED the people who sold some of Whitty's stolen horses." (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 245) Constable Fitzpatrick grabbed this as an opportunity and came to the home of Ned Kelly where he misbehaved with the Kelly family and tried to tempt Kate. In such a situation, Ned's mother attacked him with a shovel. Ned also fired at Fitzpatrick's wrist when he was trying to draw out his revolver. Nonetheless, the Kellys were arrested because of the assault for the attempt of murder. Thus, the Fitzpatrick incident proved to be catastrophic for the Kellys as well as their associates including Mary Hearn and eventually paved the path for the final manhunt in the novel. In a capitalist state where Ned Kelly immensely became a menace to the government, the police force who act to safeguard the ruling class, intentionally adopts different strategies to eradicate him completely so as to secure the gulf between the oppressor and the oppressed.

3.3 Social Banditry: A Phenomenon Developed Out of Capitalism

In the books *Primitive Rebels* (1959) and *Bandits* (1969), Eric Hobsbawm, a Marxist Historian first coined the term "social bandit". Hobsbawm is of the opinion that the phenomenon of social banditry emerges out of class struggle. He invites the example of many outlaws including Ned Kelly to discuss the nature of social banditry. Social banditry is a cultural system practiced by the outlaws who do not accept oppressive social order and revolt against the capitalists. The tradition of social banditry came into existence in the wake of Capitalism. These men were compelled to break law when they were cornered against life's relentless challenges who, then, firmly stood against the oppressor. Australian bushranging was one of the popular forms of social banditry. During 1860-1880, bushranging became a widespread and popular culture in Australia. There were two major factors that gave birth to bushranging in Australia. First of all, the class struggle between the squatters and the selectors and secondly, the antagonistic relationship between the police and the working class. In the novel, Ned Kelly delves deep into the phenomenon of bushranging when his tragic fate overshadowed the moral values of his life. The transition of Ned Kelly from a law-abiding citizen to a bushranger starts under the apprentice of Harry Power, a famous bushranger of the time. While traveling, Harry Power involved Ned Kelly in a stagecoach robbery where Ned ultimately states "that was the moment by the law I made myself a

bushranger as well" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 83). Ned failed to find peace and purity and most importantly a hope for respect in a country where he was severely and constantly mistreated by the colonial officials. The events that are disclosed later in the text are integrally connected with "unfairness" of Capitalism because of which the oppressor leaves no room for improvement. Moreover, "the pastoralists, through their general occupancy of magisterial positions, exercised very close control over the police force" (O'Malley, 1979, P. 276) and this malicious operation procreated a tumultuous status quo in Australia. It is said that the survival of Australian bushranging would not be possible without the unity between the bushrangers and poor proletarians of the country who shared the same bitter demeanour towards the injustice they tolerated. Ned says "as the poor pay fealty to the bushranger thus the bushranger pays fealty to the poor" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 126). The extreme savagery unleashed by the police, combined with the brutality of the squatters sparked an unparalleled wave of sympathy and admiration from the local people of Australia for the Kelly Gang which can be cultivated for the widespread growth of popularity of them. Cult characters like Robin Hood of England, Raghu Dakat of Bengal, the Scottish outlaw Rob Roy, etc. belong to the same category of famous bandits in the history who, ages after ages, emerged and played the bugle of protest whenever anarchy erupted in the world. The figure of Ned Kelly and his story in *True History of the Kelly Gang* chronicles the same with a sense of clarity where he presents the supreme emblem of this resistance which, at the same time, underlines his anti-capitalist protest as a universal phenomenon.

3.4 Criminogenic Climate in *True History of the Kelly Gang*: A Product of Capitalism

In the book *A Primer on Crime and Delinquency Theory*, Bohm and Vogel view that "crime in capitalist societies is often a rational response to the circumstances in which people find themselves" (2010), which suggests that the external workings surrounding a person's life may determine the fact that a person is not born criminal but becomes a criminal. It is pivotal to figure out the harsh reality that works behind the transformation of a human being into a criminal. When circumstances function against one's life despite of numerous attempts to remain and engage with the moral codes of the society, then the person begins to nurture a kind of negative temperament about the world. As in *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels see crime as "the struggle of the isolated individual against the predominant relations" (1998) which nods towards a person's reaction against the preexisting unfavourable events in the society. It is clearly quite noticeable in the novel. Though the conflict between the poor farmers and rich squatters becomes tumultuous during the period of

drought but Ned Kelly decides to stay away from this affair by concentrating on his own work until he is disturbed by the police power of the country. He writes: "By this time there was men so enraged by these abuses that they put the squatters' oats under the torch in revenge but I continued my labour at the sawmill keeping my head in the ground like the proverbial ostrich until they finally charged Dan with having stole a saddle." (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 205) Thus, Ned Kelly gradually deviates himself from the mainstream of life as he is burdened more and more by the violence of the government. He takes law, order and justice in his hand out of frustration for the system that grows around his community. Again, Bonger comments that "lack of civilization and education among the poorer classes" (1916) gives rise to criminal thoughts in the interior landscape of a man's mind. Ned Kelly has been born and brought up in an impoverished area where neither ethical nor educational duties are regarded important. Rather, one's survival is more important where threats are lurking in every corner of the country. Ned Kelly has originally written the *Jerilderie Letter* which Peter Carey later artistically moulds in his *True History of the Kelly Gang* where incorrect grammatical long sentences, broken syntax and misspelled words, irregular formation of speech, errors of punctuation marks, particularly commas are eminent throughout the text with first person narrative- these language mistakes demonstrate Ned Kelly's lack of education who left the formal academic circumference at the age of twelve. Moreover, the rough and troublesome childhood of Ned Kelly places the readers in a position from where they are able to interpret his position against the catalysts of power. His character, being traumatized with his surroundings became the reason for his commission of offence. In Capitalism, the unequal distribution of the means of production between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat simultaneously elevates the contentment of the rich and the misery of the poor. Thus, Karl Marx comments: "there must be something rotten in the very core of a social system which increases its wealth without diminishing its misery..." (1971/1859) Willem Adriaan Bonger who is the first Dutch Marxist criminologist came up with the phenomenal thought about the commission of crime. In his book *Criminality and Economic Conditions*, Bonger for the first time analyzes crime in the context of Marxism. He opines that Capitalism is the root cause for the augmentation of crime and criminal activity. In a situation where people suffers from economic crisis, injustice and the sense of individualism is at stake as opportunities are only limited to the rich, it conceives a self-centered or self-interest approach, which Bonger termed as "egoism" within the mind of the people who become fearless to defy law for the sake of their survival. When the degradation of the Kelly family reached to its culminating

point, Ned's focus only centered on his individual benefit instead of "altruism" (magnanimous and selfless attitude towards people's welfare). The adverse atmosphere manufactured by the capitalists towards the Irish criminals marked the life crisis of Ned Kelly. The very beginning of *True History of the Kelly Gang* unfolds the unfairness of colonial officials against the Irish people with the lines "God willing I shall live to see you read these words to witness your astonishment and see your dark eyes widen and your jaw drop when you finally comprehend the injustice we poor Irish suffered in this present age" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 12). The Irish settlers burdened with criminal proceedings were exiled from their motherland to an unknown piece of territory. These fellows with the stamp of convict were looked down upon as eternal criminals and unfit in the social order of Australia by the men in power. Ned writes that his father, John "Red" Kelly had to suffer a series of imprisonment from Van Diemen's Land to the country lockup of Avenel as a criminal. His life ended at last when he was "bulging with all the poisons of the Empire" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 44) which compels the readers to think of the envious nature of the British government. In the text, Ned chose the path of a criminal when he was "burnt and hardened by the fates" (Carey, 2004/2000, P. 353). He decided to take revenge against the "unfair" treatment of the system. For all his life, Ned struggled hard to protect his mother, Ellen Kelly who was the tower of strength for Ned. When she was jailed, he decided to surrender but the colonial justice system was deaf to his crying. Therefore, stifling circumstances drive him towards the world of crime through which he thought to be found a sense of belonging and identity.

IV. CONCLUSION

The Kelly outbreak is not a natural phenomenon in *True History of the Kelly Gang*. Rather, the above mentioned reasons are the deciding factors for the Kelly uprising that take place in the course of the novel. Through Ned Kelly's story, Carey presents Capitalism as a system that benefits the few at the expense of the many. The novel also shows that the capitalists have their freedom of choice to enjoy the comforts of life but the poor are not in a situation to avail freedom. The text is an eye-opener for the disastrous impact that Capitalism can exercise over another. It presents multiple subjects like class-struggle, the injustice of law, the corrupt state order and its immoral operations that widen the gap between the rich and the poor and how these features are to blame for the setup of criminal attitude in the mind of a person. Moreover, this picture of Capitalism largely perpetuates injustice, unfairness and institutional corruption. The text sheds light on the inequalities and hardships faced by those on the fringes of society. The entire

picture of Irish convict subjugation and the doomed life of Ned Kelly expose the same condition on a global scale where people suffer against the victimization of Capitalism. The theory of Marxism allows us to ponder over the painful realization that though the novel takes place during the 1870s but the strong presence of Capitalism is evident even in today's world. The crime rate has been increasing day by day in the modern era and in various cases, its root can be seen in the backdrop of the battle between bourgeoisie and proletariat under Capitalist environment. A person chooses to break the societal etiquettes created for the bourgeoisie's self-interest and thus, becomes a criminal in the eyes of the society. Ned Kelly also disagrees with the country's opinions arranged to favour the ruling party. When Ned finds himself alone in a place which advocates only the powerful people and listens to the sound of money, he starts his search for self-identity and boldly revolts against the tyrannical rule of authority which ultimately marks him as one of the most notorious criminal of Australia. But his fight for self-exploration as well as his culture, identity and belief have been achieved at the cost of his life. Many can see Ned Kelly and his gang simply as national criminals who reaped what they sowed. The murder of the policemen, the robbery of the bank and kidnapping of the locals finally put an end to their lives which others may think as well-deserved fate of the Kellys. But people who have closely tried to examine the underlying patterns of Ned's life in the novel can only sympathize with the character of Ned Kelly. It can firmly be asserted that Marxism clarifies the vision of the reader to visualize the actual and dark side of Capitalism. Thus, with a critical disposition against Capitalism, the audience is successfully able to identify the character of Ned Kelly from a criminal bushranger to Australia's national hero.

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