



MORAL DIMENSIONS OF THE MAJOR CHARACTERS IN *THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE* BY BERTOLT BRECHT

¹Mercy Gatugi Mukuru, ²Dr. Margaret Njoki Mwhia

¹School of Social Sciences, ²School of Social Sciences

¹Department of Psychology Language and Humanities

¹Mount Kenya University, Thika, Kenya

ABSTRACT

characters function as the lifeblood of narratives. Through their interactions, choices, and growth, they embody the very essence of a story's themes and messages. Authors use characters to bridge between abstract concepts and the reader's experiential understanding. Morality serves as a conduit for exploring the intricate ethical dilemmas that characters encounter and the decisions they ultimately make. However, limited attention has been given to how authors such as Brecht strategically employs characters to address moral issues. This study examines the moral dimension as illustrated through the main characters. To achieve this, the researcher employed Marxist theory, which guided the interpretation and discussion of findings. The study employed descriptive research design, as well as purposive sampling to select the text, from the entire list of works done by Bertolt Brecht. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. The findings indicated that socioeconomic factors intricately shape the ethical choices of major characters in the play. The play highlights the clash between what people personally believe is right and the pressures from the system based on social classes. The study recommends talks about how money, jobs, and society affect moral learning. This way, people can learn to understand moral problems better. This helps them see how big issues in society affect what's right or wrong.

Keywords: Moral, Dimension, Main Character, Marxism, Caucasian, class struggle

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Throughout literary history, characters have served as conduits for delving into intricate moral dilemmas, ethical conflicts, and the consequences of individual choices within broader societal contexts. Characterization the deliberate creation and development of characters with unique traits, motivations, and behaviors. Through this process, authors shape characters into dynamic entities that feel genuine to readers (Miller, 2014). These characters serve as essential vehicles for authors to communicate various themes, ideas, and moral dilemmas embedded within the narrative. Characters serve as the author's tool for exploring the complex aspects of human nature, viewpoints, and life experiences. Authors intentionally craft characters to portray a variety of attitudes, beliefs, and conflicts, reflecting the intricacies of real-life situations. This diverse array of character traits allows readers to connect with the story on a personal level, fostering empathy and understanding.

Miller's argument regarding the essential role of characterization is in line with broader discussions in literature. By developing characters with depth and complexity, authors create a sense of familiarity that encourages readers to examine their own thoughts, feelings, and ethical principles. As characters face challenges, dilemmas, and moments of change, readers are prompted to consider their own beliefs and values in relation to the themes of the story.

Morality is a significant theme in literary works, providing a pathway to explore the complex ethical dilemmas characters face and the decisions they ultimately make. These moral dilemmas are central to many literary narratives, placing characters in challenging situations that test their fundamental values and beliefs. According to Johnson (2008), literature often delves into the nuances of right and wrong, offering characters a platform to confront their own moral compasses. This process of navigating moral uncertainties prompts characters to examine their personal values, beliefs, and ethical boundaries. Authors create characters who grapple with profound moral conflicts, using these internal struggles to prompt readers to reflect on their own ethical perspectives.

Lothead (2013) argues that characters' moral dilemmas in literature are intentionally crafted to resonate with readers' experiences, beliefs, and uncertainties about morality. By portraying characters' internal battles and the choices they make when faced with ethical challenges, authors encourage readers to contemplate their own moral frameworks and potential courses of action in similar situations.

The portrayal of characters' moral struggles encourages readers to examine the reasons and justifications behind their choices (Rossman, 2011). This prompts readers to reflect on how their own values compare with those of the characters, leading them to reconsider and refine their ethical viewpoints. In Bertolt Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, the exploration of morality through characters serves as a central means to understand the interaction between individual values, societal norms, and the socio-political context of the play. By analyzing how key characters in the play confront moral dilemmas, readers can gain insights into Brecht's commentary on broader ethical, social, and political issues.

According to Lamont (1988), in Bertolt Brecht's play "The Good Person of Szechwan," the character Shen Te grapples with the struggle of maintaining self sacrifice and kindness within a harsh and exploitative world. Shen Te's dual identity as both herself and the pragmatic Shui Ta reflects the challenging balance between her desire to do good and the necessity to navigate a society that often rewards self-interest. The play questions whether genuine goodness can thrive in an environment where selfishness and deceit are often advantageous. Shen Te's journey highlights the conflict between her altruistic intentions and the practical realities she faces. The play's exploration of this internal struggle prompts audiences to reflect on the complexities of moral decisions within a challenging societal framework (Lamont, 1988). Through Shen Te's experiences, Brecht invites us to consider the tensions between personal integrity and the compromises individuals make in order to survive and succeed in a world that often values self-preservation over altruism. While Lamont (1988) focuses on Shen Te's moral dilemma, the current study goes further to look into more major characters in Brecht's different work, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*.

Scholars often study the moral challenges faced by the characters in "Petals of Blood" to understand larger issues in society. Ordu (2022) says that the characters show the dilemmas faced by East African communities during changes in society. In the story, characters deal with balancing their own morals and the changes happening around them. They struggle to keep their traditional values while dealing with modern changes like development and globalization. This balance between tradition and progress is a big theme in "Petals of Blood." The characters' struggles, as Ordu (2022) says, reflect the ethical problems not just in the story but also in East African societies. Their moral struggles show how people and societies in East Africa try to keep their culture while also adapting to a changing world.

Bertolt Brecht was a famous writer who lived in the 1900s. One of Brecht's important plays is called "The Caucasian Chalk Circle." It tells the story of Grusha, a servant who has to make hard choices in a place called Soviet Georgia after World War II. The play talks about what's right and wrong in difficult times.

By studying how characters deal with these moral problems related to gender in Bertolt Brecht's play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, researchers can find out what Brecht wanted to say about unfairness between genders and the pressure from society that affects how characters decide things.

2.0 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was guided by Marxist theory. In this concept, the conflict between different social classes, particularly the wealthy bourgeoisie and the working proletariat, shapes economic dynamics within a capitalist system and ultimately leads to a revolution towards communism. This concept examines how the dominant classes impact the working class, leading to unequal distribution of wealth. Karl Marx, commonly considered the pioneer of Marxism, worked closely with Friedrich Engels to establish the theoretical groundwork of this ideology. Marx's influential writings, such as "The Communist Manifesto" (1848) and "Das Kapital," are pivotal in understanding Marxist principles.

Marxism is believed to have gained popularity during Marx's lifetime. This included the emergence of political parties that identified themselves as Marxist. It's claimed that in 1880, Marx himself stated that he was not a Marxist. He reportedly conveyed this to his son Jules Guesede and his son-in-law Paul Lafarge, who were leaders of Marxist socialism in France and also involved with the French women's party. The theory presents various principles that served as the foundation for achieving the study's goals. Key among them is class struggle;

The tenet of class struggle, a fundamental pillar of Marxist theory, posits that societies are characterized by ongoing conflicts and tensions between distinct social classes, primarily the bourgeoisie (owners of the means of production) and the proletariat (working class). This concept offers a powerful framework for dissecting the moral dimensions of characters in Bertolt Brecht's "The Caucasian Chalk Circle." By examining how characters' moral choices intertwine with their socio-economic positions, the tenet of class struggle unveils the intricate dynamics between social classes and their profound influence on ethical decisions. Within the context of the play, the interactions between characters of varying classes, such as Grusha and Azdak, provide a rich avenue for understanding the ways in which class dynamics shape their moral compasses. Grusha, a woman from the lower strata of society, embodies the complex realities of the proletariat. Similarly, Azdak, the unconventional judge, becomes a prime illustration of the tenet's significance as his decisions challenge established norms and align with the interests of the proletariat. This tenet asserts that societies are marked by ongoing conflicts between different social classes, particularly the bourgeoisie, who own the means of production, and the proletariat, the working class. By applying this concept, we can deeply analyze the moral choices of characters in the play within the context of their socio-economic backgrounds.

3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Alturki, Gable and Bandara (2011) explains that research design is like a roadmap that guides how a study is done. It helps researchers find answers to their questions and manage differences in results. Similarly, Kothari (2004) describes research design as a detailed plan that includes how the study is organized, structured, and carried out. In this study, which uses qualitative methods, a descriptive research design was used. This means that the research focused on describing and understanding a phenomenon or situation in detail. The population encompassed the 31 plays written by Bertolt Brecht during the period spanning from the 1920s to the mid-1940s. For the purpose of this study, the text *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* by Bertolt Brecht was purposefully chosen due to its thematic alignment with the study's focus on moral dimensions, socio-political context, and gender roles. The researcher used primary and secondary sources from the library. During data collection, the text was read closely, taking note of key excerpts and instances which exhibit moral dimensions, regarding the main characters. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the text. The analysis began with a comprehensive reading and immersion into the text to gain a deep understanding of its plot, characters, and themes. The study's objectives guided the identification of relevant themes and patterns within the text.

4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Examining moral dimensions expands the interpretive scope of literature, prompting readers to delve into the intricacies of human behavior and the ethical landscapes depicted across various works. This concept functions as a framework for exploring the moral fabric of characters, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of their motivations and actions within the broader narrative context. In accordance with Karl Marx's perspective, societies grapple with persistent conflicts and tensions between distinct social classes, notably the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, representing differing financial capabilities (Antonio, 2011). Arguably, characters' moral orientations may intertwine with their socioeconomic status. Bertolt Brecht constructs characters at crossroads, compelled to make moral decisions that navigate the complexities of their ethical stance within the given social and economic background.

Grusha, in contrast to the other servants who prioritize their own safety, decides to put her life at risk to save Michael, the abandoned child of Natella. The Groom and Cook express fear and superstition, choosing to abandon the baby due to perceived bad omens. However, Grusha's response stands out as she demonstrates a remarkable display of maternal instincts and empathy;

“...Groom: Better put him down, I tell you. I'd rather not think what would happen to anybody who was found with that baby.

Cook: That's right. Once they get started, they'll kill each other off, whole families at a time. Let's go.

Singer: Grusha sat with the child a long time,

Till evening came, till night came, til dawn came

She sat too long, too long she saw...”

The Singer's narration highlights Grusha's extended and thoughtful care for the child. Grusha sits with the baby throughout the night, attuned to the infant's soft breathing and small clenched fists. The repeated phrase "till evening came, till night came, till dawn came" emphasizes the duration of Grusha's commitment to the child. The use of the word "seduction" suggests a transformative process, implying that Grusha becomes emotionally attached to the baby. Her action of carrying the child away is portrayed with a sigh, indicating the weightiness of her decision. The description of Grusha as if she were a thief emphasizes the clandestine nature of her act, driven by a sense of urgency and necessity.

Grusha's choice to care for the baby is a crucial moment in the story. It shows how people's moral decisions are connected to their social and economic situations. By prioritizing the baby's well-being over her own safety, Grusha highlights the idea of being selfless and the kindness in people. This is different from what the other characters do, emphasizing the ethical challenges in difficult situations. Looking at how characters' moral choices relate to their social status introduces the idea of class struggle. This helps us understand the complicated relationships between different social groups and how they affect moral decisions.

Despite not being the biological mother of Michael, Grusha endeavors to breastfeed him, showcasing her maternal instincts and willingness to sacrifice for the child's well-being. Grusha's dialogue with the old man, where she negotiates the price of milk and eventually resorts to breastfeeding due to financial constraints, underscores the depth of her moral commitment. This act reveals Grusha's resilience in the face of adversity and her prioritization of the child's needs over economic considerations;

“..Grusha: Three piaster's for this little drop? (without a word the OLD MAN shuts the door in her face). Michael, did you hear that? Three piasters! We can't afford it!... Open grandfather, we'll pay (softly)may lighting strike you!(when the old man appears) I thought it would be half a piaster.but the baby must be fed. How about one piaster for that little drop?...”

The negotiation over the price of milk and her eventual decision to breastfeed highlight the socio-economic challenges she faces. Grusha's determination to provide for Michael, even in the absence of financial means, reflects a moral stance grounded in compassion and sacrifice. This portrayal emphasizes how the character's moral choices are intricately linked to her socioeconomic circumstances. Grusha's actions in "Caucasian Chalk Circle" align with the societal conflicts and tensions expounded by Karl Marx, particularly the dynamic between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. As a character representing the proletariat, Grusha's moral decisions become a poignant reflection of the challenges faced by those with limited economic means. Her negotiation over the price of milk exemplifies the struggles of the working class in obtaining essential resources, highlighting the economic disparities within the society depicted by Brecht. In this context, Grusha's decision to breastfeed Michael instead of succumbing to the financial

constraints emphasizes her resilience and determination to fulfill her maternal duties, even when faced with adversities caused by societal inequalities.

The play serves as a canvas illustrating how characters grapple with complex moral decisions shaped by economic realities. Grusha's sacrificial act not only underscores the moral strength of an individual in the face of financial struggles but also acts as a lens through which the audience witnesses the intricate interplay between morality and socioeconomic circumstances. Thus, within the context of the play, Grusha becomes a compelling representation of the proletariat navigating ethical complexities amid a society marked by economic disparities.

Bandura (1999) argues that characters become a symbolic reflection of how economic conditions shape ethical decisions at a personal level, contributing to the broader understanding of social dynamics in accordance with Marxist perspectives. By examining characters as symbolic representations of real-world ethical dilemmas, Bandura's argument invites readers to explore the nuanced connections between personal struggles and the overarching socio-economic landscape depicted in the play. It underscores the importance of analyzing characters as more than literary entities, recognizing them as conduits through which the complexities of ethical decision-making in the face of economic constraints are revealed and understood.

Grusha chooses to cross a rotten bridge, risking her life, in order to save Michael, rather than giving him out to the iron-shirts.

“...MERCHANT WOMAN: Maybe she’s really got to get across. Give me the baby. I’ll hide it. Cross the bridge alone!

GRUSHA: I won’t. we belong together. (To the child) “Live together, die together” (she sings). Get out of my way, I’ll try it without the rope.

MERCHANT WOMAN: You are tempting God!

GRUSHA: Please, throw that stick away, or they’ll get the rope and follow me. (pressing the child to her, she steps onto the swaying bridge. The MERCHANT WOMAN screams when it looks as though the bridge is about to collapse. But GRUSHA walks on and reaches the far side.)

FIRST MAN: She made it!..”

Grusha's pivotal decision to risk her life by crossing a perilous bridge to save Michael, rather than yielding to the demands of the iron-shirts, is a profound moment of moral courage in "Caucasian Chalk Circle." This scene encapsulates the essence of Grusha's character, as she vehemently rejects the suggestion to cross alone, emphasizing the inseparable bond between her and the child. Her mantra, "Live together, die together," encapsulates her unwavering commitment to Michael's well-being. The tension escalates as Grusha, pressed by the urgency of the situation, decides to attempt the crossing without the safety of a rope. The dramatic moment unfolds with the bridge swaying, inducing fear that it might collapse. However, Grusha persists, successfully reaching the far side to the relief of the onlookers.

This narrative instance symbolizes Grusha's moral resilience and maternal devotion. It reflects her choice to confront immediate danger to protect the life entrusted to her. Calandra (1999) posits that Grusha's actions stand as a testament to the transformative power of selfless love and the willingness to face life-threatening risks for the sake of another. Bertolt Brecht, known for his socio-political commentary, often portrayed characters grappling with moral dilemmas shaped by their socioeconomic conditions (Hartl, 2021). Grusha, belonging to a marginalized and oppressed class, exemplifies the ethical choices individuals make when faced with societal injustices. Her decision to defy the iron-shirts and brave the dangerous bridge underscores the influence of socioeconomic factors on moral decisions, emphasizing the struggle of the proletariat against oppressive forces. Grusha's act serves as a poignant commentary on the moral dimensions entwined with societal and economic disparities.

Grusha's decision to marry Jussup in the provided dialogue reflects a profound sense of self-sacrifice and dedication to ensuring Michael's safety. Her willingness to enter into a marriage solely on paper, driven by the pragmatic need for societal acceptance and a secure place for the child, goes beyond the conventional expectations of her character. This act is not merely a formality but a demonstration of Grusha's extraordinary commitment to protecting Michael, even at the cost of personal desires and aspirations.

“...LAVRENTI: (eagerly) I’ll tell you what we’ll do. You need a place to go, and, because of the child (he sighs), you have to have a husband, so people won’t talk. Now I’ve made cautious inquiries to see if we can find you a husband...

GRUSHA: But I can’t marry! I must wait for Simon Shashava.

LAVRENTI: Of course. That’s all been taken care of. You don’t need a man in bed-you need a man on paper. And I’ve found you one...

GRUSHA: No one will know us there. I’ll do it...”

The dialogue with Lavrenti captures Grusha's internal conflict, as she initially resists the idea of marrying someone other than Simon Shashava, the man she loves. However, her pragmatic acknowledgment of the societal necessity for a husband, coupled with Lavrenti's assurance that it will be a marriage only on paper, leads Grusha to make a difficult choice. Her words, "No one will know us there. I’ll do it," underscore her awareness of the potential societal consequences and her willingness to bear the burden of a false marriage for the sake of Michael's safety. This scene deepens our understanding of Grusha's character, revealing her as more than

just a woman in love. It shows her as a strong and selfless person facing complicated moral choices. Examining this moment helps us delve into Grusha's reasons, the societal influences affecting her choices, and the ethical aspects of her sacrifice. Gobert (2006) argues that the society in the play emphasizes collective responsibility, especially during times of turmoil. Grusha's moral decisions are shaped by a sense of responsibility not only towards herself and Michael but also towards the larger community. This reflects Brecht's exploration of social and collective morality.

Due to Grusha's genuine love for Michael, she chooses to relinquish custody for this well-being. The court scene, presided over by the character Azdak, becomes a moral crucible as he attempts to determine the child's rightful mother. Grusha's decision to relinquish custody, despite her genuine love for Michael, reflects a profound ethical choice driven by her concern for the child's well-being. The courtroom test, involving drawing a circle on the floor and having the potential mothers attempt to pull the child out, serves as a symbolic and moral ordeal

"... AZDAK: Plaintiff and defendant! The court has listened to your case, and has come to no decision as to who the real mother is; therefore, I, the judge, am obliged to choose a mother for the child. I'll like to make a test. Shauwa, get a piece of chalk and draw a circle on the floor. (Shauwa does so) Now place the child in the center. Stand near the circle both of you. (Natella and Grusha both step in the circle) now each of you take the child by one hand. (they do so) The true mother is she who can pull the child out of the circle...Pull!(The Governor's wife, Natella, pulls the child out of the circle on her side; Grusha has let go..what the matter with you? You didn't pull..

GRUSHA: (in despair) I brought him up! Shall I also tear him to bits? I can't!..."

Grusha's refusal to engage in a tug-of-war for custody, stating, "I brought him up! Shall I also tear him to bits? I can't!" underscores her commitment to the child's welfare over any legal claim. This moment encapsulates a sacrifice, where Grusha prioritizes Michael's safety and emotional well-being over a legal right to custody. The ethical dimensions of this choice prompt a broader reflection on maternal love, selflessness, and the complexities of morality in the face of societal norms and legal obligations.

In Marxist terms, this scene prompts an exploration of the sacrifices individuals make within the context of their socioeconomic status. Grusha's moral stance becomes a focal point for understanding how societal expectations, often influenced by the ruling class, intersect with personal ethics. The ethical challenges posed by legal systems can be viewed as part of a larger ideological apparatus reinforcing class-based norms. Thus, Grusha's moral choices unravel not only the intricacies of personal morality but also serve as a reflection of the broader socioeconomic dynamics within "Caucasian Chalk Circle," aligning with Marxist analyses of societal structures and power relations. From a Marxist perspective, legal systems can also be seen as tools of repression used to maintain the status quo (Gabel & Harris, 1982). When Grusha is faced with legal challenges, it reflects the broader function of the legal system in preserving the existing social and economic order, which often perpetuates class-based inequalities.

"...Azdak's often favors the underprivileged. His decisions aim to balance the scale for those who might be oppressed or underprivileged.

COOK: Her grace (Natella) would pull your hair out on the spot if she didn't know Azdak is for the poor. He goes by the face..."

Azdak's character in "Caucasian Chalk Circle" emerges as a symbolic figure challenging the prevailing social order. His commitment to social justice and his willingness to defy the expectations of the elite, as indicated by Natella's potential disapproval, align with a broader theme of addressing class disparities. Azdak's decisions, driven by consideration for the underprivileged, become a deliberate effort to disrupt established societal norms and rectify inequalities rooted in class distinctions. By favoring the poor, he not only defies the expectations of the privileged class but also questions the legitimacy of a system that perpetuates inequality. This moral stance adds a layer of complexity to the narrative, prompting reflection on the role of justice and empathy in the face of entrenched class struggles. Azdak contributes to a broader exploration of the moral dimensions of societal structures,

Azdak not only issues a verdict but also advises Grusha to leave the city, considering her well-being and that of the child. Simultaneously, he confronts the Governor's wife, warning her of potential fines for fraud and redistributing her estates for the benefit of the community. This portrayal suggests that Azdak's judgments are not solely based on legalities; rather, he incorporates a humane element by considering individual circumstances and demonstrating a sense of mercy.

In the broader context of the play, this aspect of Azdak's character adds depth to the exploration of justice. It reflects a departure from rigid legal formalities, introducing a more compassionate and humanistic approach to judicial proceedings. Azdak's decisions, as evidenced, underscore the importance of considering the human aspect in legal matters, demonstrating a nuanced understanding of justice that goes beyond the confines of strict legal codes.

Azdak's actions also hint at some thoughts about how things work in society and the differences between people. When he decides to turn the rich person's land into a place for kids to play, Azdak is changing who gets what in a way that's not typical. This seems like a move toward being fairer to everyone, especially those who aren't usually well-off. Azdak's choices shake up the usual way things are done and suggest a move toward a more equal society. In the bigger picture, Azdak's character sparks conversations about what's fair, being kind, and the challenges of different groups of people in "Caucasian Chalk Circle."

Marxist theory emphasizes the inherent conflict between different social classes, particularly the bourgeoisie (the wealthy, ruling class) and the proletariat (the working class). Azdak's intervention in redistributing resources aligns with Marxist principles of addressing class disparities. By turning the rich person's estates into a communal space for children, he disrupts traditional class dynamics, suggesting a move toward a fairer distribution of societal resources. This reflects a form of resistance against the

prevailing capitalist system that often concentrates wealth in the hands of a few. This act can be seen as a step towards challenging class inequalities and fostering a more egalitarian society, consistent with Marxist ideals of social transformation and the pursuit of a classless society (Piff, Kraus, & Keltner, 2018).

Simon, as a soldier, believes in doing what is expected of him. He takes up his responsibility of taking care of the Governor's family, with great commitment.

“...SIMON: I'll just take the mistress to the troops that have stayed loyal. When the war's over, I'll be back. In two weeks. Or three. I hope my intended won't get tired, awaiting my return...”

His dedication is evident in his assurance of returning promptly after completing this duty, even expressing concern about his intended patiently awaiting his return. This portrayal highlights Simon's sense of duty and loyalty, aligning with conventional expectations associated with his role as a soldier. His commitment to both military duty and personal relationships reflects a complex moral landscape, where duty to the state intersects with personal obligations. Simon embodies the tension between individual agency and societal expectations, a common theme in literature that explores the moral dimensions of characters navigating their roles within the broader socio-political context.

Canizales and Sotelo (2022) argue that soldiers, often representing the proletariat in societal structures, face the challenge of navigating their duties within a system that may not prioritize their well-being. They have to fulfill their duties within a system that might not care much about their well-being. In Marxist terms, soldiers, similar to the working class, find themselves in a social and political setup that primarily benefits the ruling class. Even though soldiers are tasked with maintaining order, they often deal with the contradiction of protecting a society that might not prioritize their own needs or rights. The way military structures are organized reflects broader inequalities in society, where those in charge benefit from the hard work and sacrifices of the working class. This highlights the struggle between individual well-being and the demands of a system designed to maintain class-based differences.

Simon's commitment to his responsibilities can be seen as a manifestation of the struggles faced by individuals in lower socioeconomic classes, where duty and responsibility may take precedence over personal desires. This dynamic adds depth to the exploration of class struggle within the context of the character's moral choices and societal expectations.

According to Marxist principles, individual moral values are shaped by one's place in the social hierarchy, and this notion is vividly illustrated as characters navigate a society marked by stark class disparities. Clark (2006) argues that the struggles faced by characters in making moral choices serve as microcosms of broader societal conflicts arising from class differences. These conflicts underscore the tension between the characters' personal ethical beliefs and the systemic pressures imposed by a societal structure designed to perpetuate class-based norms.

One key concept is ideological hegemony, where the dominant class shapes societal norms and values to maintain their power (Stoddart, 2007). This is evident in the characters' moral dilemmas, where prevailing ideologies often conflict with their personal convictions. Additionally, the play embodies the Marxist notion of the base and superstructure, where the economic foundation (base) influences the cultural, legal, and moral aspects of society (superstructure). The characters, operating within this framework, grapple with moral decisions molded by their socio-economic standing.

The dilemmas faced by the characters are not isolated incidents but rather symptomatic of the contradictions inherent in class-based societies. Marxist theory posits that such societies contain inherent tensions between the ruling and working classes (Aron, 1950). In the play, these tensions manifest in the characters' moral struggles, emphasizing the clash between individual values and the systemic demands imposed by a structure that perpetuates class distinctions. This dynamic reflects the broader Marxist critique of social structures, portraying the characters as both products and perpetuators of the class-based norms prevalent in their society. The play, with its rich narrative and characters, provides a compelling narrative that engages with fundamental Marxist concepts, making it a thought-provoking exploration of ethics within the context of class struggle.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that socioeconomic factors intricately shape the ethical choices of major characters in the play. Characters like Grusha serve as poignant symbols of the impact of economic disparities on moral decision-making. Grusha's sacrificial acts and ethical dilemmas highlight the moral strength required to navigate financial struggles, reflecting the broader societal conflicts embedded within the narrative. Moreover, the study illuminates the role of Azdak as a symbolic figure challenging established social hierarchies, making decisions that align with Marxist principles and addressing class disparities. Azdak's character serves as a catalyst for discussions about justice, kindness, and the struggles faced by different societal groups, reinforcing the interconnectedness of morality and socioeconomic structures. The play highlights the clash between what people personally believe is right and the pressures from the system based on social classes. This clash becomes a deep look into what's right and wrong, making "Caucasian Chalk Circle" a meaningful commentary on the moral challenges that come with the larger issues of social classes. By incorporating discussions on socioeconomic factors into moral education, individuals may develop a more nuanced and empathetic approach to ethical dilemmas, recognizing the broader societal conflicts and tensions that influence moral choices.

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