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*With a focus on Ethical and Sustainable Business*

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## Editorial: The New Dark Ages



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky broke down during a visit to Bucha, where bodies were found lying in the street after the city was retaken by the Ukrainian army. Picture: Ronaldo Schemidt/AFP

Albert Einstein: *It is my conviction that killing under the cloak of war is nothing but an act of murder.*

Lesley Pocock

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I have written in this space ad nauseum about the criminal acts of dictators and their reigns of terror against innocent people - in Syria, Tibet, Myanmar, Iran, North Korea and Xinjiang province in China to name but a few, and it is always the same 'evil club of dictators' arranging the massacre, torture and rape of men, women, children and yes, even babies. This is how dictators dehumanise the village idiots that they get to do their murder and rape for them. These brutes are the favoured killers of the dictator masters as real men would never stoop that low. The dictator countries also swap hired killers when it comes to torture and rape of their own people in fear the local men will have some compassion for their brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters.

Most of their soldiers are weak minded, brutalised men and also victims of their psychopathic masters and their schemes. They have been turned into inhuman beasts.

This is the new low to which the current batch of despotic 'rulers of planet earth' have dragged us all down into. They have stolen their country's wealth and destroyed their country's ecology, dragged the bottom of their country's seas to be forever empty and unproductive so now they gang up to gain the last bits left on earth while they can, and in doing so have brought us to the start of the New, and Last Dark Ages. Will we survive the Great Betrayal - likely not - but the psychopaths care not even for their own children. They do not understand that they fool no-one - they are not clever, they are not admired, rather they are hated and watched, always watched, until the opportunity comes when those who surround them can be rid of them

It is why a good man like Volodymyr Zelensky has astonished them. They have no understanding of decency and honour and self-sacrifice.

Once we enter the Last Dark Age there is no coming back for us or them. And the dictators will fight each other for the last spoils of planet earth.

*Frankly they don't give a damn,...*

And if we need proof of their malevolence see how they target schools and hospitals and maternity wards. They befoul the human spirit and insult human intelligence when they trot out their soulless spokesmen to spin their filthy lies. They need not open their mouths – their evil, their complicity and their heartlessness is written on their faces,

The only man who will be remembered from this final barbarism that destroyed the world (at least for the tens of thousands of years, that it will take any creature to claw its way back), will be Volodymyr Zelensky. A leader is someone who honourably takes responsibility for the welfare of his people and his country and all they do business with, A leader has integrity and protects the weaker members of society.

The names of the dictators will be spoken of in time with the same hate, horror and derision as Adolf Hitler, Idi Amin, Pol Pot, Vlad the Impaler and Ivan the Terrible and the rest of the rubbish that has become the collective nightmare of innocent children who had the misfortune to be born on this planet of primitive brutes.

These psychopaths plan GLOBAL GENOCIDE - and it is now 'us vs them'.

But as they can see with Mr Zelensky GOOD people do not lay down and die. Good people, will fight to the death as they have something to believe in and something of real value to fight for - good people eventually win and they will rise up en masse against those who dared to befoul us all.

Thank you Mr Zelensky from the hearts and minds of all good, decent and intelligent people of the planet. Should you win or lose Putin's 'war' - you have already won anyway – you are the honour and decency of humanity that these brutes can never conquer, nor even understand

# An analysis of Marxism in industrial relations theory in light of capitalism, neoliberalism and globalisation: A petite critical review from Bangladesh's RMG perspectives

ASM Anam Ullah

Academic

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## Abstract

**Often, scholars have questioned whether Marxism has any relationship with modern industrial relations theory. Some scholars have portrayed Marxism as an evaluation of the mode of production where capitalism is a powerful force that exploits workers in many ways. Workers' exploitation is evident in the capitalist mode of the production system, mainly in less regulated developing countries like Bangladesh. On the other hand, neoliberalism and globalisation have sparked the workers' exploitation debate between old and contemporary scholarship. Scholars further argue that neoliberalism and globalisation work as a supportive force of capitalism; at present, therefore, Marxism is again in the academic discourse. However, other scholars find Marxism less effective or invalid in industrial relations theory. Therefore, this short article focuses on whether Marxism is still valid in current industrial relations theory within the perspective of neoliberalism and globalisation. Moreover, this article aims to provide some critical analyses from the viewpoint of the Bangladesh RMG industry and its workers' dilemma in the capitalist mode of production to find whether there is a correlation between Marx's exploitation and the surplus-labour theory.**

**Keywords:** Marxism, industrial relations theory, neoliberalism and globalisation, trade unionism, exploitation, unethical business, supply chains and Bangladesh's RMG

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ASM Anam Ullah's Bio: Anam's expertise is in globalisation and neoliberalism, ILO, WTO, HRM, employment and industrial relations, workplace safety and OHS regulations, Bangladesh and global RMG industry, international business and supply chains management, ethical business, CSR and CSV. Anam was appointed academic by The University of New South Wales, The University of Sydney, The University of Wollongong, Charles Sturt University, The University of Newcastle, and CQUniversity, Australia.

**Method:** This is a quick review of scholarly work published in international journals covering the current research topic. Moreover, the author's observation and long research experience in Bangladesh's RMG industry on its labour exploitation have been supportive in constructing narratives in this article.

## Contribution to knowledge through findings and analysis:

Several scholars have discussed whether industrial relations have a relationship with Marxism. Scholars have also discussed Marxism in light of capitalism and how globalisation is associated with Marxism. Several other scholars perhaps aimed to explore the labour exploitation in industrial relations theory and incorporated the discussion of trade unionism in industrial relations based on Marxian discourse. However, scholars have probably neglected to explore whether Marxism is valid in the theory of industrial relations based on Bangladesh's Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector, where exploitation is one of the significant academic discussions that has been prominent since the industry's establishment in the 1980s. Therefore, this article suggests through its in-depth understanding and interpretations that Marxism is still valid in industrial relations theory as long as exploitation and surplus labour exists in the capitalist mode of the production system, mainly from the Bangladesh RMG contexts.

## Introduction

Since the 1980s, globalisation and neoliberalism and their structural changes (e.g., political and economic) at the state and national levels have forced scholars to examine industrial relations theory critically (see Harvey et al., 2002; Rahman, 2013; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Harvey, 2007; Harvey, 2022). Scholars have consistently published essays, articles, books, etc., based on their research findings, beliefs and observations in Marxist, Pluralist, and Unitarist approaches (Kochan et al., 2019). As a result, industrial relations debate has found intensity in recent years, both in academic and professional arenas (Kaufman, 2004; Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020; Hayman, 2008; Gall, 2012). The current research shows that in many countries, mainly in developing countries, the role of governments, employers, and unions are under significant criticism due to their structural adjustment with neoliberal globalisation (see Harvey, 2007; Munck, 2010; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Hiba, 2021; Ullah, 2022). Scholars, e.g., Rahman (2013); Siddiqi (2019); Alamgir and Banerjee (2019) and Ullah (2022), argue that developing countries, such as Bangladesh and their governments, have adopted and practised neoliberal globalisation with a free-market economic policy. More specifically, Alamgir and Banerjee (2019) further mention that since the 1980s, successive governments in Bangladesh have shown a reluctance to change the working conditions, minimum wage structures and well-being of RMG workers (see also Siddiqi, 2019; Rahman, 2019). Contemporary scholarship suggests that, in order to maintain the competitive position with Bangladesh's RMG goods in the global garment market, the Bangladesh governments and RMG traders have deliberately kept the minimum wage and operating costs of workers lower than the major garment-producing countries of the world (see Rahman, 2013; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Ashwin, Kabeer & Schuessler, 2020; Ullah, 2021a; Ullah, 2021b; Ullah, 2022).



While evaluating the RMG workers' working conditions and well-being in light of neoliberal globalisation, it becomes apparent what Marx had written in his famous "Das Kapital" (Kritik der politischen, 1867 (Capital Volume I - "A Critique of Political Economy" - English version published in 1887). For example, Marx, in Chapter 9: "The Rate of Surplus-Value," and Section 1 has discussed "The degree of Exploitation of Labour-Power," in which my interest lies and I have aimed to connect Marx's exploitation theory with the current upheaval of Bangladesh's RMG workers' conditions. For example, integrating with Marx's surplus labour theory, it is again seen that the Bangladesh RMG industry has created many lower-paid jobs for much less skilled labour (Rahman, 2020; Rahman & Yadlapalli, 2021; Ullah, 2021b; Ullah, 2022). Notably, RMG has created extensive employment in the industry since the 1980s; however, workers' exploitation has been a considerable concern. Therefore, the discussion of Bangladesh RMG workers' minimum wages, well-being, working conditions, and other issues have been rational, logical, and timely (e.g., Rahman, 2013; Crinis, 2019; Bair, Anner & Blasi, 2020; Rahman & Ishty, 2020; Ullah, 2022).

Bangladeshi RMG workers are low skilled and less-educated workers who have lost the ability to bargain with the RMG employers due to a lack of opportunities in other informal economic industries in Bangladesh (see Ullah, 2020; Hossain, 2021). Thus, it has been an excellent opportunity for local and international capitalists to exploit RMG workers (Crinis, 2019; Ullah, 2021a). In addition, more than 84 or 85 per cent of rural Bangladeshi women are employed in the sector. Therefore, despite the call of the RMG employers for the so-called empowerment of women, scholars still see the industry as a terrible place where the minimum well-being and fundamental rights (e.g., collective bargaining power, decent minimum wages, health and safety, bonuses etc.) of workers have not yet been established (Islam & McPhail, 2011; Rahman, 2013; Siddiqi, 2019; Ullah, 2021a; Ullah, 2022).

Furthermore, RMG workers mostly compromise with accepting the work offer at the unhealthy and unsafe factories. As a result, while they get a job to survive, they often face severe injuries and brutal death in factory fires or building collapses, like the Rana Plaza building collapse (The Guardian, 2014; The Guardian, 2015; Human Rights Watch, 2015; Salminen, 2018; Bair, Anner & Blasi, 2020; Ullah, 2022). These tragic accidents have a devastating effect on their family and social life (see Siddiqi, 2019; Bair, Anner & Blasi, 2020). Although their families often lose their last earning person and the family member in factory accidents, they do not receive adequate financial compensation from the governments, RMG factory owners not even from the clothing brands that are regularly outsourcing from those unhealthy and unsafe factories (Islam & MacPhail, 2011; Siddiqi, 2019; Ullah, 2021a; Ullah, 2022). As a result, scholars, media reports and anti-sweatshop campaigners show concern about the supply chains' unethical business behaviour in developing countries during globalisation (e.g., Human Rights Watch, 2013; Haque, 2018; Crinis, 2019; Siddiqi, 2019; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; BBC News, 2019; Rahman & Yadlapali, 2021; Amnesty International, 2021; Ullah, 2022; Clean Clothes Campaign, n.d.).

Nevertheless, international scholars still argue that Bangladeshi RMG workers' productivity is very low compared to other RMG producing countries. For example, Hossain (2021) published a report in the English newspaper in Bangladesh, i.e., The Business Standard. According to the report, the average productivity of garment workers in Bangladesh is lower than all competing countries except Cambodia, which assessment was based on Asian Productivity Organization (APO) 2020. In the report, Hossain further shows that the annual productivity level per worker in Bangladesh is \$10,400, compared to \$12,700 for Vietnam, \$15,800 for India and \$23,800 for China. Furthermore, it was said in the report that the main reasons behind the low productivity of Bangladeshi workers are a few essential things that both Bangladesh Government and RMG employers intentionally ignore. For example, lack of training, low wages, lack of nutritious food, unhealthy living conditions and lack of suitable working environment for women workers are the main obstacles (see Rock, 2003; Ullah, 2015; Butler, 2019; Rahman, 2019; Ullah, 2020a; Hossain, 2021).

However, as inspired to write this article based on Marx's exploitation and surplus labour theory, my purpose is not to generalise or over-generalise Marxism. Instead, I aim to discuss the theory of industrial relations (e.g., Marxist, Pluralist and Unitarist approaches) from the work of scholars. And then, while I aim to explore Marxism in industrial relations, my arguments mainly reflect upon Marx's theory of surplus labour and labour exploitation in light of capitalism, the current market and economic force. Scholars argue that capitalism has been more potent with the support of neoliberal globalisation. But, at the same time, its severe consequence, for example, workers' exploitation, is evident in the global south, particularly in the RMG sector in Bangladesh (see, e.g., Harvey, 2007; Rahman, 2013; Ullah, 2020a; Ullah, 2020b; 2021a; Ullah, 2021b).

In addition, I further aim to see whether there is any correlation between the exploitation of RMG workers and Marx's exploitation theory in this article. Therefore, the research questions for the present article are: (a) why does exploitation occur, (b) is Marxism still considered an essential component of industrial relations in light of the exploitation of RMG workers in Bangladesh, and (c) how can the exploitation of RMG workers be controlled? Thus, the present article is probably the best source for understanding how Marxism is legitimate and how capitalism still undermines the emancipation of workers in a country like Bangladesh. I also investigate the state's (e.g., Bangladesh) nature and function as a rising capitalist state and whether it behaves ethically to benefit RMG workers in Bangladesh.

### **The definition of industrial relations, and what do they mean?**

An Anglo-American influential industrial relations writer Kochan defined industrial relations as "an interdisciplinary field that encompasses the study of all aspects of people at work" (cited in Hayman, 2008). However, from most old and contemporary scholarship, the ideal definition of industrial relations refers to the relationship between employee and management, which arises directly or indirectly from the union-employer relationship (see, e.g., Hayman, 2008; Edwards, 2009; Kochan et al., 2019; Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020). Moreover, when

one or more people are engaged in productive work, it can be said that those people are “industrious”. So then, relationship in industrial relations refers to any relationship between an employer and its employees and the union representing them in a productive field. So again, industrial relations refers to the relationship between the employer and the employees. To get specific work done in the workplace, it needs to be a good relationship between employers and employees. However, contemporary scholarship (e.g., Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020) suggests that conflicting relationships are not a great way to achieve high productivity in industrial relations, so employers and employees should look for reciprocal and friendly relationships. Therefore, both parties (employers/managers and employees or their unions) need to work together as efficiently as possible to maximise the potential for economic gain and industrial growth. Scholars argue that industrial progress and financial gains will come to a standstill without cooperation between these two departments (employers and employees) (see Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020).

Furthermore, the relationship between the employer and the employee may be directly or indirectly affected by the union representing the workers. Therefore the industrial relationship is the interaction and relationship between the employer, the employee and the government and the organisation and the association through which such exchange is mediated (Kaufman, 2004; Abbot, 2006; Eberhard, 2007; Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020; Edwards, 2009).

### Origin and ideas of industrial relations

In the 1920s, the term Industrial Relations (IR) first came to knowledge as the industrial revolution was underway mainly in Britain and America. However, IR theory was initially associated with Personal Management (PM) and Human Resource Management (HRM) in the 1980s. According to Kaufman (2003), in the 20th century, the field of industrial relations in the United States was primarily contained by John R. Commons and Wisconsin schools. Kaufman described the documentation and their strategies and proposed policy approaches for improved industrial relations at that time. The three main elements of their system were market stability, equality of bargaining power and constitutional government in industrial establishments. Therefore, Kaufman saw that Commons and its affiliates think about the best way to achieve these three goals, particularly their views on trade unionism, labour law, labour management, and the proper blending of macroeconomic/monetary policy through four distinct aspects. The process initially started in the 1900s and ended in the late 1930s.

However, in 1929, the Great Depression saw a reorganisation of the social and theoretical conflicts in the 1890s. Still, this time featured a new generation of economists: Joseph Schumpeter in the German-speaking and in the English-speaking world, John Maynard Keynes. The previous generation laid down the primary arguments against the basis of the science of civilisation - today called neoliberalism (Reinert, 2013).

After World War II, John T. Dunlop (1958) developed a systematic industrial relations theory in his Landmark 1958 volume, *Industrial Relations Systems* (Bellemare, 2000; Lieberman et al., 2006). In his writing, he described the system as consisting of three actors: the trade union, the employer, and the state. The International Labour Organisation, established in 1919, had a similar tripartite structure, state, manager and trade union as workers' representatives (see Standing, 2008; ILO, n.d.). Later, other scholars have also discussed an industrial tribunal to see proper regulations of industrial sectors of the state or nations. Interestingly, these three have standard features in practice based on a single concept (human management) (see Edwards, 2009). However, international scholars, e.g., Stone, Cox and Gavin (2020), also argue that IR involves employees/workers and their unions, employers and their associations and state and national governments.

The focus of this article should be based on aspects that have changed the total market shapes of the world since the 1980s due to the direct impact of globalisation and neoliberalism (see Harvey, 2007; Munck, 2010; Rahman, 2013; Hiba, 2021; Ullah, 2022). I also argue that we live through a groundbreaking shift in industrial relations marked by the collapse of labour collectivism, organisation, and militancy (see Kelly, 2012; Mahmood & Banerjee, 2020). Therefore, before starting the discourse of Marxism and its valid connections with the current article, I should present a short analysis of other industrial relations forms.

### The unitarist approach to the industrial relations system

Under the unitarianist approach, industry relations involve the interrelationships between employers and employees. This process mainly encourages both parties to agree on specific conditions in the workplace to avoid industrial disputes by sharing common objectives and values, and trade unionism is not enabled in this way, which significantly gains the influence of management in the workplace (Bashshur & Oc, 2015; Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020). Furthermore, international scholars, e.g., Kochan et al. (2019), suggested that those who use a single frame of reference assume that the interests of workers and employers are consistent. The authors' argument is the voice of workers could express “positive” actions or “organisational citizenship” behaviour. Doing so, however, will improve individual, group, or organisational outcomes that potentially increase commitment, hiring, trust, and job satisfaction and meet employee voice shared goals. Moreover, the unitarist approach works with the concept of HRM, which does not encourage the state government or industrial tribunals to be involved in minimising industrial disputes between employers and employees. Therefore, governments have less influence in achieving good industrial relations (Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020).

### The pluralist approach to the industrial relations system

The pluralistic view reflects the inevitable conflict between employers and employees because there is disagreement in the distribution of power between parties in the workplace, i.e. between employers and employees. Moreover, pluralist advocates often argue that conflict is inevitable in democratic

and pluralist societies such as in Australia (Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020). Kochan et al. (2019) suggested that the “worker’s voice” is embedded in the pluralistic approach to employment relations. Scholars argue that a pluralistic approach can acknowledge workers’ wants, and they would get to know and contribute to organisations that share their values and interests. Ultimately, voices can combine individual and collective efforts to improve organisational processes and performance with efforts to assert employees’ claims in conflict with the interests of employers or other parties in the workplace (see Ackers, 2007; Kochan et al., 2019; Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020). Therefore, trade unionism is encouraged in the pluralist form of the industrial relations system because trade unions can be seen as a legitimate force that can act against any executive/managerial prerogatives and authority on behalf of the workers (Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020). However, an eminent scholar in industrial relations theory, Hayman, suggests that the pluralist approach is a temporary outcome and has a contingent interaction with social, political and economic forces. On the other hand, this approach increases economic growth through mutual understanding between employers and trade unions (Hayman, 2008).

### **The Marxist approach to the industrial relations system**

The Marxist or radical approach reflects industrial conflicts mainly due to class conflict (Marx, 1887; Engels, 1890; Stone, Cox & Gavin, 2020). Marxism has discussed the workers’ exploitation in the capitalist mode of production (see Wolf, 1999; 2004; Hayman, 2008; Gall, 2012; Howell, 2019). The Marxist point of view is also called the radical point of view. This view expresses the nature of capitalist society. It feels like workplace relationships are the opposite of history. It acknowledges the inequality of employment relations and power in the broader society as a whole.

Moreover, Marxism can serve as a mode of analysis by examining the relationship between ownership, power, and social change and thus illuminate the social transformation of a wider variety than what is present (Levin, 2005). One of the strengths of Marxism is that it analyses the social power and conflict between proletarians and capitalists. This explains why there is an unequal distribution of power and resources among the social classes. Marxism helps explain conflict and change and the change that comes through shining a new proletarian class or civil society (Marx, 1987; Wolf, 1999).

The current article looks at whether Marxism is still valid in industrial relations and how workers are exploited, mainly in the RMG sector of Bangladesh. Scholars argue that under the influence of globalisation and neoliberalism, people are becoming more and more instrumental in adapting to the global production pressures (Harvey, 2007; Harvey, 2022). Another scholar, e.g., Reinert (2013), critically evaluated the capitalist mode of the production system, which intensified tensions between the poor and wealthy class, resulting in two types of people: the excessively rich and the abject poor (see also Ullah, 2022).

The capitalists are now much more greedy than ever before. At the same time, they are not concerned about their extreme exploitation (See Harvey, 2007; Ullah, 2021a). It seems that capitalism is just a way to fulfil their material aspirations (e.g., Harvey, 2022). Significant research evidence at various levels suggests that setting unrealistic goals, while seemingly utopian, can encourage people to make compromising choices in order to achieve their goals. As a result, in the case of industrial relations, the conflict continues to be severe, and the RMG industry in Bangladesh represents a horrific experience of exploitation in the modern century (Harvey, 2007; Siddiqi, 2019; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Ullah, 2021a; Ullah, 2022). Therefore, the next section will provide the theoretical reasoning derived from Marxism based on exploitation and surplus labour, the interpretation of other scholars of Marxism, and their counter-opinions in industrial relations theory.

### **Theoretical interpretations of industrial relations theory and the doctrine of Marxism**

As inspired by British Born Marxist writer David Harvey, in this article, particularly while constructing some theoretical debate on Bangladesh’s RMG workers’ exploitation, I wish to provide the basis for the argument of exploitation from Marxism. Thus, my position is clear as I do not see myself as Marxist as Marx said: “all I know is that I am not a Marxist” (Engels 1890, cited in Sayers, 2021, p. 379). In this article, my clear intention is to find the relationship between Marx’s interpretations of capitalism and how workers are powerless in the capitalist mode of production. Furthermore, the scholarly discourse remains to be seen whether, after more than a century and a half, Marxism could be understood with some of its arguments and theories about the exploitation of workers with the rise of world capitalism.

To understand the world trade system, I aim to incorporate some scholarly arguments in this article. For example, Harvey has perhaps closely observed the current global political-economic situation; his work can be used as an excellent reference source. When he portrays globalisation, capitalism, and workers’ exploitation, in his views, these are inevitable debates (e.g., Harvey, 2007; Harvey, 2022). Harvey recently published an article that aims to clarify how Marx attempted to restructure various pre-capitalist modes of production. He showed some different reflections and how the history of humanity has been exposed to the rise of capitalism in Marx’s interpretations (see Harvey, 2022). Here that legacy is seen as deeply problematic, where it forms a primary and perhaps indomitable barrier to the establishment of a rosy socialist future. Marx emphasises the centrality of isolation, emptiness, the loss of money, the sacrifice of all human potential to the God of money power, and the obscenity of capitalist developmentalism (see Harvey, 2022).

The simplest way to explain these two aspects of capitalism and globalisation, and to ‘merge’ them in one sense, is to suggest that the first is globalisation, the expansion of the capitalist mode of production, which has leveraged and strengthened capitalism in the world (Munck, 2010; Harvey, 2007; Harvey, 2022; Ullah, 2022). And the second is the power of capitalism



which has become much more influential than ever before, especially after the fall of communist rule in Eastern European countries in 1989 and the most significant dramatic change in the state policies of the former USSR (Russia) by demising communism through a revolution in 1991. The current communist states in the world are China, Cuba, Laos and Vietnam. These communist states often do not claim that they have achieved socialism or communism in their country but are building and working to establish socialism in their country. However, in the light of China's socio-economic reform that has been seen as the capitalist mode of production over the past four decades, in contrast to the state power controlled by one party, could we state that China is still in the doctrine of traditional communism, perhaps not (e.g., Sayers, 2021). Academically, in this article, I have to abstain from such debate about whether China still adheres to the idea of Communism or deviates from its core state political ideology. Instead, I try to understand how and why Marxism is still a valid theory in industrial relations for evaluating workers' exploitation globally, mainly in Bangladesh's RMG sector.

As Harvey recently discussed in his article about Marx's representation of the bourgeois utopian vision of what they were achieving and what they were destined to achieve, the second is a dramatic rendition of Marx's dystopian fiction of what the bourgeoisie was accomplishing (2007; 2022). So, here are two variables in his discourse: (a) the way the so-called reformists have seen this world has changed with the balance of capital distribution between the upper and lower-income groups, which has not happened, and (b) the bourgeoisie has failed to do its job, mainly in developing countries (e.g., Bangladesh). As a result, they create a hostile atmosphere between employers and employees as there is no ethical distribution of wealth (see also Gilbert, 2018; Ashwin, Kabeer & Schubler, 2020; Ullah, 2021b, Ullah, 2021c; Ullah, 2022). Also, many developing countries have agreed to provide cheap labour and non-unionised factories to attract foreign capital for FDI. As a result, in most informal economic sectors, mainly in the RMG sector of Bangladesh, the state government and local and foreign capitalists were equally responsible for the extreme exploitation of workers (see Siddiqi, 2019; Crinis, 2019; Ullah, 2021).

Furthermore, international scholars, e.g., Chhachhi (2014), precisely portrayed capitalism in Indian society from a more sociological perspective. Her portrayal is a harsh critique of India's new 'bourgeoisie'. Her research, however, revealed that the urban industrial workers who were in full-time employment now find themselves in precarious jobs after a decade of liberalisation of fairness and celebration of equality, which was even a false promise. She further stated that an unethical capitalist class has developed in the grip of vicious capitalism, demising workers' power significantly. Chhachhi's critical analysis of the Indian capitalist class is no different from that of the capitalist class in Bangladesh, which is rooted in the unethical business ideology and exploitation of workers (see also Harvey, 2007; Rahman, 2013; Ullah, 2021a, Ullah, 2021b).

Therefore, the question is whether scholars should consider Marxism with the current upheavals in the workplace world-wide, or more specifically in the RMG sector in Bangladesh? Before I try to find the connection between Marx's exploitation and surplus labour theory and the current working and workers' actual conditions in Bangladesh, it is crucial to know first, what is Marxism. To identify what is Marxism, while the question is simple, it lacks a straightforward answer. Scholars argue that Marxism has been developed over time and under each of the unique events in the world (see Marx, 1887; Engels, 1890; Hayman, 2008; Sayers, 2021). Marxism mainly represents a joint write up by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels in the "Communist Manifesto" first published in 1948. The "Communist Manifesto" was written for Communist League. Still, unfortunately, the small revolutionary groups could not see success in Europe, resulting in demising their activities as they were smashed. Marx and Engels were forced to flee from Germany to settle in England. Later, Marx devoted himself to more academic work than his political motivation. Scholars saw Marxism had become famous after Marx's death in 1883; it had spread and steadily grown (Sayers, 2021).

After Marx's death, his great friend and follower Engels continued to work on Marxism, and he took the initiative to establish the concept of Marxism in the world (see Engels, 1890). This process continued until he died in 1885. However, World War I was a turning point for the socialist movement that first came to Russia in 1917 through the Bolshevik Revolution. The Russian Revolution of 1917 comprised two revolutions. The first one was in 1917, which overthrew the imperial government in February. And the second of these, the Bolsheviks, came to power in October 1917 (see Trotsky, 2008; Wade, 2017; Fitzpatrick, 2017). However, research shows that the revolution began initially on 23 February 1917. But, originally, neither the movement was organised nor any existing party or political group recognised the potential of the movement, which later came under the structural process. Some workers in the Petrograd factory (e.g., the total number of workers was about 130,000) led the major campaign where women's participation was significant as they celebrated International Women's Day. The workers' strike spread, and students and the general public participated in the strike. Several elite regiments of the Imperial Guard revolted and increased their support for the protesters, which accelerated the growing progress of the revolution. Under Stalin's rule in Russia, despite the narrow orthodoxy, Marxism was still widespread (see Trotsky, 2008; Wade, 2017; Fitzpatrick, 2017).

Moreover, in the second wave of the communist movement, China, Korea, and Vietnam saw success. By 1959, Cuba and other Latin American countries had witnessed communist revolutions. Again, in this article, I have no intention of discussing the Russian Revolution of 1917 or evaluating whether there was intense domination of communism in the world or whether it could fight against capitalism or not. Still, academically, I would like to highlight some notable facts related to Marxism's ideas in evaluating the workers' power that can be assessed because the workers in the Russian revolution were the central players against the imperialist government (see Trotsky, 2008; Wade, 2017; Fitzpatrick, 2017).

Returning to the idea of Marxism, it is only thoughts of Marx that he understood from his experience and observation about many things in society from historical and worldly points of view (Marx, 1887). For example, the exploitation of the proletariat and the capitalist production system in his time was one of the significant works that he aimed to formulate under theoretical construction, but this is not all about Marxism (see Sayers, 2021; Harvey, 2022). However, we may argue that there is no significant labour movement in Europe, North America, Asia, or other countries; however, does this mean that Marxism does not exist in the world (see Abbot, 2006; Kaufman, 2004; Kaufman, 2010)? Perhaps, this would be a straightforward assessment of Marxism and an over-generalisation of Marx's interpretation of many essential things in the society that still exist, and we as citizens of the world often confront them (see Chidi & Okpala, 2012; Worsley, 2013). For example, Worsley (2013) has suggested that instead of treating Marxism as an abstract philosophy, we (scholars) should focus on applying Marxism and emphasise the connection between theoretical debate and political struggle in the real world.

Other international scholars, e.g., Abbot (2006), Kaufman (2004), and Kaufman (2010), asserted that Marxism, however, emerged unequivocally to establish a general theory of society and social change with a wide range of implications for the analysis of industrial relations within capitalist society, which did little or nothing. And it does not have any relationship with industrial relations theory. Interesting indeed! Again, scholars, e.g., Kaufman (2004), argues that for potential industrial relationship students, however, the concept of labour relations or industrial relations does not belong to Marxism (see Kaufmann, 2004). Theoretically, as the controversy grows, Ogunbameru (2004) offers an idea for such a debate. For example, Ogunbameru (2004) argues that the application of Marxist theory related to today's industrial relations, that later Marxist scholars did not look directly at the writings of Karl Marx.

Again, Kaufmann (2010) notes that the term industrial relations between 1870 and 1920 originated in a limited number of works in response to the global "labour problem" (or "social question") since industrial development and the emergence of industrial society. Research has shown that there was a conflict between capitalism and socialism, and both were revolutionised, while Marx observed all the changes very closely in his time (see Marx, 1887; Engels, 1890). Also, the labour reform project faced many obstacles and objections during that period. Therefore, the world was divided on the concept of orthodox classical and neoclassical economics.

Chidi and Okpala (2012) quote Hyman (1975), who defined industrial relations as "a study of the mechanisms of control over work relations and in these processes, the collective worker organisation and those involved in the work are of particular concern". Hyman, an orthodox Marxist, gave a firm idea of industrial relations theory. Heyman insisted that Dunlop and Flanders, among those who were hitherto giant industrial relations, theorists. However, Hyman (1975) thought that the issue of industrial relations theory specifically came from Dunlop (1958) and was somewhat limited, explicitly finding out the role of actors and actresses in the labour or employment control process (see also Jayeoba, Ayantunji & Sholesi, 2013).

Hyman's main point is that it is almost impossible to come up with a complete industrial relations theory at one time, but rather it develops through an ongoing process and maintains and stabilises performance in industrial control (Chidi & Okpala, 2012; Heyman, 1975; Kaufman, 2004; Gentz, 2004).

However, scholars like Kaufman (2004) emphasise how Marx's core institutions focus on industrial relations, free labour markets, and the factory system, where Kaufman finds key elements in Marx's analysis. Moreover, industrial capitalism was a keen observer; thus, he extensively discussed labour issues in trade unionism. However, Kaufman's point is that Marx's primary focus was on classifying the distinct gap between labour and capital. Although his ideology was based on trade unionism, scholars also point out that he did not show how trade unions can be a fruitful organisation in achieving ultimate success through a collective wage process: inequality and other labour problems.

But, a century earlier, Marx adequately portrayed trade unionism as the white dominant class's influence in England. Trade unionism was under severe threat as trade unions were close to the capitalists rather than uniting themselves with the proletarian power for social change in England. Marx, therefore, stated that the decision of the Hague Congress of the International Workingmen's Association (held from 2 September to 7, 1872) is very significant in this regard (Lozovsky, n.d.). The Hague Congress, in Marx's proposal, adopted a resolution "on the political activity of the proletariat". In his explanation, it was clear that the working class can take action as a class only after organising its political party in opposition to all the old parties established by the proletariat in the struggle against the collective power of capitalists or merchants. Such organisation of the proletariat into a political party is necessary to ensure the victory of the social revolution and its ultimate goal-class extinction. Marx stated:

*The consolidation of the workers' forces attained in the economic struggle will also have to serve as a lever in the hands of this class for the struggle against the political power of its exploiters. In view of the fact that the owners of the land and of capital always utilised their political privileges to guard and perpetuate their economic monopolies and to enslave labour, the conquest of political power comes to be the great task of the proletariat (cited in Lozovsky, n.d.).*

Marx emphasised the importance of trade unions as the organisational centre of the massive population of working people and fought against merging the party and trade unions. He believed that the political and economic organisations of the proletariat had the same goal (economic liberation of the proletariat). Still, each applied its specific methods to fight for this goal. The predominance of economics in such a way that, in the first instance, he gave higher priority to the political all-class work of trade unions than to personal, corporate jobs. Secondly, the proletariats' political party must have the goal of economic emancipation and then should have led trade union organisations themselves towards success (see also Rahman & Langford, 2012).

A century later, from Marx's portrayal of trade unions, while evaluating trade unions' performance, it is identified that their characteristics have not changed a lot (see Ashraf & Prentice, 2019; Ullah, 2022). On the contrary, association with bourgeois and employers and even with the right-wing political party mainly undermines working-class power and association with capitalists has worsened the situation for workers (see Munck, 2010; Rahman, 2011; Rahman & Langford, 2012). For example, in Bangladesh, from Rahman's scholarly work, it is well understood that trade unionism is not very popular, mainly failing to protect workers' safety and well-being (see Rahman, 2011). Other international scholars, such as Ashraf and Prentice (2017) and Ullah (2022), evaluated the condition of trade unionism in Bangladesh. Their scholarly work shows that trade unions in Bangladesh are fragmented and are not united and are often involved in power struggles between the sectoral and federation level trade unions (see Ashraf & Prentice, 2019; Khan, Braymer & Koch, 2020).

Moreover, their (trade union) political association with right-wing political parties has seriously collapsed their reputation among the workers. Scholars are concerned about whether they want to see any positive change in Bangladesh's most informal economic sector, including RMG, where workers are severely exploited (Khan, Braymer & Koch, 2020; Ullah, 2022). Furthermore, trade unionism has been discouraged in Bangladesh since the 1980s, when capitalists changed the global political and economic policy under the doctrines of neoliberalism and globalisation. So, here again, we find the relationship between globalisation and capitalism. These forces exploit workers worldwide by undermining trade unionism (see Harvey, 2007; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Crinis, 2019; Rahman & Yadlapalli, 2021; Ullah, 2022). It is a clear fact that Marx wanted to say that unless the trade unions unite and form a significant political party in which civil society is involved, the emancipation of the proletariat and the end of their exploitation will not take place.

Again, from a critical point of view, I wanted to look at the features of Marxism. Discussed in the Marxian literature, though not the most notable feature of Marxism, but central themes are:

- How capitalist society is widely divided into two classes,
- Those who have the power of capital, control of other social institutions,
- How the bourgeoisie exploits the proletariat,
- Ideological domination, false consciousness and finally but not least,
- Revolution and communism.

At least three significant features are relevant to this current article from the above list. Most importantly, due to the rapid expansion of globalisation, the process of corporate capitalism has spread extensively since the 1980s. As a result, the problem deepens rather than solving the issue of income inequalities and poverty between developed and developing countries (see Stiglitz, 2007; Harvey, 2007; Harvey, 2022). For example, Stiglitz, 2007 asserted:

*So this is really amazing, and it's not just one year as I say for three decades and it was managed in ways that brought literally hundreds of millions of people out of poverty in spite of the fact that there was growing inequality within China. So while, while there have been some impressive successes and those successes of China and India are due to globalisation, access to global markets, access to global knowledge, it has not played out in the way that the advocates had hoped, that there are growing inequalities, disparities between the richest and poorest countries and growing disparities within most of the countries in the world, both the developed and the less developed and in which globalisation plays an important role (Stiglitz, 2007, pp. 3-4).*

The question is how the above quote relates to Marxism and industrial relations analysis. Well, class struggle is the dominant feature of Marxian discourse. However, in light of the current dilemmas in most developing countries (e.g., Harvey, 2007; Rahman, 2013; Siddiqi, 2019; Ashwin, Kabeer & Schubler, 2020; Ullah, 2022), due to uneven distribution of wealth, the conflict between employers/bourgeoisie and trade unions and workers are common. On the one hand, global capitalists, with the help of local capitalists (e.g., Bangladesh RMG employers/traders), pay the low wages (e.g., Ullah, 2020; Ullah, 2021a; Ullah, 2021b; Rahman & Yadlapalli, 2021), to RMG workers in Bangladesh. On the other hand, they often control trade unions and other institutions of society with their capital power (Rahman & Langford, 2012; Ullah, 2022). Notably, trade unionism has lost its vision and failed to connect civilians in the trade union movement to establish workers' rights in many countries, including Bangladesh. At the same time, globalisation has also undermined trade unionism globally (see Munck, 2010; Siddiqi, 2017).

Moreover, when trade unions become useless and cannot help workers get their rights in the workplace, RMG workers have no choice but to protest on the streets or call for factory lockouts or strikes (see Khan, Braymer & Koch, 2020). The protest often leads to deadly violence between state authorities (police) and factory owners and their private musclemen in Bangladesh. As a result, an antagonistic relationship develops between employers/factory owners and workers/employees (see Siddiqi, 2017). However, we can best portray Bangladesh RMG workers' socio-economic condition and their ongoing struggle from Marx's interpretations. In the capitalist mode of production, workers are virtually powerless, as Marx clearly said in his several write-ups. Marx discussed that workers do not get proper wages or even equal distribution of profit the business. However, workers are the main power to generate revenue for those merchants or capitalists. Therefore, Marx's analysis reveals how workers are exploited, and surplus labourers are created in a country like Bangladesh (see Marx, 1887; 2018; Engels, 1890).



However, Marx had adopted Ricardo's labour theory of value (that the price of a commodity is based on the amount of labour it takes to produce) (Marx, 1887). Still, he subscribed to a theory of the payment of wages for different reasons given by classical economists; hence, what Marx asserted is very important to understand. For example, according to Marx, it was not the population pressures that pushed wages to the level of livelihood but the existence of a large number of unemployed workers. Marx blamed the bourgeoisie and capitalists for creating unemployment in a specific society. He reinstigated Ricardo's belief that the exchange rate is determined by the labour hours required to make it.

Moreover, Marx thought that labour was merely a commodity in capitalism: a worker would be paid a living wage in exchange for work. Marx speculated, however, that the owner of the capital might force the worker to spend more time working than was necessary for the income of this livelihood and that the employer would thus demand the surplus product or surplus value, which is also evident in the contemporary world. Bangladesh is no exception to Marx's interpretations of labour exploitation and surplus labour theory (Marx, 1887; Engels, 1890).

Global capitalism severely controls world economic sectors, and most developing countries depend on capitalists or external economies. The central focus of capital expansion from these Western and European countries is the exploitation and leverage of capitalism (Rahman, 2013; Crinis, 2019; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Ullah, 2021a). For example, while Bangladesh's RMG workers are paid meagre wages for their factory work, global clothing and fashion brands still make extensive profits, a clear symbol of modern slavery and extreme exploitation, which is also a critical discourse of Marxism. As inspired by Marx, here is a clear example of exploitation illustrated by the Clean Clothes Campaign in the global supply chains. For example, if we break down the cost of a T-Shirt made for European consumers, Figures I and II show how a Bangladesh worker is exploited.

Countries like Bangladesh are popular places to source work because they are skilled in making garments and have cheap labour (Rahman & Yadlapalli, 2021). The legal minimum wage for garment workers in the country is BDTK 8,000 (£73.85) or (US\$92.83) per month. However, workers' representatives demand BDTK (£171.65) 16,000 (US\$185.67) for a comfortable life in Bangladesh. With such low wages, workers are often forced to take large amounts of overtime to meet the company's schedule, an example of the surplus-value of labour in the Bangladeshi RMG sector. Still, a worker gets minimal benefit (Butler, 2019).

Several international media and organisations reports, e.g., the Clean Clothes Campaign, suggest that workers' wages do not reflect the actual payment of clothes they made and what consumers pay because of deep-core structural energy dynamics. Clean Clothes Campaign illustrated a well-known example is the national kit of the England football team at the 2018 World Cup, the logo of a famous sportswear brand and the most expensive England kit ever. When the company sold them to fans for about €80 - when Bangladeshi workers made

them, they earned less than € a day. This is the absolute example of exploitation that Marx focused on in his writing.

Therefore, if we consider industrial relations from the perspective of workers, employers, and society, we can see how the state, society and workers are affected due to the direct impact of capitalism. More specifically, if labour is the significant component of industrial relations, Marxism cannot be overthrown in the academic discourse, so Marxism is again valid in industrial relations (Marsden, 1993, Gall, 2012; Rannie, 2016).

### Critical discussions

I have been inspired by Alamgir and Banerjee's work (2019), in which the authors have discussed the politics that have defined the market and has shown Bangladesh's nexus with the global production network. Furthermore, the authors' critical analysis of Bangladesh's state and civil society dynamics has inspired me to create further arguments in the current article. Specifically, Alamgir and Banerjee's research reveals the types of classification, alignment, and fragmentation created in workforce development in Bangladesh, particularly for the RMG sector. Therefore, I would like to portray the characteristics of the peculiar capitalist class that has been developed in Bangladesh with the blessings of globalisation.

From my observations and from previous research experience in the light of Alamgir and Banerjee's research findings, it can be further said that economic relations between global capitalists and Bangladeshi capitalists are highly unsustainable for the overall social development of Bangladesh because these capitalists collectively exploit Bangladeshi RMG workers. As a result, although RMG workers may be able to survive by taking on low-paying RMG factory work, they continue to show low productivity. RMG workers' social and economic well-being remains under serious challenges in Bangladesh. At the same time, the state is much more reluctant to remedy the exploitation of workers. The current investigation through scholarly work suggests that developing countries like Bangladesh cultivate capitalism centrally and ensure the interests of the capitalists instead of the workers (see Gilbert, 2018; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Siddiqi, 2019; Rahman, 2019; Ashwin, Kabeer and Schuessler, 2020; Ullah, 2020a; Ullah, 2022).

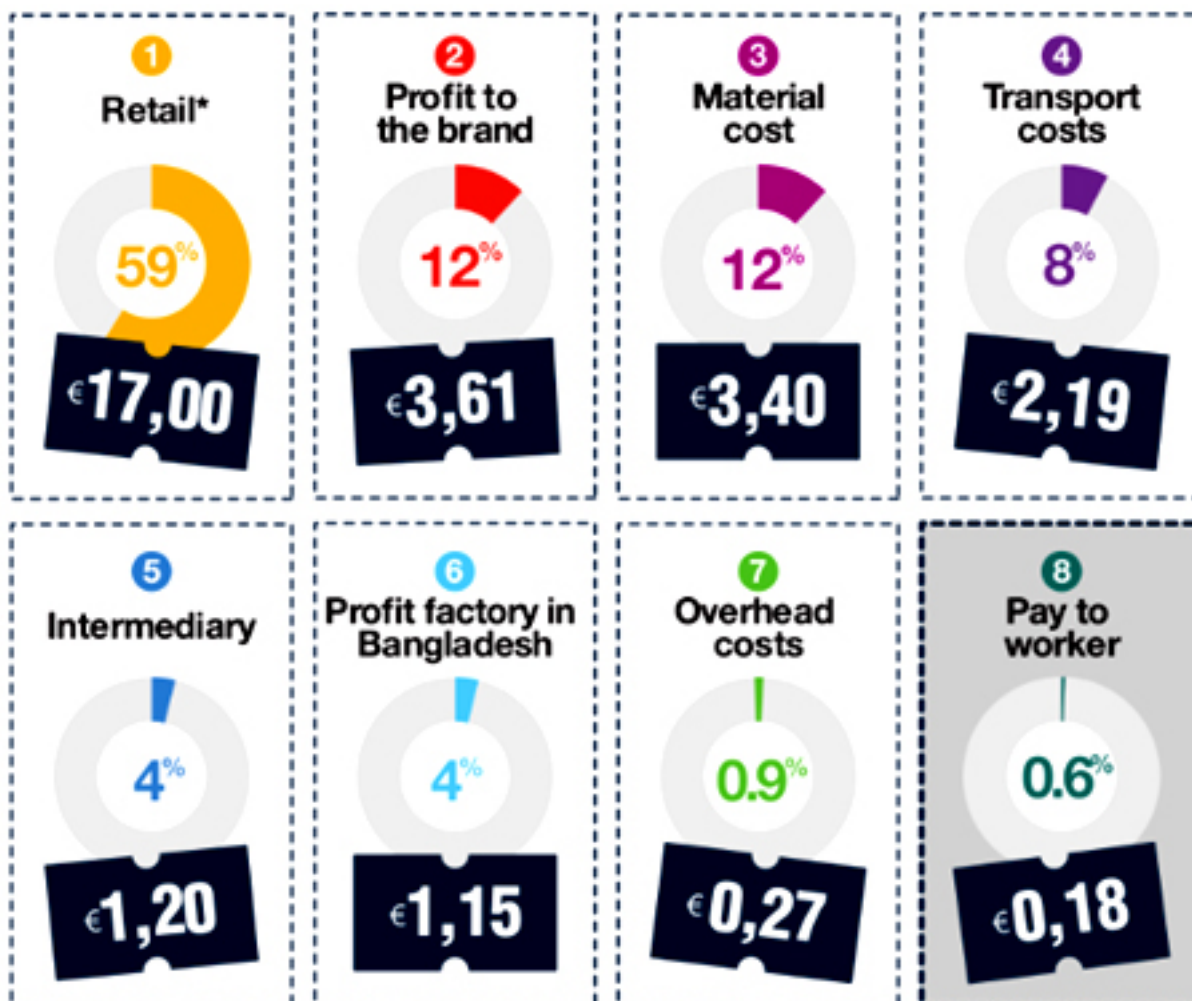
The results of my new research on state capitalism in Bangladesh: As is well known, the governmental power of Bangladesh is in the hands of the national bourgeoisie, whose interests define the character and specific features of Bangladesh's state capitalism, its inconsistency and its conflict (see Ahmed, 2004; Muhammad, 2011). In fact, by definition, state capitalism in Bangladesh serves the interests of the nation's bourgeoisie. It also ensures that it is in the best interests of that particular group, to the extent that state capitalism in Bangladesh aims at overcoming economic backwardness and encourages independent economic and political development of the country. However, further arguments are established that it is a progressive phenomenon that responds to and serves the interests of crony capitalists rather than the mass people in Bangladesh. The state of Bangladesh has thus failed to ensure that it can protect the interests of the working classes but protects capitalists both at home and abroad (see Rahman, 2013; Gilbert, 2018; Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Ullah, 2022).



Figure I: Breakdown of the costs of a T-Shirt made for the European consumer. Source: Clean Clothes Campaign (n.d.).



Figure II: Statistical breakdown of the costs of a T-Shirt made for the European consumer. \*Includes all costs at a retail level, including staff, rent, store profit, VAT etc. Source: Clean Clothes Campaign (n.d.).



The industrial bourgeoisie of Bangladesh has a strong and significant social and political foundation for capitalist development (see Gilbert, 2018). Here I can find the relationship between my observation and other international scholars' propositions on the state characteristics that show capitalists are well protected but workers. For example, from Hayman's work, it can be illustrated that functionaries being an occupant of the state power have their political agenda, and they enlarge their network, influence and competence among their similar interested groups and organisations (2008). Such behaviour of the capitalist state is precarious, and it brings specific interest to the crony capitalists. For example, the capitalists influence major political parties as they often give an immense amount of donations to secure positions in the state's top office. In Bangladesh, capitalists are a symbol of inhumanity while exploiting workers and violating national labour law with no punishment (e.g., Sharma, 2015; Ullah, 2022). Along with the views of other scholars, I can explain that the state is the closest ally of those capitalists. Both capitalists and the Bangladesh governments work on the same plan where the workers' welfare and their future are not well secured (see also Siddiqi, 2019; Muhammad, 2011; Ullah, 2021a; Ullah, 2021b).

It is a Marxist or better approach from modernist-superstition that capitalism as a historical age will end when a new, advanced society is in sight and ready to implement a revolutionary cause for the betterment of humanity (see Streeck, 2014). So a conscious and developed civil class in Bangladesh is a cry now. First, however, a genuine and conscious civil class needs to be formed in Bangladesh to achieve a few common goals, mainly social justice and equality. And second, this mindful and unbiased civil class should put tremendous pressure on the government and capitalists to ensure civil rights, including the fundamental rights of workers and citizens of Bangladesh.

Not only in Bangladesh or other developing countries, but in the top economically stable countries, inequalities are at a high point (see Kochan et al., 2019). Historically, the lack of voice has led to a wave of union drives in many states, including the United States. For example, in the United States, the union density reached 35 per cent in 1945 and now stands at 11 per cent, which is shocking (Kochan et al., 2019). However, during neoliberal globalisation and a free-market economic system, the union collapsed dramatically, and inequality returned to the historic highs of the 1920s. Moreover, the type of work and the workforce have changed, and new voices have emerged in the workplace. Still, the question is, do workers now have adequate options for forming trade unions, and can they get a better working environment and wages in the United States, Bangladesh or elsewhere in the world?

On the other hand, since 1980, along with Bangladesh and the United States, other Western and European countries, including Australia, have been experiencing low trade union density. Research suggests that trade unions density has significantly declined in those countries because of the direct impact of globalisation (see OECD.Stat, n.d.). Scholars have identified the reasons for trade unions' low density in the current time. For example, most multinational and local companies from Western and European countries relocated to low regulated countries

like Bangladesh, where trade unionism has been undermined and discouraged (see Alamgir & Banerjee, 2019; Khan, Braymer & Koch, 2020; Parliament of Australia, n.d.).

At the same time, increasing the density of trade unions in Bangladesh is a significant challenge due to government and capitalist intervention in various ways, e.g., inadequate labour law provisions etc. (see Human Rights Watch, 2013; Afrin, 2014; Sharma, 2015). For example, Bangladesh's RMG sector has more than six million workers (Ullah, 2022). However, only 5 to 10 per cent are unionised, which is a significant obstacle to the trade union movement and the establishment of workers' rights in this sector (see Ashraf & Prentice, 2019; Ullah, 2021b; Ullah, 2022). Other scholars, such as Khan, Braymer and Koch (2020), have shown that only 2.25 per cent of Bangladesh's textile and garment sectors workers are unionised, which is the lowest in Asia.

As inspired by Marx, as he wrote in several of his write-ups on trade unionism, achieving ultimate success in a capitalist society is quite challenging. Therefore, trade unions need to be united, and they should raise their voices collectively with the support of citizens and by forming a political party. Marx clearly states that this organisation of the proletariat has become a class and, as a result, is becoming a political party; the workers are constantly being disrupted by competition among themselves. But if they rise again, they become more robust, firmer and mightier.

Thus, Bangladeshi trade unionists must unite and form an ideal united trade union party with the strength of the workers to succeed in the labour movement instead of establishing relations with capitalists and state governments and right-wing political parties. Moreover, in Bangladesh, trade unionism must be widespread among workers and other interested groups to succeed in the trade union movement (see Munck, 2010; Rahman & Langford, 2012; Ashraf & Prentice, 2019; Ullah, 2022).

## Conclusions

Marxism has no straightforward answers. It is a complex area of study. However, Marx tried to establish his arguments through the lens of practical observation and identified crucial aspects that change human life and society in many ways. For example, he has aptly defined how an individual as a worker is exploited in the capitalist mode of the production process. The counterargument is also evident in scholarly work, as many believe that Marx was so interested in finding the economic relationship between workers and employers. And on this debate, for example, scholars argue that the Marxist view of using the state as an instrument of the rich and a device created at a particular time and still exploiting the poor is inaccurate. But, in this article, from my observation and other scholarly work, I have provided analysis more critically that the neoliberal state stands by the side of capitalists or bourgeoisies. However, my perception of Marxism is that it is still an ongoing process. Marxism can be defined in various political and ideological forms, mainly regarding industrial relations, trade unionism and the current industrial conflict, especially when describing its effectiveness in the Bangladesh RMG sector.

Moreover, my aim in this article was to evaluate whether there is a connection between Marxism and industrial relations theory. My brief understanding is Marxism has many branches. Yet, I suggest that when I consider Marx's theory of exploitation, it comes mainly from two variables, (a) low wages for workers and (b) surplus-labour, which comes from the pressure of capitalists or factory owners (employers). Therefore, these profoundly affect the relationship between workers and employers, affecting society, which means that Marxism is still valid. But, again, Marxism is not all about the Communist Manifesto. Most scholars often make a mistake by considering Marxism from Russia's, Eastern and Central Europe's communism fall and narrowing down the concept of actual Marxism in scholarly debate. With my profound realisation and long working experience in the Bangladesh RMG sector, I can state that as long as capitalism and exploitation continue (e.g., employers and workers' conflict continue), Marxism will remain valid in academic discourse and industrial relations theory.

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# Ukraine - Russia wartime health crises

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## A parable

*One morning a rich man opens the paper and he sees the world is full of misery. He says "I have money I can help", so he gives away all of his money, - but it is not enough .The people are still suffering. While he is living in a small cottage the man sees another article: (A dozen die daily due to lack of donor organs for transplants). He decided he was foolish to think just giving money was enough. So he decides to go to the Doctor and says "Doctor, I want to donate a kidney". The doctor does the surgery. It is a complete success. While still lying in bed postoperatively he is hoping to feel good, but he does not ... for people are still suffering. So he goes back to the doctor. He says "Doctor this time I want to give it all". The doctor says: What does that supposed to mean, give it all?" He says "This time I want to donate my liver, but not just my liver I want to donate my heart. I want to donate my cornea. I want to give it all away, everything I am, all that I have. The doctor said "A kidney is one thing, but you cannot give away your whole body piece by piece. That is suicide". And he sends the man home ,but the man cannot live knowing that the people are suffering so and he could help so he gives the one thing he has left his life he cuts his wrist in the basin in the bathroom. He was buried and on his grave was written: 'Here Lies He Who Gave Everything'. The question is Does that work? Does it stop the suffering? So he killed himself for nothing? Did he?*

Only a fool thinks he can solve the world's problems.

But you have to try, don't you?

I guess that is why we should publish this article. In response to intense emotions during the wars on my Country Iraq I have found ways to suppress them .While perhaps someone adaptive in past difficult situations, now causes these intense emotions to bubble up in unpredictable ways .Anger. Unrelenting worry. Sadness. The loss of joy. When I read the news about the break out of the Ukrainian war and watched the children and women trying to escape a harsh raw anger erupted from somewhere within me. It is a black stain in our collective humanity.

**Dates in this article reflects the situatuon at the time of writing**

As the Russian invasion of Ukraine enters the fourth week the results are destructive and cruel. At least 90 children have been killed and more than 100 injured. The first child reported killed in the invasion was identified as 10-year-old Polina.

Roughly 4 million people have fled to neighbouring countries. Humanitarian organisations have said it is the fastest-growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War 2. According to the joint statement by UNICEF Executive director Catherine Russell and the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees Filippo Grandi on 7th March 2022 Hundreds of thousands of them are children. Amongst those fleeing, many are unaccompanied or have been separated from their parents or family members. Children without parental care are at a heightened risk of violence, abuse and exploitation. The risk of trafficking also soars in emergencies. UNICEF and UNHCR urge all neighbouring and impacted countries to ensure the immediate identification and registration of unaccompanied and separated children fleeing from Ukraine, after allowing them access to their territory. States should offer safe spaces for children and families immediately following crossing, and link these to national child protection systems. The current emergency also necessitates rapidly expanding the capacity of emergency care arrangements with screened caregivers as well as other critical services for the protection of children, including against gender-based violence, as well as family tracing and reunification mechanisms. For children who have been displaced across borders without their families, temporary foster or other community-based care through a government system offers critical protection. Adoption should not occur during or immediately after emergencies. Every effort should be made to reunify children with their families when possible, if such reunification is in their best interest. Nearly 100,000 children, half of them with disabilities, live in institutional care and boarding schools in Ukraine. Many of these children have living relatives or legal guardians. We have received reports of institutions seeking to move children to safety in neighbouring countries or beyond. While recognizing that, under specific circumstances, humanitarian evacuations can be lifesaving and welcoming efforts to bring children to safety, it is critical that special measures be taken in the best interest of the children, and that the consent of their parents or persons responsible for their care be granted. Under no circumstances should families be separated as a result of relocation or evacuation movements.

"Those legally responsible for children in institutions in Ukraine must ensure that evacuations are done in line with national authorities' instructions. Movements must be reported to competent authorities in Ukraine and neighbouring countries immediately upon crossing the border, and as far as possible, children should be evacuated with their identification papers and case files. Humanitarian organisations have said it is the fastest-growing refugee crisis in Europe since World War 2. Solidarity by the global community has spoken with Ukraine, but the humanitarian emergency and widespread harms to health and wellbeing demand a concrete international plan. It is a fact that Ukraine has severe epidemics of some major infectious diseases. It has the fourth highest incidence rate of tuberculosis in the WHO Europe region, an estimated 32,000 people there develop active TB each year, and about one third

of all new TB cases are drug resistant, and a major HIV/AIDS epidemic, with an estimated 260,000 people living with HIV. A disease worsened by crowding and poverty. Drug resistant TB arises when people do not adhere to their arduous regimen of daily drugs." *"If you have TB or HIV, no one has time to get their treatment and run with it, they barely have time to get their kids, pets and run"*

Other infectious diseases, including measles and rubella, are a concern, and the nationwide polio vaccination campaign, which started in February, 2022, has now been suspended. Moreover, vaccination rates for COVID-19 are among the lowest in Europe, at just 35%. Many neighbouring countries have waived existing requirements of proof of COVID-19 vaccination or a negative test for the virus for refugees from Ukraine.

*"In a crisis of this kind, many people think of casualties and injuries, but they do not necessarily think of the problem of cancer patients, people with diabetes, people with HIV, people suffering from COVID."* Speaking in a webinar on Feb 4, John F Ryan, acting Deputy Director General at DG SANTE, the European Commission's health policy body, said.

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director of the World Health Organisation (WHO) said at a 2 March press briefing that when Russian invaded On 24 February, Ukraine was coming off the worst of its Omicron wave, which had peaked that month. COVID-19 has fallen there since the conflict began, which means undetected transmission is probably significant.

Julia Hall, Deputy Director for Research at Amnesty International, whose staff are monitoring the crisis, said " There are lots of people who are deeply traumatized by what they have been through. Many are still in utter shock at the sheer speed of how their lives have been turned upside down. The issue of mental health care is going to be a big one."

Research has shown that the consequences of human-caused trauma can be much greater and can last longer than the consequences of trauma induced by, for example, natural disasters. The sooner treatment is given for trauma, the better, so the sooner countries taking in refugees start dealing with this, the better.

*"Services in receiving countries will definitely be more strained—just look at the sheer numbers of refugees,"* said Toby Fricker, Chief of Communication and Partnerships at UNICEF South Africa.

In Poland, which has taken in more than 2.1 million Ukrainian refugees, two-thirds of the total number of people who have fled Ukraine since the start of the invasion, health authorities have secured thousands of hospital beds for refugees needing treatment. However, local officials say that the rapid influx of refugees, which has seen Warsaw's population alone grow by 20% since the start of the war, is likely to have an effect on a healthcare system still recovering from the COVID-19



pandemic. “You know, our health system is under an incredible strain after COVID-19” Rafał Trzaskowski, Mayor of Warsaw, told international media, adding “so now, if we have 20% more inhabitants in Poland...it is going to put an additional strain on the health service” WHO has admitted there is concern among health-care workers over the challenge they are now facing. ‘we are very ready to care for refugees, but our workforce is exhausted after 2 years of pandemic and now we have this on top of it;” said Dr Hans Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe.

The UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) warned “As the war continues to rage in Ukraine, impacts of rising food prices and shortages of staple crops will escalate global hunger and poverty”.

A quarter of global wheat exports come from Russia and Ukraine. Forty percent of wheat and corn from Ukraine go to the Middle East and Africa, which are already grappling with hunger issues, and where further food shortages or price increases risk pushing millions more people into poverty.

IFAD's analysis shows that price increases in staple foods, fuel and fertilizer and other ripple effects of the conflict are having a dire impact on the poorest rural communities. For example: • In Somalia, where an estimated 3.8 million people are already severely food insecure, the costs of electricity and transportation have spiked due to fuel price increases. This has a disproportionate impact on poor small-scale farmers and pastoralists who, in the face of erratic rainfall and an ongoing drought, rely on irrigation-fed agriculture powered by small diesel engines for their survival.

- In Egypt, prices of wheat and sunflower oil have escalated due to Egypt's reliance on Russia and Ukraine for 85 percent of its wheat supply and 73 percent of its sunflower oil.

- In Lebanon, 22 percent of families are food insecure and food shortages or further price hikes will exacerbate an already desperate situation. The country imports up to 80 percent of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine, but can only store about one month's worth of the crop at a time due to the blast in Beirut's port in 2020 that destroyed the country's major grain silos.

We join others in calling for the immediate cessation of violence by the Russian Government in Ukraine and urge all European countries to adopt evidence based approaches in supporting and responding to the health needs of displaced populations from Ukraine.

First, we urge Russia to desist from attacking health facilities and allow access for evacuation of wounded and vulnerable civilians.

Second, governance must be migration-sensitive so that official processes do not worsen the health of already vulnerable and traumatised populations. Border controls and authorities should undertake their responsibilities by acting to counter all discrimination and mitigate health risks.

Third, to ensure that those with chronic illnesses do not suffer, health-care services must secure continuity of care during and after their journey. We call for immediate and rapid access to medicines for individuals with insulin dependence and those requiring dialysis, chemotherapy, anticoagulation, and other lifesaving treatments. Immediate attention must be paid to people who need mental health and psychosocial services, particularly children.

Fourth, we ask that health workers from Ukraine are allowed to continue working in reception countries, for automatic recognition of their qualifications, and for those in training to be allowed access to medical, nursing, and other health schools throughout Europe.

Finally, we urge all countries aiding Ukraine to include support for the needs of the Ukrainian health system in the context of conflict by providing needed medicines, equipment, and any particular health needs as identified by the Ukrainian Government, and ask Russia to allow unimpeded supply.

Such actions will help mitigate the continuing displacement, suffering, and tragedy unfolding in Ukraine. (1).

### Finally I quote

The war will end. The leaders will shake hands. The old woman will keep waiting for her martyred son. That girl will wait for her beloved husband. And those children will wait for their heroic father. I don't know who sold our homeland. But I saw who paid the price.

~Mahmoud Darwish

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# Rebuilding Ukraine

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## **The moral imperative**

It is blatantly apparent that dictators have no morals, hence in 2022 almost the entire world is in the situation where criminals and idiots rule their destined to fail empires, purely on the power dynamics of out of control evil and it seems that most of them have no conscience whatsoever about destroying all natural and cultural life on planet earth before they will deny their egos.

People's lives and livelihoods are not the only collateral damage in the unfathomable Russian invasion of the Ukraine. In Putin's scorched earth attempts to turn Ukraine into a shattered concrete wasteland, as he did in Syria (though the poor Syrians had no weapons to defend themselves with), he is also destroying priceless world heritage buildings some of which have stood since mediaeval times. It is to be noted that while fleeing for their lives some Ukrainians have tried to also protect their architectural and cultural heritage, along with their families.

UNESCO reports that at least 98 Ukrainian cultural and religious sites have been damaged or destroyed during Russia's invasion of Ukraine. UNESCO has used satellite images and witness reports to verify information provided by the Ukrainian authorities about the damaged sites.

Some of these sites and monuments will take time to rebuild and others probably cannot be rebuilt at all.

None of the Ukrainian sites confirmed as damaged are on the list of UNESCO World Heritage list, for example the Saint-Sophia Cathedral and monastic buildings of the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra in the capital but Eloundou Assomo (an architect and heritage advisor appointed head of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre) warned that any targeting of buildings bearing the UNESCO-backed Blue Shield that signals cultural heritage "is a violation of international law and could also be considered a war crime."



## Ukraine's rich architectural heritage



Mariynski Palace



The Golden Gate





St. Michael's Monastery

### Ukrainians Protecting their Cultural Heritage









## Damage already incurred



It is to be hoped the insanity in this world caused by dictator's egos will soon end, and hopefully never recur, but this leaves the Ukrainian people with no homes or towns or public utilities to return to.

While "scorched earth" is likely Russia's plan toward genocide and de-nationalisation of Ukrainians, such is to be avoided at all costs for the sake of all humanity, and the Ukrainian people deserve to have their homeland rebuilt to a standard that can heal the great wrong committed against them and restore their pride in their country and also alleviate their cost of living.

When it comes to rebuilding Ukraine, new buildings and facilities should not only to be the best of sustainable architecture of the modern era, but, like inspiring architecture of old, it needs to restore spirit and trust, and heal the wounds of the brutal acts and violent war crimes against peaceful and innocent people.

Those landmark buildings that can be restored should be, but where they cannot be perhaps the world can help Ukraine build 'future proof' houses and cities – state of the art and totally sustainable buildings and facilities run by renewable energy.

Central Business Districts or City Centres have been particularly affected and they usually consist of high rise corporate towers of offices with retail premises at street level. The huge influx of workers to the CBDs in normal times also support a myriad of smaller businesses that cater to the needs of office workers, office supplies and food outlets being prime examples, as well as the lunchtime shopping of office workers. (Pocock/Shams)

We can rebuild all these places to generate their own power and retain their heat in winter. Solar power can be collected not only by photovoltaic solar panels on roofs and walls, but also through the use of state of the art construction materials.

A team of researchers from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) have developed solar paint that generates energy from water vapour. The paint works by absorbing moisture from the air and using solar energy to break the water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen can then be used to produce clean energy.

So far, the lifeblood of the solar industry has been traditional solar panels which are a well-proven technology that provide huge cost savings in both domestic and commercial buildings. However, the expense of rooftop panel installations often deters people from switching to solar energy.

Newly built cities can be readily converted to uplifting habitation precincts for city workers without the need for commuting from suburbia, with for example, the use of rooftop and vertical gardens, and the retail sector could extend to include more domestic facilities like supermarkets. Theatres, Art Galleries and Museums also attract out of city and inner city users and tourists, and will likely remain viable. (Pocock/Shams)

The new Ukrainian cities can even have inbuilt health security features such as temperature screening of people entering or even some form of UV disinfecting and automated facilities in washrooms and toilets. Architects and designers will increasingly call on antibacterial fabrics and finishes, including those that already exist and many other options will now be developed. (P/S)

Parks, gardens and fountains in new city centres are essential for both helping clean the air and cooling of the air in summer. Nature in the cities brings in birds and bird song and small animals into the city centres and uplifts the mood of the citizens in the way that only nature can.

The world responded to the fire in Notre Dame, Paris, in 2019 and circa \$200 million was donated from ordinary people around the world, as well as grants from various national and international organisations to rebuild Notre Dame to its former state.

The entire world is shocked and appalled by the barbarism of Russia's actions and while neighbouring countries have provided the most assistance, the rest of the world can help rebuild a clean and green Ukraine. It will provide a way to both help the Ukrainian people and to heal the wounds of all decent world citizens who have had to witness this barbarity.

Ukraine's new cities and towns should be the start of a new era in sustainable architecture and sustainable living and the development of such communities can be an educational process for all of us, as the real war on this planet is the survival of the human race and this travesty in Ukraine should be the end of our barbaric and senseless past, and the rebuilding of Ukraine should be a shining light to guide us to a new approach to living, by intelligent, decent and worthy people.

The reconstruction of Ukraine could become the epitome of what can lead us out of these darkest times. Ground Zero could develop a new and civilised meaning – the place where human history began again, where we saw the light and collectively changed to an intelligent species that is capable of managing a planet, a planet, our home, that was once a jewel in the universe.



## The poetry of Ehsan Anam

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### LIFE

#### Point of view

Earth, the only planet that supports life and the only place that I can call home.

"Tell me, what do you see in yourself?"

It responds to me with its wind scraping across my dry cheeks, and with a howl, it finally speaks.

"Oh man of god, science and philosophy, I see in myself life and death in a constant rotation, everyday humanity strives for salvation but it always ends in devastation.

I feel the dust engulf my weary body as I walk ahead of the past. I feel the blood drip from my dry hands as I strangle the present.

Sailing through the Antarctic Ocean, I see only a blur, it's crippling wind excavates through my fingers and zips through my bones as I unknowingly float towards the future.

"I have found my purpose, what of yours?"

"Oh man of anger, love and hatred. I have no purpose for I am only a product to your survival. I provide you with sweet nectars and bitter Radicchios that make me your saviour, but I am also the fire that burns through your crops and I am the water that drowns your soul. When you go for a swim I am your demise.

The dark clouds spell the end of it all, my heartbeat says that the sky is about to fall. I can't walk an inch through the muddy fields because it aches through my chest. Bringing the pain, I stand to confess. I walk and walk to see the heavens above me turn red. The storm gathers inside my head. It got me running through the acid and it got me losing it.  
This is what I see. What about you?"

"Man of a broken and corrupted society, you see dark clouds and red skies,  
all I see are the stars amongst all of you, Destiny isn't about fate, it's about the choices you make.  
So let me ask you a question, what choice will you make?"

"Man of a broken and corrupted society, you see dark clouds and red skies, all I see are the stars amongst all of you,  
Destiny isn't about fate, it's about the choices you make.  
So let me ask you a question, what choice will you make?"



## EARTH

### Point of view

What do you see in yourself? I see in myself life and death in a constant rotation  
 What is your purpose? I have no purpose for I am only a product to your survival  
 What do you see?

I see the stars amongst all of you

Why are you here?  
 It isn't the question of why I am here it is what I am created to do  
 Why do you cease to exist?

The same reason why you exist. I am no different from you  
 As I float across the emptiness of space, I see a blue sphere rotating gracefully  
 | get closer I see more to this blue sphere, there are signs of clouds smeared across it  
 Now there are signs of tectonic plates floating in the blue sphere  
 It isn't really blue anymore for there is greenery in this  
 Now I see orange and yellow in some parts of it  
 The closer I get the more it contrasts  
 Now I see buildings and structures  
 I see the clear blue water  
 The buildings are now lit up  
 There are specks  
 people  
 life

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#### Part 1: Existence

Born in darkness.

I am that one soul that was created inside another soul, provided by another soul.

Both of which set out to find something to call their own.

Living everything behind their only remaining memory was the sound of a ringtone.

Last words spoken with their kinfolk, last words written in their hometown, last breath taken in their country.

To find purpose one must break through the boundaries.... they were one of the lucky ones.

They were cold and alone on the outside, whilst I was filled with warmth and comfort from within.

Through their pain and suffering, I felt serenity and calmness.

I was immortal I couldn't die nor was I truly alive at the same time.

Their abyss was the world they lived in; my paradise was encased in a meaty dome.

I started to grow, my soul was encased inside a wall of bones, organs, tissues... I had a body... I am now mortal.

A few months has passed, and the walls I have grown accustomed to, slowly.... violently started to tear away.

I don't know who they are, but they took me out.... took me away from my paradise

The light blinded my sight, the air was thick I started to gasp for it... I was completely paralysed

Vocals started to project out my body, I gave out a scream, then I started to cry

It wasn't out of emotion but only through impulse, then I realised

I was held close to the soul that made me, it was her and through her skin I felt warmth, comfort, security

But it wasn't the same, this was only temporary because from that point on fate left me out in the cold to fend for myself.

#### Part 2: Experience

Growing over time I couldn't tell if I was pure or was I vessel filled with impurities

I saw what was known to be the abyss, a place filled with hate, animosity.... Fear.

I saw people commit atrocities, sin, delve into corruption.

Some souls were darker than coal and some were sold to the highest bidder.

I witnessed love, kindness, happiness.... Perhaps it was paradise?

There were souls that was brighter than any populated city in the world... there were souls that was brighter than mine.

I played their tedious game, what they called "life" was a matter of winning or loosing

I gave more to people I cared... then to myself

I felt hate and sadness, I wanted hurt "people" ... I wanted to hurt myself for not meeting their expectations

I fell in love, an emotion that is balance between obsession and compulsion

I found her and she found me.  
 I saw the world in her eyes, I saw the shape of her soul... I understood why she existed.  
 She saw an endless void through my chest, a constant struggle between light and dark, she wanted to help understand my existence.  
 the cycle repeats itself, tiny souls were yet again born in darkness  
 They came from her  
 provided by me.  
 This was being human....the price of mortality

### **Part 3: End**

Time changes people, cities, land.... the world  
 I am growing older, the light in my eyes is set to dissipate  
 This body is started to wither away, skin feels like old leather  
 Bones starts to creak...like old ships sailing in the deep blue sea  
 She was no more, the one I saw the world in, her soul that was trapped inside the body has long ascended....she was the lucky one.  
 I am surrounded by this white light; the air was thin as I took my final breath.  
 My vocal cords are numb, I don't speak, I just smile.  
 I felt a rush of emotions, it was then I realised...  
 Why have I existed?  
 Was it because I had a purpose? God spoke to me in whispers, he told me that I was created to experience life the way he intended.... Funny, she told me the same thing  
 It wasn't because I hated the way I lived. For I have struggled to find peace between my inner demons and angels, only to find out that they were one of the same.... They sit and wait  
 The world was never my home.... I never belonged here in the first place  
 The room is quiet, no one around to see me  
 I am lonely, but me and loneliness are old friends.... we are together at last  
 My breath is slowly starting to run away from me.  
 Eyes starts to dilute  
 The noise fades.  
 It is dark  
 Finally.... Paradise.