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The Loss of the Self and the Quest for Identity in Martin Amis's Money: A Suicide Note

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Abstract:

The present paper investigates the profound impact of the extravagant consumer culture on the individual's self and identity in Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note*. It aims at proving that the postmodern capitalist society is suffering from an identity crisis due to its extreme obsession with monetary gain and insatiable greed. Relying on the perspective of postmodern literary theory, this article offers an in-depth analysis of the destructive consequences of the relentless pursuit of material profit on personal self and identity. Moreover, the study examines Amis's satirical and sharp language that unveils the harsh reality of the contemporary materialistic age. The findings of this work demonstrate that the alluring postmodern consumer culture can disintegrate and distort the

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essence of one's self and identity ultimately leading to moral and social decay.
Keywords: Postmodernism; Consumerism; identity crisis; self-loss; moral decay.

1. Introduction:

Today's materialistic world embraces a consumer culture in which people's first obsession and passion is money. In fact, materialism has become a major force in the contemporary era that shapes societies and people's identities. The captivating allure of wealth and fame fascinates individuals who find themselves striving constantly in order to fulfil their materialistic desires. This article relies on the postmodern theory of literature in order to address the destructive impact of the blind pursuit of monetary gain on the individuals' self and identity. The study investigates the postmodern narrative techniques of literature that reinforce the author's satirical aim mainly: black humour and metafiction. Through his novel *Money: A Suicide Note*, the British author Martin Amis delves into the intricate interaction between materialism and the formation of one's personal identity. This masterpiece that has been first published in 1984, is a darkly humorous critique of the extravagances and follies of the postmodern capitalist culture. Actually, this novel affords a deep portrayal of the struggles faced by individuals in the postmodern era and explores the long-lasting ramifications of the consumer culture. Brilliantly, Martin Amis satirizes the meaninglessness of the postmodern society where people are tricked by an elusive and temporal happiness; a happiness that is built upon a distorted morality as well as a relentless greed and insatiability.

This study strives to reveal the truth behind the attractive materialistic culture and endeavours to highlight a crucial human dilemma where people are losing their identities because of materialistic fascination. In addition, it intends to prove that the postmodern world is suffering from an identity crisis as a result of being excessively addicted to the pursuit of money. Accordingly, this article offers a novel approach for future researchers interested in exposing the detrimental effects of materialism and capitalism on people's identities in Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note*.

2. Monetary Obsession: The Catalyst for Self-Disintegration and Identity Destruction:

The capitalist postmodern world witnesses a relentless pursuit of material wealth that leads to calamitous repercussions mainly: pressure, anxiety and identity destruction. Martin Amis's *Money: A Suicide Note* mirrors the state of the individual amidst an excessively materialistic world. This literary work portrays the dangerous effects of being infatuated by an extreme consumer culture. In essence, Amis shares his point of view concerning the issue of money

in an interview. He explains what motivated him to produce a book on such a controversial topic as he defines money as a deceitful addiction and "a tacit conspiracy" that everybody approved to comply with (Haffenden, 1985, p. 9). Amis's words reveal the profound impact that money traces on people's lives. He writes *Money*, a novel that is "a vividly black comedy" (McGrath, 1987, p. 26) that satirically reflects the political dynamics of his era, while also showcasing the impact of the American cultural values on British people (Kaur, 2017, p. 90). The narrative takes place between New York and London, drawing attention to the misadventures of a funny thirty-five years old film maker whose name is John Self. This protagonist, who is the first person narrator, is portrayed as a man who is very addicted to the desires of his age. He is depicted as a man who is hooked to fast food, alcohol, sex, and women. Moreover, he takes the role of an avid pursuer of money and profit. Excitedly, he travels to his dream land which is America chasing wealth and fame; his intention is to produce a movie which is significantly called "Money". Unpredictably, he finds himself chasing shadows; his target has never been achieved and his entire life has been ruined as a result of being irrationally obsessed with materialism.

As a postmodern satirist, Martin Amis was completely influenced and fascinated by the American postmodern narrative style of writing. Through his innovative literary writing skill, he transcends the boundaries creating beautiful stories that echo authentic human experience. For instance, in *Money*, he utilizes techniques similar to his favourite American novelists. His unique fusion of multiple storytelling methods enables him to pinpoint the deep influence of the American culture on his English protagonist who is deeply immersed in a constant stream of popular leisure.

One of the most prominent narrative strategies that distinguishes *Money* as a social critique is black humor. Actually, in art and literature, the concept of black humor is defined as morbid or grotesque humor that is used as a device to convey the paradox, selfishness, absurdity, cruelty and brutality that extremely invade the modern world. Moreover, writers tend to apply black humor in their texts in order to express confusing feelings of insignificance, meaninglessness, mercilessness, foolishness and hopelessness that infiltrate human existence (Nalini, 2016, p. 53). Accordingly, this narrative strategy is adopted to dissect the absolute lack of purpose in the new mode of living. It reflects the vision of the world as a chaotic space that is saturated with doubt and disorder.

Significantly, the use of black humor allows the novelist to mock macabre topics. The comic effect is achieved mainly by mocking danger, death, or any other subject that is morally and ethically forbidden for humor (Blynova, 2023, p. 263). In fact, Amis succeeds in treating the serious effects of materialism playfully by creating a humorous protagonist who brings about his own euphoric

destruction. Through the use of black humor, Amis is able to blend and contrast humor with dreadful and grotesque aspects. He has the potential to replicate the ridiculousness and mercilessness of life creating a perplexing sense of insecurity and uncertainty; the novel recites: "we are all fading, shrinking, paling. Life is all losing, we are all losing, losing mother, father, youth, hair, looks, teeth, friends, lovers, shape, reason, life. We are losing, losing, losing. Take life away. It's too hard, too difficult" (Amis, 1984, p. 92). Spontaneously, reading this novel may stimulate laughter; but profoundly, it is not a simple and safe kind of laughter. In fact, the novel generates an unpleasant sour and sardonic smile in people who are observing their real miserable condition in the tangible world (Blynova, 2023, p. 263). Tying these lines of thought together, the author injects black humor in his narrative to criticize the way people are throwing themselves to hell unconsciously and to show the false basis of their lives: "if you lose your laugh, you can get a false one. If you lose your mind, you can get a false one" (Amis, 1984, p. 10).

The personality of John Self can reflect any postmodern individual who is deeply fascinated by the allure of money. Throughout the novel, he confesses: "I myself was the key figure in all this, with my controversial TV ads for smoking, drinking, junk food and nude magazines" (Amis, 1984, p. 65). John Self's income arises from such trendy postmodern businesses. This man who is obsessed with money is portrayed in a perpetual thrust and hunger to earn more, and though he was conscious that his constant struggle to obtain extra benefit drives him to catastrophe, he tries his best to neglect this inevitable truth, he states: "making lots of money is a breeze" (Amis, 1984, p. 7). The novel opens with an outrageous suicide note; it reads: "This is a suicide note. […] John Self will no longer exist" (Amis, 1984, p. 1). In fact, this note reflects the psychological suicide of John Self as well as his failed attempts to be rich. His quest for wealth makes him goes on four excited journeys to the United States of America to meet an American capitalist film producer whose name is Fielding Goodney. The tale of John Self starts with his nonexistence and ends with the destruction of his materialistic self after several unsuccessful efforts to protect his existence. The novel's setting is well depicted between the United Kingdom and the United States of America to represent the crisis of the postmodern people as a global issue that could have an impact on human life everywhere.

In effect, John Self's ecstasy to earn more money turns him into a blind person who cannot realize the betrayal of the people surrounding him. Unfortunately, John Self has been deceived by Fielding Goodney. The person whom he trusts blindly and considers as his best friend and the promising figure who ensures him wealth and fame. He claims: "Fielding, my moneyman, my contact and my pal. He's the reason I'm here, I'm the reason he's here too.

We're going to make lots of money together" (Amis, 1984, p. 7). Surprisingly, the deal between the two ends by seizing all of John Self's money. He has been traumatized after discovering that he has been deceived in accordance with the contracts he has been signed leaving him financially liable.

Unluckily; John Self's disappointment has not only been the result of Goodney's trap. He has been hurt by the two women whom he had serious relationships with: The American cultivated lady Martina Twain and the British mistress Selina Street. Actually, Selina has betrayed him with several men and his beloved Martina, who symbolizes "the only (faint) hope for renewal and reform" (Saleem, 2014, p. 103), has left him. Furthermore, John Self has been profoundly disillusioned by discovering that his father is not whom he claims to be, and that his entire life and identity have been built on a false reality. After all these frustrations; a ruined, poor and broken John Self returns to London and makes an unsuccessful suicide attempt. That suicide note which opens the novel stands as an emblematic manifestation of his fragmented and disintegrated self, it serves as a symbolic interpretation of his internal emotional disorder.

Besides black humor that blends fear and laughter together, Martin Amis blurs the line between reality and fiction through applying metafiction. As a matter of fact, metafiction is another narrative technique prominent in postmodern literature. It occurs when the representation of the literary work implies the personal connection of the author with the story and characters indicating an intense awareness of authorial involvement and identification (Kaur, 2017, p. 91). That is to say, that the author implants himself in the story making the reader doubtful about the reality of the narrative. Metafiction is basically present when the writing output speaks about the writing process itself. It highlights the techniques that are used in telling stories; also, it works as a reminder that makes the reader aware about the artificial and fictional side of art (Sharma and Chaudhary, 2011, p. 195). In *Money*, the author shatters the boundaries of his fiction when he appears in the novel as Martin Amis the character who is John Self's neighbor. The fictional Martin Amis embodies the role of an educated person, he acts as a writer who presents rationality and knowledge. Self has met him many times because he has hired him to rewrite the script of the film he wants to produce (Saleem, 2014, p. 103). In essence, the employment of metafictional elements enhances the novelist's abilities to artistically achieve his satirical aim as he involves himself in the story.

In this novel, *Money*, Amis relies principally on black humor and metafiction to intensify the harsh commentary on the postmodern capitalist society. Skillfully, he creates a tone which is a mixture of comedy and tragedy in order to criticize the superficiality of material excesses as well as the absurdity of a depthless consumer culture. Actually, the majority of characters are portrayed as

postmodernist citizens who are defiantly addicted to money to the point where this obsession traumatizes and deforms their lives and mental worlds. Accordingly, Amis's materialistic characters are victims of the exhausting dominion of materialism that infiltrates their lives through the multiple authorized institutions such as: media, politics and capitalism.

This postmodern popular materialist style invades every single angle of their personal lives pulling them to what Jean Baudrillard calls: the world of simulations "where no longer really the real" (1994, p. 2). In effect, Amis's characters are living in a fake reality, looking for an alternative to fill in their inner emptiness. In this regard, they are portrayed as entities who are in a constant spiritual conflict with themselves besides their perpetual sense of insecurity.

The American philosopher Marshall Berman provides a deep explanation to the radical change that people are experiencing in their new life style. He presents a vigorous description of the postmodern world and to its relationship to one's self and identity. He admits that worldwide today, men and women are sharing a new and critical mode of living in which they are experiencing challenges of understanding one's self and others' (1982, p. 15). In the same vein, he emphasizes the intricacies of being part of this new mode of living and the crisis of the postmodern individual who finds himself in a doubtful situation in which he is not able to resist the great attainable opportunities and simultaneously, he is incapable of securing his essence.

Berman believes that anyone who embraces postmodernity finds himself engrossed in an atmosphere that guarantees delighting adventures, massive strength, ecstasy, progress, extreme self-transformation and the possibility to change the world. Simultaneously, this environment represents an imminent threat that has the potential to destroy everything that people possess and know, also, everything that defines their existence (1982, p. 15). Apparently, there is a contradiction concerning the shimmering new patterns of life that are really attractive and desirous. They may be considered to unify all the humanity through transcending the barriers of location, race, class, nation and religion; but there is a paradox regarding the nature of this unity. In simpler terms, the new postmodern culture immerses all the humanity in a turbulent cycle of continuous uncertainty and anxiety, of disintegration and regeneration, of paradox and conflict. It encompasses people into a universal space in which "all that is solid melts into air" (Karl Marx Qtd. in Berman, 1982, p.15). In this regard, people are challenging life with its new conditions that impose on them its paradoxical and superficial unity. It is significant to reveal the reality that is to live in such an age is not something easy and comfortable; but rather, it is deeply stressful and painful.

Indeed, the value of people is measured by the amount of money they acquire. Money becomes the sole determining means that society can rely on to appreciate a person's worth. Accordingly, it is not important for the postmodern man how to get money, but rather the most valuable thing is to earn more regardless of the way he made it. Hence, John Self enjoys an unrestricted life; a life that is controlled only by one dominant force which is money, an open life that is not a subject to any boundaries or limitations, a life that is completely devoted to possessing more and more wealth.

In essence, the novel cleverly echoes the ravenous appetite for material profit predominant in contemporary culture. It depicts a vivid portrayal of the emptiness and decay of a community that is totally confined to monetary acquisition. Thus, all the characters in the novel adore money, and they are conspicuously enslaved by it (Othman & Rebwar, 2021, p. 62). This is well described when Self tells the fictional Martin Amis that: "Selina says I'm not capable of true love. It isn't true. I truly love money. Truly I do. Oh, money, I love you" (Amis, 1984, p. 81). In fact, this is not a requirement only for John Self or Selina or any other character in the narrative, it is rather a world-wide condition; it is a global issue: "So is the United States. So is Russia. We are all stomped and roughed up and peed on and slammed against the wall by money" (Amis, 1984, p. 91). However, nearly every sentence in the book vindicates Self's obsession with money. This voracious hunger for wealth is well reflected through the characters' names, the movie that Self will make, and even the books that Self has read.

It is worth noting that the characters in the narrative are engrossed in gains and profit, since money serves as the focal point of John Self's social circle. All of his ideas and definitions revolve around money, he states: "money is always involved" (Amis, 1984, p. 8). By the end, when he discovers the reality of his obsession, he is able to derive further explanation to what money really is. He claims: "Maybe money is the great conspiracy, the great fiction. The great addiction too: we're all addicted and we can't break the habit now. There's not even anything very twentieth century about it, except the disposition. You just can't kick it, that junk, even if you want to" (Amis, 1984, p. 127). Apparently, through this passage, John Self unveils the truth. He realizes that his own downfall and destruction are due to his addiction to a great deceptive conspiracy which is money, and the worst thing ever is the inability to be healed from this devastating infatuation.

Simultaneously, at the book's conclusion, and after his failed suicide attempt, John Self experiences a sense of self disintegration. He lacks a clear understanding of the issues surrounding his whole life and how to resolve them. It is the dilemma of the postmodern human being who finds himself in a puzzled

state and incapable of completing the targeted image. According to Self, what seems to be the most appreciated thing after his suicide attempt is life itself; he states: "life is pretty good over here in England but this is a tough planet and don't you tell me any different. In the best, the freest, the richest latitudes, it's still a tough globe" (Amis, 1984, p. 130). Self's words imply a harsh criticism of the world's capitalist system that invades the globe and distorts the beautiful innate nature of life.

Notably, *Money* excellently portrays the miserable status of the capitalist world. The novel immerses inside the profound layers of the postmodern society that prioritizes consumption over virtue and authenticity. It discloses the fact that humanity is imprisoned in a perpetual profit driven cycle that devaluates the individual and turns him into a mere object of material exchange. The narrative satirizes the monetary mind that has plagued the globe and has eroded the core values that once defined human existence. It adeptly reveals that underneath the shiny and alluring surface of the advanced consumer culture lies a complex world full of miserable disintegrated people who lost their true selves during their perpetual journey of money chasing.

3. The Hope for Self-realization and Identity Formation:

It is true that *Money* portrays and criticizes the bleak side of the postmodern capitalist society; but genuinely, it tenders a twinkle of hope. The protagonist's failed attempt to commit his planned suicide is the key to an optimistic end. Unexpectedly, he finds himself in a sudden alteration of fate. His suicide failure denotes that there is always a new chance for atonement even in the darkest and hardest circumstances.

The open ending of the novel leaves room for hopeful interpretations; it opens the door to John Self for self-awareness. His survival urges him to defy the meaninglessness of his existence. After losing his money, he finds himself in a horrific situation, terribly wondering about his identity and the purpose of his life as he evidenced in the following quote: "how can you live seriously if you don't know who you are" (Amis, 1984, p. 130). Because he is doubtful about his true self, he starts an identity quest since he is experiencing a severe identity crisis. His deceptive hopes of celebrity and extravagance through the production of his alleged film led him to dive into an infinite sea of money and pleasure; to realize ultimately that he is chasing an illusion, a beautiful day dream that cannot be reached.

Considerately, the story closes with John Self's ultimate hope for a better future though his loss of his wealth as well as his sense of selfhood (Mohammed et al., 2016, p. 129). He paints in words his messy brain full of contradictory ideas about his life, existence and identity. He expresses how awfully was his

childhood and how it is really hard to discover that a person's entire life is just a joke. He states: "few fathers have abused their sons as Barry Self has abused me. But Barry Self is not my father. Fat Vince is my father. In a sense, then, my life has been a joke right from the start, right from the womb, right from the first twinkle in Fat Vince's eye" (Amis, 1984, p. 130). By discovering that his real father is Fat Vince instead of Barry Self, he displays a sense of a profound pain and betrayal.

Accordingly, John Self's real name turns out to be Fat John indicating the loss of his name and identification. Ironically, he "is exposed to be fragmentally identified. On the other hand, the novel closes with Fat John who loses all of his fortune, yet he is still able to laugh and is circumspectly hopeful about his future" (Mohammed et al., 2016, p. 129). His strong sense of self is based on the name Self that has vanished and the most hated part, which is John, is all what remains. He confesses: "I hate my name. I mean, you have a kid, a little baby boy, and the best you can do with it is to name it John? I'm called John Self. But who isn't?" (Amis, 1984, p. 35) In fact, the name Self is an embodiment of everyone and, thus, it cannot be attached to a specific identity. Therefore, John Self's identity is vague and fragmented from the very beginning of the novel.

John Self can stand for any person who is living in the postmodern era. In this age, the majority of people are deprived from all the noble senses of humanity and sublimity due to the impact that money obsession has on them. There is a deep description of the tragic state of the world in the novel delivered by the character Lorne Guyland wherein he claims that: "it's a terrible world we're living in, John, it's a really crazy, awful... world" (Amis, 1984, p. 38). Consequently, John Self's journey in this meaningless postmodern world towards self-discovery ends with being unmistakably a broken man with a fragmented self.

As a matter of fact; Self finds himself confused, trying his best to re-shape and to find his true identity. He starts to get rid of his addictions; this is apparent in the following exchange with Martina Twain wherein Self states: "You may have noticed that apart from the odd momentary lapse I've managed to quit swearing. I've started stopping doing other things too. AH my addictions stand doomed on death row: swearing, fighting, hitting women, smoking, drinking, fast food, pornography, gambling and handjobs" (Amis, 1984, p. 98). Noticeably, this change in the way of thinking adjusts John Self's attitude and makes him excited and motivated to improve and develop his true-self.

However, it was not easy for the main protagonist to achieve this development as he realizes that he has to consistently control his self-desires and defeat his addictions. He consciously engages himself in order to win this challenge. In fact, John Self hopefully strives to learn self-discipline, he states:

"I wish someone had taught me self-discipline […] I've endeavored to teach it to myself. I sit around trying to teach myself self-discipline" (Amis, 1984, pp. 25-26). Though he knows that it is wrong, Self used to choose the immoral, the incorrect and the sinful. He used to follow his pleasures without control; but at the end of the novel, he tries his best to overcome the temptations of the postmodern life style.

Moreover, Self also understands how crucial it is to live a life free of future obsessions and to prioritize experiencing the present moment more fully; he says: "during that time of suicide, my entire future flashed through my head. And guess what. It was all a drag! My past at least was — what? It was... rich. And now my life has lost its form. Now my life is only present, more present, continuous present" (Amis, 1984, p. 130). Evidently, John Self experiences a drastic transformation in his lifestyle and way of thinking. Throughout his contemplation, Self raises a sense of liberation from the burden of thinking about how to accumulate wealth for a prosperous future time. However, he finds relief remembering his past as a rich journey, he reveals his recognition that real satisfaction can be found in the deep and memorable life time instead of being consumed by gathering money.

Actually, money persists to hunt Self's thoughts and the core of his consciousness. He becomes constantly aware of the painful constraints inflicted upon him because of the lack of monetary resources (Begley, 2004, p. 100). Profoundly, he longs for a revival of his consumer identity but, he confesses that his sense of the self has been improved after losing his wealth; he declares: "I want money again but I feel better now that I haven't got any" (Amis, 1984, p. 130). Being terribly tired from his previous unrestricted and chaotic life, John Self does his best to teach himself self-discipline in order to gain a stable life, a life that is incredibly well ordered, matured and balanced. He manifests a new hopeful self that is more courageous, more prudent and more intellectual. Furthermore, this broken and torn protagonist manifests an unpredicted bravery through being able to break the chains restraining him from going forward to reach a better life and a better self. These chains are his pleasurable addictions that used to shape his fragmented self and life.

Optimistically, and after a sequence of traumatizing disappointments, John Self stands up seeking to integrate his collapsed self. Interestingly, it can be noticed that he is portrayed as being drunk all over the novel, especially when he has a significant event. He seems to be absent minded due to consuming alcohol; on the other hand, at the end of the novel, John Self appears to be awakened from a long-lasting nightmare. He is conscious enough and never too late to save what has been rescued from his shattered self in order to build the new self of John.

Undoubtedly, it is really hard for a person to change radically, and Self finds himself in an in-between situation. He is bewildered by "facing new challenges in his transitional phase which can be felt as a split in personality. Part of his mind and thinking is directing him for his old ways in life while the other part is demanding the new direction" (Othman and Rebwar, 2021, p. 62). Nonetheless, despite the moral rupture that he is suffering from, he decides to quit the world of money claiming the following: "God I can't wait to leave this moneyworld" (Amis, 1984, p. 120). Indeed, the novel discloses the reality of the capitalist consumer culture through John Self's revelation of the pervert truth of the materialistic world that seduces people to worship money. The story can be read as a critique of the cultural and moral decay of the postmodern lifestyle:

through the broken promises of its satiric masterplot, *Money* offers a disquieting recognition that the cultural democracy proffered by postmodern capitalism necessitates a diminution of collective or consensual authority—that in the absence of normative frameworks, moral arbitration may ultimately be consigned to the inhumane and capricious jurisdiction of the market (Begley, 2004, p. 104).

The above commentary highlights the fact that the novel warns about the perils of the materialistic culture that diminishes the value of morality and ethics. Throughout Self's endeavor for improvement and self-discovery; the novel manifests that it is never too late to restore one's self and identity. Genuinely, John Self has been exposed integrating courage, sobriety, cautiousness and education to obtain self-discipline as well as self-confidence.

Concerning knowledge and education, Martina Twain and the fictional Martin Amis are the two figures that urge John Self to read and to obtain reason and wisdom. In fact, Martina is the one who pushes him to read different books like: *Animal Farm* and *The Catcher in the Rye*. He has also read Einstein, Darwin, Marx, Freud, and others. She is the inspirational woman who makes him go to the Opera and visit the museum. In a tone that shows how much he is impressed and satisfied by being part of Martina's educational world, John Self declares: "I'm seeing her tonight. Off to the Opera, me. *Otello*. I'm really looking forward to it. I've never been to the Opera before. Do you think it might turn out to be my kind of thing? Martina makes me strong" (Amis, 1984, p. 99). Notably, John Self is depicted to be inspired by a new kind of life; it is the life of art and culture. For the first time, he experiences strength, pleasure and joy far from his corrupt materialistic world.

Martina urges him to seek an eternal sense of satisfaction through knowledge and logic rather than a fake and momentary happiness based on money. She helps him to clarify his vision in order to make him able to understand life. In this regard, he states: "To stare into the world and see its conspiracies, to see the

secrets of the Old One. Darwin too. Freud, Marx —what colossal guessers. I haven't given up on the fiction either: I read The *Catcher in the Rye*, a first-class work in my view, most powerfully and elegantly written" (Amis, 1984, p. 99). Apparently, John Self enjoys Martina's intriguing world of art and literature. His reaction symbolizes the great importance of knowledge in the life of any person. As a matter of fact, the novel highlights knowledge and education as the source of strength and self-confidence.

Furthermore, he has learnt a lot of facts through reading. He has been enlightened after understanding the major basics of history owing to reading. In other words, knowledge is the only source of truth; hence, the novel sheds light on the essence of life which is the life of the mind.

John Self, as a postmodern citizen, has been deluded by the deceits that media disseminates. Actually, like the majority of his generation, he has passed all his previous life years running after money and neglecting education and knowledge. He confesses early in the novel that he has no attraction to read: "it all came down to a choice between pain and not reading. I chose not reading. Not reading — that's where I put my money" (Amis, 1984, p. 15). This quote contrasts with the new version of Self; an individual who becomes strongly interested in art and education and who is experiencing growth and progress through the pursuit of knowledge.

In fact, Martin Amis's *Money* can be read as a postmodern satirical novel since it portrays the capitalist society of England as well as America in a declining and chaotic status that makes the individual loses his self and identity. Through a subtle and pleasurable manner of writing, Amis was able to mock the excesses of the postmodern Western civilization that prevents people from controlling and restraining their desires. Actually, he makes the reader enjoy a funny story despite its treatment of serious issues. His intelligent selection of the setting reflects the state of the whole postmodern world. Indeed, he depicts the life of two major capitals in the world and portrays both London and New York as focal locations for interchangeable extensive greed and corruption. Likewise, John Self's money obsession can be interpreted as a severe personality dilemma. Also, it can be the major cause that makes the novel funny and a source of laughter. Amis chooses to use money as his central element in the novel and he transforms it into a basic humorous component of the story. Therefore, Amis satirizes and degrades the capitalist society system that worships money; providing that this money adoration is just an absurd fantasy that leads to disappointment and self-destruction.

Money, can be regarded as a literary masterpiece that artfully shapes an image of what is really taking place in the postmodern society. This awful society is plagued by a consumer and mortifying culture that effaces the dignity

of people and denies their moral values and ethical principles. Throughout the narrative, Amis undeniably succeeds in revealing how the postmodern individual is blindly surrendered to his materialistic desires believing that fulfilling these substantial pleasures is the great achievement. However, it is just a misleading convention that gratifies a person to an exhausting path of endless frustration and regret.

The detailed disclosure of each small aspect of the life of John Self is the key through which Amis is able to create the best image that represents the demeaning attitudes and behaviors of the postmodern man. In a satirical view, Amis exhibits the gloomy fate of a community that suffers from a lack of self-control in the face of monetary obsessions. Simultaneously, the end of the novel subtly indicates that there is always a glimmer of hope for renewal and reform even in the darkest of times.

4. CONCLUSION:

This study has shown that money obsession can lead to self-loss and identity destruction. Through Martin Amis's literary endeavor *Money: A Suicide Note*, this paper has unraveled the struggle of the postmodern individual to preserve his identity in the harsh conditions of the materialistic world. The author artfully depicts the image of the capitalist society where noble emotions are no longer valuable and the sole target in life is the blind pursuit of money. Moreover, the present article has explored the tragic consequences of the persistent pursuit of wealth that leads people towards spiritual emptiness and the loss of the sense of the self. Through the lens of the novel's protagonist John Self, Martin Amis mocks the absurdity of the deceptive postmodern consumer culture, a culture that transforms people into selfless material products. As a postmodern satirist, Amis brilliantly employs crucial narrative strategies, chiefly black humor along with metafiction, in order to create his tragicomic masterpiece. The protagonist suffered from a profound lack of meaning in his life. In fact, *Money: A Suicide Note* does not condemn only the 1980's capitalist consumer culture, but it extends extensively to the contemporary world as the deceitful glamour of money, fame and wealth is dominating humanity. More importantly, the optimistic end of the novel affirms that there is always hope if people rely on knowledge, education and moderation in consumption. Concisely, *Money: A Suicide Note* can be read as a warning against the destructive effects of money obsession on the postmodern individual's self and identity.

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