

**A STUDY OF THE CONCEPT OF
CIVILSOCIETY IN *LORD JIM*,
SONS AND LOVERS AND *MRS.DALLOWAY***

**Dissertation submitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru
University in partial fulfilment of the requirements
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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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1999

*To
Dear
Amma, Achan
&
Kalpana*



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled A STUDY OF THE CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN *LORD JIM, SONS AND LOVERS* AND *MRS. DALLOWAY* submitted by Ajay Kumar P. Panicker in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy** of this University, is his original work. This dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this or any other University.

We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiner for evaluation.

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Ajay Panicker

Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION

The high point in terms of cultural production of the project of modernity that started with the Renaissance in the 16th and the 17th centuries came in literature towards the beginning of the 20th century, as what is popularly known as 'literary modernism'. The liberal humanist philosophy, which developed in the west as a result of the Renaissance, became its official philosophy till the turn of this century. This philosophy was used to explain the idea of progress, a resultant of very many processes, which had long standing impacts on the western culture, such as Renaissance, Reformation, industrial revolution etc. Renaissance meant recourse to the classics, which prompted an epistemological shift from the earlier medieval paradigms of knowledge to a 'man-centric' universe. Reformation, initially a scathing attack on the ruling Roman Catholic Church from its margins in terms of Protestantism added a new dimension to morality. The spurt of knowledge and its accompanying yearning to learn resulted in new paradigms being set in scientific progress. This was industrial revolution. This, in turn, led to sudden rise in production and the necessity for raw material was felt. The end of this was search for new markets and

colonialism happened as a result. Western imperialism, or economic colonialism, ruled the roost as a revolt of all these till the early part of this century. Along side all these developments was taking place the production of new ideas to justify the existing dominant ideology of the industrial - capitalist mode of production and the bourgeois social order, that is liberal humanism.

It is with the emergence of industrial economy in the eighteenth century that the idea of civil society was mooted. The concept of civil society acquired no precise definition or conceptual frontiers until classical political economists began to argue for a strict delineation of economic sphere and it was suggested that this sphere be called 'civil society'. Civil society was the property of emerging industrial societies, which were marked by a complex division of labour, the centrality of production, and economic changes. Neera Chandoke quotes, Ellen Meiksens Wood on the modern conception of 'civil society':

a conception which appeared systematically for the first time in the eighteenth century is something quite distinct from earlier notions of 'society'. Civil society represents a separate sphere of human relations and activity, differentiated from the state but neither public nor private or perhaps both at once, embodying not only a whole range of social

interactions apart from the private sphere of the household and the public sphere of the state, but more specifically a network of distinctively economic relations, the sphere of the market-place, the arena of production, distribution and change. (*State and Civil Society*, p. 114).

It is in this sphere that the individual can engage in the quest for privately designated ends in association with others. The whole mark of civil society is its being supposedly distinct and enjoying a certain amount of autonomy from the state. Consequently state and civil society were separated and assigned different roles and it was civil society that was seen as primary. Later, after the classical political economists, it was Hegel who developed the concept of civil society. Neera Chandoke says:

Firstly, he expanded the notion of civil society and rescued it from being excessively identified with the economy. To Hegel, civil society is a set of social practices which are constituted by the logic of the capitalist economy and which reflect the ethos of the market, but which have an existence distinct from the economy. He located these social practices between the family and the state and invested them with historical significance. (*State and Civil Society*, p. 117).

Thus, civil society is the space where Hegel locates his historical project of reconciling the particular and the universal in an ethical community. But it is Antonio Gramsci who expands the Marxian notion of civil society. Gramsci saw civil society as being constituted by the capitalist system and that it was much more than the material sphere as against the orthodox Marxist tradition that had seen civil society as identical with the material organisation of society. But what is important is that as Neera Chandoke says:

It was the domain of cultural and ideological practices which, serve to intensify the oppression of the dominant classes and of the capitalist state...for Gramsci, as for Marx, civil society is the theatre of history. The life of the state is a 'continuous process of formation and superseding of unstable equilibria' in civil society. (*State and Civil Society*, p. 151).

Since civil society is the theatre of history, it is where the ideological conflict in the society can be located. Further, since, civil society is a result of the modes of production and production relations, it is not quite independent of the state which controls and facilitates the latter. Thus, the ideology of the state comes into play in the civil society, though it may not quite accept the ideology of the state. It is this aspect which brings about

ideological conflict, between the ideology of the state and that of their people more so because it is a historical factor. In order to discover this latent conflict in literature the theoretical/ideological positions taken have to be defined.

Literature is a product of social relations grounded in the material reality constituted by relations of production, property relations and the superstructure. It is historic in nature as historicity is involved in the most important component of literature - language. Then, it becomes necessary that literature be analysed in a historic materialist perspective in order to bring out the concrete social relations that underlie the text.

Dialectical materialism seen in a historical light is historical materialism. Engels outlines dialectical materialism in his *Dialectics of Nature*:

It is, therefore, from the history of nature and human society that the laws of dialectics are abstracted. For they are nothing but the most general laws of two aspects of historical development, as well as of thought itself. And indeed they can be reduced in the main to three:

The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa;

The law of the interpenetration of opposites;

The law of the negation of the negation. (*Dialectics of Nature*, p. 62)

It is a historical materialist approach that can expose the metaphysics of idealist claims that the universe is a given or that it has a casual existence. It does so by analysing the causal realities that necessitates the shape of the universe in a certain way. This logic works in novels too.

As mentioned earlier, the novels of modernist literature portray a society that has reacted a certain high point in the course of modernity. This was a time when a serious stock taking on the nature of the capitalist forms of progress happened. But since the main perpetrators of literary modernism failed to see the causal factors that constitute literature, many of the responses merely ended up as structural ruptures. Malcolm Bradbury, in his co-edited volume of essays, *Modernism* says:

...one feature that links the movement at this centre of sensibility we are discerning is that they tend to see history of human life not as a sequence, or history not as an evolving logic; art and the urgent now strike obliquely across. Modernist works frequently tend to be ordered, then not on the sequence of historical time or the evolving sequence of character, from history or story, as in realism and naturalism; they tend to work spatially or through layers of consciousness, working towards a logic or metaphor of form. (*Modernism*, p. 50).

It may be noted that ahistoricism, fragmentation of time, individual consciousness cut off from the social reality are ways of isolating a work in its production. Rather than questioning the logic of the system, they only isolate themselves from the system. But the system, with its dominant ideology goes on. It needs to be analysed whether such an effort in literary creativity is progressive in terms of historical materialism or not. This is the effort in this work.

In order to do this, three canonised novels of literary modernism - *Lord Jim* of Joseph Conrad, *Sons and Lovers* of D. H. Lawrence and *Mrs. Dalloway* of Virginia Woolf are analysed in the theoretical positions stated above. *Lord Jim* written in 1900, is one of the most representative works of Joseph Conrad, one of the early progenitors of literary modernism. Born in Poland and deciding to live in England and write in English during the reign of Queen Victoria, Conrad internalised a lot of the famed Victorian morality. In the first chapter that deals with this novel, the questions of morality and religion, which are important ingredients of civil society are analysed through the character of Jim. The attempt is to identify the causality of the novel in terms of historical materialism.

In *Sons and Lovers*, written in 1913, D. H. Lawrence problematizes questions of class and alienation in a bourgeois - industrial - civil society.

The second chapter analyses Lawrence's perception of the problems of man's existence in an industrial - capitalist society and his suggestions of a way out.

Mrs. Dalloway blasts the myth of capitalist progress by presenting a society in which the central character suffers from a sense of acute alienation. Manners and snobbery and their class nature are central discourses in this novel that portrays the socialisings of a high-class society in the imperialist England. War and market along with individual choices are issues addressed in a society based on division of labour, not quite grounded in material reality. But it is important to highlight the 'politics of the material' which underlie the given society, using historical materialism. This is the attempt in this chapter.

The concluding chapter attempts to find common grounds in these three major proponents of literary modernism in terms of the analysis conducted in the earlier three chapters. This deduction, even though limited because of the scope and canvas of this exercise, tries to discern certain common aspects in the perspective of materialism. A lot of research has been done in the field of literary modernism in order to trace structural commonalties, and its relationship with history. But many of them have taken a quasi-idealist position that has problematised the idea of bourgeois

historiography. But this was done in an ahistoricist way that in turn has paved the way for post-modernism, the ideology of neo-capitalism. This study, in a small way, tries to read these novels in the light of historical materialism in order to decipher the actual, material social relations among groups of human beings in these civil societies.

Chapter - II

LORD JIM

In his preface to 'The Nigger of the Narcissus' Joseph Conrad places what can be considered as his manifesto of novel writing and the justification of his art. According to him

Art itself may be defined as a single-minded attempt to render the highest kind of justice to the visible universe, by bringing to light the truth, manifold and one, underlying its every aspect. It is an attempt to find in its forms, in its colours, in its light, in its shadows, in the aspects of matter, and in the facts of life what of each is fundamental, what is enduring and essential - their one, illuminating and convincing quality - the very truth of their existence. The artist, then, like the thinker or the scientist, seeks the truth of and makes his appeal! (*The Nigger of 'Narcissus'/Typhoon/and Other Stories*, p.11)

It is such an appeal that forms the content of the novel *Lord Jim*, a work of Conrad's early maturity as a writer. This novel, crafted with sophisticated and subtle prose established him as one of the first English 'Modernists' while writing in his third language. Along with *Nostromo*, *Lord Jim* is widely considered to be among Conrad's masterpieces, drawing as it

does on so much of the author's first-hand experiences in the Far East and as a ship's officer.

It is this effort at deciphering the 'one truth of existence' that probably drove Conrad to write about a character that he might have come across as dishonored and made outcast by the society. *Lord Jim*, based on a true story, recounts the story of Jim, the chief mate on the poorly-crewed 'Patna' - a ship carrying pilgrims in Eastern seas - which threatens to sink and is abandoned by its officers who are joined by Jim at the last minute in all the confusion and chaos without conscious thought. The 'Patna' does not sink and the officers are rescued, as are all the pilgrims on board (who are described as 'cargo'). But Jim alone faces the court of inquiry and, even worse, the vivid torment of his own conscience at the breaking of a code of honour he holds dear.

Jim's inability to overcome the shame of the incident on the Patna forms the underlying thread of the story as it continues, despite the efforts of many well-disposed people to assist him. Eventually, Jim is sent to a remote trading station - Patusan and there brings order and prosperity to a previously chaotic community, becoming in the process 'Tuan' or *Lord Jim*. A further incursion by dishonourable men in the form of Cornelius and Gentleman Brown into Jim's New World leads to his final confrontation

with the issue of honour. Ultimately, in an act of apparent attempt at restoration of honour Jim presents himself to death in the form of Doramin who puts a bullet through Jim.

It may be seen that the questions of honour and self- respect which imply acceptability in the normal (dominant) ways of the society are rooted in the discourses that structure the society. In *Lord Jim*, the protagonist is portrayed as a romantic idealist whose relationship with the moralistic discourse of the western society is placed as a problematic. There are two versions to it. The first way analyses the text in the light of Bakhtinian dialogics. Bakhtinian dialogics claims to be the clear interventionist evaluative theory of analysis, which is qualitatively distinct from the monological approaches of social fragmentation and atomization circumventing dialogue, heteroglossia, openendedness and polyphony. The dialogisation of the socio-political-ideological factors, of the social-ideologemes, it is claimed, is multivoiced and multilevelled providing immense scope for vast dimensions. V. K. Tewari, in his article 'Social Code: A Realist Problematic in *Lord Jim*' which appears in his *Joseph Conrad in Bakhtinian Dialogics* says that:

Conrad grapples with a new dimension of social consciousness epistemologically grounded in the relationship between the self and

community, individual and the social code reverberating on the Patna and the island of Patusan in the remarkably complex narrative of *Lord Jim*. (*Joseph Conrad in Bakhtinian Dialogics*, p. 60)

Central to this analysis is unraveling 'the realist problematic between the official and non-official discourse helping create dialogism and polyphony, contextualised in the modern critical discourse' (p. 60). Thus, according to this analysis the official and the non-official discourses, represented by the jury and Jim respectively are locked in a problematic, the way out of which lies 'not in any resolution of the social conflicts but in their artistic presentation which remains open-ended and unfinalised'. (p. 60)

Now, what is discernible here is that the critic tries to place the relationship between a seeming deviant (Jim) and a rigid system (the western rules that govern sea faring) as central to the novel. Using Bakhtinian dialogics and the postmodern concepts of unfinalisedness, the critic attempts to wean the reader away from the material realities that constitutes the politics of this novel. The process gets additional support from the apparent complications in the narrative structure and the portrayal of the characters.

This analysis, by placing Jim in direct opposition to his adversaries - at first the system through the jury and later through Cornelius, Gentleman Brown, Rajah Allang and Sherif Ali, gains a certain legitimacy for the

character of Jim. This ultimately results in carrying the day for the romantic idealist in him. This in turn diverts one's gaze away from the material realities that constitute the universe in the novel to a moralistic and dogmatic or individualistic realm. The second mode of analysis mentioned earlier is based on historical materialism, which begins by a causal explanation to a presented universe rather than taking it for a casual given. This gets manifest in a direct conflict between the material and the ideal, which underlies the very existence of a text. Unraveling the material factors not only within, but also outside the society portrayed in the text can bring to light the political position consciously or unconsciously taken by the author.

It may be added that the romantic idealist that Jim is, rooted in moralist - individualist realm is the product of bourgeois relations of production. Understanding this reality can unravel the mysticism that is built around Jim and at a broader level the bourgeois conceptions of heroism. Many critics have identified the problem in *Lord Jim* as Marlow's efforts at knowing Jim and his final inability to know it. Jim is characterised initially in the First chapter of *Lord Jim* as an exceptional human being who has 'Ability in the abstract' (p. 1). His presence is forceful, and as a water-clerk he inspires a kind of confidence in ship captains a very difficult lot to please,

Conrad suggests. Other people do not understand him and he makes no effort to communicate anything about himself.

An important aspect of Conrad's techniques is that the reader realises that information about Jim is revealed in a non-chronological manner. Incidents of the story will be learned before other incidents, so that the understanding of the book will eventually emerge piece meal rather than in some conventional order. The idea seems to be that when author breaks the conventional chronological order, as Conrad does, then the order in which information is communicated is of extreme importance for an understanding of the book's meaning. Thus, it is suggested that the technique of the book subsume its meaning in it. This adds weight to the argument that the essential meaning of the text is unfinalisedness of knowledge. V. K. Tewari suggest such an argument using Bakhtinian dialogic, even though he tries to project the apparent progressive aspects of *Lord Jim* by trying to place the official code of western imperialism in opposition with mystically coloured individual that Jim is. He says:

Marlow's involvement in the narrative discourse is actuated by the profound inkling searchingly directed towards the finished utterances of the official inquiry, which rouses the skepticism of a unique type. It is in this context that the monologism of the traditional code is beset

with problems. Situating Brierly's suicide...in the overall perspective of the aftermath of enquiry seriously impinges upon the established code and its veracity in the life of the sailors. This assessor's role remains mysterious and his act of suicide all the more anxiety-ridden for the reader as well as Marlow. (*Joseph Conrad in Bakhtinian Dialogics*, p. 62.)

But then, the stated problem with this analysis is that it demands an analysis of literature as a 'discourse' in itself which does not have any material relationship with the external reality or the socio-politico-cultural matrix in which the work is to be historically placed:

This subtle rupture in the psychic framework of those sitting in judgement has been lucidly captured by the text. Obviously, the text does not want any "finalisedness" to be associated with the traditional code of which the centralizing voices are ubiquitously confronted by the decentralizing ones, most sharply that of Brierly, who is textually catapulted to have committed his reality. (p. 63)

and

The textual attempt at contextualising the multiplicity of consciousnesses is of paramount signification as the signifieds have been represented in a dialogic discourse with even greater

openendedness.(emphasis added). The official enquiry may be closed with its perennial judgement so as to keep the ethical code but the Marlowian search is unending till the point that exoneration of Jim in the social terms is actuated. (*Joseph Conrad in Bakhtinian Dialogics*, p. 63).

But even when, his 'exoneration' in social terms is actuated later in Patna, it happens only in within the paradigm of bourgeois-idealism which the text constructs. Since, it is Marlowe who tries to capture the reality of Jim's existence in the novel, it is important for any materialist analysis to start from Marlowe's class nature, Tewari says of Marlowe:

Marlowe's ideological premise is not to explain ideological formations as an expression of the psychological, but to explore the social meaning its real character, its meaningfulness through the objective sign, that is, utterances materially expressing the inner being. All these voices are allowed a free play in the text according to their own perception, their consciousness may be individually or being coterminous with other voices in a specific heteroglossia. (p. 67).

This suggests that Marlowe takes a quasi-materialist position as he tries to find out Jim's inner-self. But Marlow is referred to as "the white man on whom rested the eyes of Jim." (*Lord Jim*, p.23), towards the end of

chapter as the reader is introduced to the beginning of official enquiry held 'in the police court of some eastern part'. In the author's note to 1917 edition of *Lord Jim*, Conrad tries to place the generic status of the novel as a yarn.

He says:

Men have been known, both in the tropics and in the temperate zones, to sit up half the night swapping yarns. This however is but one yarn, yet with interruptions affording some measure of relief. (*Lord Jim*)

Even though Conrad begins in this analogy to justify his employment of a complex narrative, there is an inherent attempt in this statement to claim to the novel the working class nature of yarns. But this does not hold well as Marlow does not quite belong there.

Further, a look at Conrad's preface to 'The Nigger of the *Narcissus*' reveals the idealist moorings of his art. He contrasts the trade of the scientist and that of the artist:

Impressed by the aspect of the world the thinker plunges into ideas, the scientist into facts- whence, presently, emerging they make their appeal to those qualities of our being that fit us best for the hazardous enterprise of living...confronted by the same enigmatical spectacle the artist descends within himself, and that lonely region of stress and strife, if he be deserving and fortunate, he finds the terms of his

appeal...his appeal is made to our less obvious capacities: to that part of our nature which, because of the war like conditions of existence is necessarily kept out of sight within the more resisting and hard qualities-like the vulnerable body within a steel armour...the artist appeals to that part of our being which is not depended on wisdom; to that in us which is a gift and not an acquisition - and, therefore, more permanently enduring. (*The Nigger of the Narcissus/Typhoon/and other Stories*, pp. 11-12.).

This romantic approach is not dialectical in the sense that it discounts the importance of history, human agency and the society in which the work of art is placed. The quasi-idealist approaches mentioned earlier along with the tendency to look at linguistic constructions as cut off from the social reality from which it emanates have been countered in David McNally's essay 'Language, History and Class Struggle'. For him social interaction is not simply discursive. Speech is not a realm with an "independent existence"; it is one of the aspects of a multifaceted network of social relations. He mentions three initial propositions fundamental to V. N. Voloshinov's views on language:

First, all signs - from words to traffic signals - are mentioned, embodied in some physical form or other. Second, signs are social in

nature; they exist on the boundaries between individuals and have no meaning outside communicative interaction. Third, because signs are social, any scientific approach to language must focus on speech. (Monthly Review, Vol. 47, Jul-Aug, 1995, p. 16).

In the present context speech can be taken for the communicative word. Thus, outside of speech, language is lifeless, it is a collection of means of communication without the act of communication itself. Speech is what brings into being a community and creates its history.

It is in this background that one has to look at *Lord Jim* as Marlowe's effort at communicating Jim's story to the world. Historical materialist analysis of this story has to take into account the causal factors, the politics of hierarchy and domination and resistance to these, which are central to the production of *Lord Jim* in a cultural milieu. But in the course of the narration, especially as the novel revolves around the life of Jim - his trials and tribulations, defeats and victory and ultimately the seemingly heroic deed of his facing death courageously exalt him to heroic heights. Some of the insights, which Christopher Caudwell throws in his analysis of T. E. Lawrence, help in differentiating between the bourgeois concept of heroism and its Marxist counterpart. This, in turn can explain the ideological factors

extraneous as well as intrinsic to the society portrayed in the novel.

Caudwell speaks of a hero of Jim's creed so:

Yet, if any culture produced heroes, it should surely be bourgeois culture? For the hero is an outstanding individual, and bourgeoisdom is the creed of individualism. The bourgeois age was inaugurated by a race of hero giants; the Elizabethan adventurers and New World conquistadors boom large out of the rabble of history. The bourgeois progress gives us Cromwell, Marlborough, Luther, Queen Elizabeth, Wellington...Indeed bourgeois history for bourgeois schools, is simply the struggles of heroes with their antagonists and difficulties.

(*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 13). ^{DISS} 0,111,3,M57,5:9 N9

It is not necessarily personality or courage or not even success that constitutes heroism. The truth is that heroism is not something that can be defined by hero's character alone. Caudwell rejects both the extreme notions regarding heroism when he suggests that the conception of the hero as the man dominating and moulding circumstances to his will is as false as that of him simply lifted to achievement as on a wave of the sea. Or rather both are partial aspects of the same truth, that of the freedom of man's will. He says:

Man's will is free so far as it is consciously self-determined. His will at any moment is determined by the causal influences of his



environment and his immediately preceding mental state, including in his mental state all those physiological factors that combine in the conscious and unconscious innervating patterns. A man is born with certain innate responses determined by his heredity, in a certain environment determined by the past. As he lives his life, innate responses and environment interact to form his consciousness, which is thus the result of a mutual tension between environment and instinct begetting a continual development of the mind. Since all action involves an equal and opposite reaction, he in turn changes the environment during each transaction which changes him. His environment of course includes other human beings. (*Studies in a Dying Cultures*, p. 14).

The hereditary influence on Jim is presented in the novel through the presence of his father, a parish priest. Religious imagery that abound in the novel along with its biblical underpinnings explain the early idealist influences on him which forms one side of the contradictions that work in him. The narrative discourse begins with the description of Jim whose heritage is emphasised in terms of the established order.

Jim's father possessed such certain knowledge of the unknowable as made for the righteousness of people in cottages without disturbing

the ease of mind of those whom an unerring providence enables to live in mansions. (*Lord Jim*, p. 2.)

This is a typical representation of Jim's father who has been rightly called an "ideologue in the characteristic British class system" by Frederic Jameson. (*The Political Unconscious*, p. 211.). So, the analysis of "ideological function of religion is also to be grasped in terms of containment and totality; the geographical vision of cottage, mansion and 'little church' (the place of the production of the ideology that harmonises them) requires that neither class position be able to focus or indeed see the other" (*The Political Unconscious*, p. 41). The centralising role of this approach "harmonised by ideological blindness" receives an unconscious denunciation of ideology by way of its enactment and its reversal from Jim who goes in for his "choice of the sea as space and as vocation" (" (*Political Unconscious*, p. 211).

The life of Jim takes the form of a journey where he comes down from a hill on which the parsonage is situated, to the sea where he holds a responsible position in Patna. It may be seen that the alienation that works in Jim is the result of his inability to resolve the contradictions inherent in him because of his class nature. He attaches a lot of unquestionable power to his father's voice. Through all his failures, Jim's problem is his inability to go

back to face his father with these failures. Further the religion idealises that has been imparted to him makes him a romantic and a misfit in a concrete society. His first failure is during the course of his training. His inability to act when the situation demanded is suggestive of his alienation from the material reality around him. In the first chapter itself Conrad talks about two kinds of mariners:

These were of two kinds. Some, very few and seen there but seldom, led mysterious lives, had preserved an undefaced energy with the temper of buccaneers and the eyes of dreamers. They appeared to live in a crazy maze of plans, hopes, dangers, enterprises, ahead of civilisation, in the dark places of the sea; and their death was the only event of their fantastic existence that seemed to have a reasonable certitude of achievement. The majority were men who, like himself, thrown there by some accident, had remained officers of country ships. (*Lord Jim*, p. 9).

It is clear here, that the seamen underwent a high level of alienation. This emanates from the fact that their profession worked seldom in tandem with nature. It is pertinent to remember that the exploration of sea-routes and the subsequent development of sea-trade were necessitated by the onset of industrial revolution in the west, followed by the growth of capitalism. In the

process the western trade with the east, took the form of exploitation and the mariners were a mere tool in this broader programme.

It is in this light that the 'Patna' incident is to be viewed. His inability to decide on a course of action in order to rescue the 'cargo' (the pilgrims) is the direct result of alienation. Jim commits an act of bourgeois individualism when he jumps from the ship into the life boat. The very fact that it was an unconscious decision suggests that the dominant ideology of bourgeois individualism works in Jim at the unconscious level. It may be later seen in Patusan that Jim becomes the representative of imperialism with which bourgeois concepts of morality and individualism are closely linked. This shall be examined later in the chapter.

However, an interesting aspect of the 'Patna' incident and the following enquiry is that through these episodes the text suggests that Jim is a romantic-idealist. It may be recalled that the Victorian era exalted the 'virtues' of romanticism and idealism, which are closely interlinked with morality and religion. These factors work in a society through suppressing the material power relations from coming to the fore. Thus in an abstract way it is suggested that all men are equal before God. And the concept of God is an abstraction, which the dominant powers in a society manipulate to their material benefits. Here, rather than viewing Jim as an alienated figure

waiting for a 'chance' to prove his mettle as laid out by the systems, there are suggestions in the novel that exalt him to the levels of an idealist hero who fails when the material system demands his action. Jim's ultimate victory in Patusan reveals the efforts of the novel to be a record of the ultimate victory of the idealist hero - Jim.

In this context, it is pertinent to look at the contrast between the idealist hero and the materialist hero as analysed by Christopher Caudwell:

A hero is a man whose life is such that, his instinctive equipment being what it is, and his environment being what it is, the effect he has on his environment is much greater than the effect it has on him. We may, therefore, say that he is a man who dominates and moulds his environment. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 14).

But he adds that a hero dominates events only because he confirms closely with the law that produces them. And the hero, even as he alters the world, seems unaware of what he is doing.

The hero seems to act with a kind of blind intuition; and it is therefore particularly strange that the hero is master equally of matter and men...the hero understands geography, war, politics and cities, and new technologies are instrumental to him, but men are instrumental to him too. And with it all he hardly knows why it is so;

he could not give a casual explanation of what is to come about in the future in conformity with his present action, but it seems as if he knows in his heart what to do. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 15).

It is in this light that one has to analyse Jim's being projected as a hero. Since the development of Jim as a 'projected-hero' takes place in Patusan the very presence of Patusan in the story seems to facilitate Jim's 'development'. But yet, there is a deliberate effort from the part of the narrative voice (here, Marlow in chapter 21) to hide this causal factor for the existence of Patusan:

It was referred to knowingly in the inner government circles in Batavia, especially as to its irregularities and aberrations, and it was known by name to some few, very few, in the mercantile world. Nobody, however, had been there, and I suspect no one desired to go there in person. (*Lord Jim*, p. 137).

It is here that Jim flourishes, and 'he left his earthly failings behind him and that sort of reputations he had, and there was a totally new set of conditions for his imaginative faculty to work upon' (*Lord Jim*, p. 137).

Even as Patusan comes to acquire a heaven-like status in Jim's universe, the material conditions there are not all that glossy. The delicate balance of power, exploitation and corruption by the powerful men there

such as Sherif Ali, Rajah Allang ravage Patusan. The people of Patusan are as hapless as the pilgrims of 'Patna' and they are always at the mercy of the powerful people who have ulterior motives. It is Jim's presence in Patusan and his subsequent attempts at taking the corrupt powers head on that bring about a semblance of peace there. Conrad's description of Jim's journey to Patusan and the imagery used to this purpose suggests that Jim goes through a symbolic birth from one life to another, the sea representing the life of struggle behind him and the land representing the pureness of his new life. But this suggestion is problem-ridden because it attempts to negate history and constructs a world with idealism where Jim, the absolute can reign. The very fact that things are not that rosy becomes clear as time and again, at the slightest suggestion, Jim's past starts to weigh heavily on his mind. Further, Doramin has a well-defined interest in Jim's presence at Patusan. Doramin wants to see his son, Dain Waris on Rajah Allang's throne and knows that only Jim has the power to put him on the throne. This means that the purpose of Jim being in Patusan is, in the final analysis, linked to the project of reinforcing the feudal structure based on hierarchy. Jim is expected to be the henchman of Doramin who is described by Marlow as:

One of the most remarkable men of his race, I had ever seen. His bulk for a Malay was immense, but he did not look merely fat, he looked

imposing, monumental. This motion less body, clad in rich stuff, coloured silks, gold embroideries; this huge head, enfolded in a red-and-gold headkerchief, the flat, big, round face, wrinkled, furrowed, with two semicircular heavy folds starting on each side of wide, fierce nostrils, and enclosing a thick-lipped mouth; the throat like a bull; the vast corrugated brow overhanging the staring proud eyes-made a whole that, once seen, can never be forgotten. His impassive repose...was like a display of dignity. (p. 162,*Lord Jim*)

As interesting as Jim's presence in Patusan is the clash of interest among the powerful people there and their attempts at monopolizing the right to exploit the land. This reads like the history of any colonised third world country. Sherif Ali, the Arab half-cast, Cornelius, the Malacca-Portuguese who is described as the "mean, cowardly scoundrel" who mistreats his stepdaughter, abusing the memory of her mother are all of the same category. It is in the midst of such a situation that Jim enters Patusan as the head of a non-existent trading post. His mission is clear -to be the imperialist agent who can get the indigenous people to his side and consolidate trade in Patusan. This is the material, exploitative side of a bourgeois ideology which professes individualism, morality and romantic-idealism. Jim's presence in Patusan does not in any way contribute to the

liberation of its people from the age-old feudal norms that lie inherent in the society. In a way Jim's presence only accentuates it, as in the case of feudal and Tamb-Itam who have a servile devotion for Jim. This servile devotion does not in any way help their cause to be independent whereas they become more and more dependent on 'Tuan Jim'. Two incidents, which serve as parallels in the narrative, explain the situation of Jewel in Jim's universe. The first of them is when Stein kills one of the group that attacks him. It is said that Stein was more interested in the rare butterfly that hovered around his enemy than killing the enemy. Likewise, when, enemies attack Jim, he is moved by Jewel the same way as the butterfly moved Stein. Here Jewel is equated with the butterfly. Underlying this parallel is the attitude of the white man to look at Jewel as an object rather than as an individual in her own right.

Jim's life in Patusan takes an interesting turn as the most ungentlemanly Gentleman Brown enters the scene. Brown is presented as an unscrupulous buccaneer who revels in plundering and has the utmost hatred for the civilised world. He is portrayed as an outcast, an aberration of western progress:

The world he had bullied for twenty years with fierce, aggressive disdain, had yielded him nothing in the way of material advantage

except a small bag of silver dollars, which was concealed in his cabin so that "the devil himself couldn't smell it out". And that was all-absolutely all. He was tired of his life, and not afraid of death. But this man, who would stake his existence on a whim with a bitter and jeering recklessness stood in mortal fear of imprisonment. (*Lord Jim*, p.225)

Brown is portrayed as evil, the anti-Christ if Jim is Christ himself, as Jewel comes to acquire in Magdalene her archetype, in the biblical underpinnings that work in the novel. However, as mentioned earlier, the concern here is to look at the society which produces both Jim and Brown.

The two men face each other near the spot where Jim leapt from the Rajah's stockade. Marlow reports that Brown hated Jim at first sight, and the hope to engineer a deal to share the wealth of the land died immediately. These are clear dues of similarities between Jim and Brown:

"Who are you?" asked Jim at last, speaking in his usual voice. "My name's Brown", answered the other loudly "Captain Brown. What's Yours?" and Jim after a little pause went on quietly, as if he had not heard: "what made you come here?" "You want to know", said Brown, bitterly. "It's easy to tell. Hunger. And what made you?" (*Lord Jim*, p. 238).

The structural similarities in this exchange are a pointer to the deep lying similarities between the two. But Brown comes out with a revelation as he analyses Jim's response to his last question:

"The fellow started at this, "said Brown, relating to me the opening of this strange conversation between those two men separated only by the muddy bed of a creek, but standing on the opposite poles of that conception of life which includes all mankind. (*Lord Jim*, p. 238).

Jim and Brown are the products of the same civilisation, the same society that underwent a certain socio-economic transformation, which places these two at this specific point of time and space. Brown has a stated reason for being in Patusan-plunder. But Jim is in Patusan as a representative of the imperialist traders, at the same time acting as a savior of the masses of Patusan. Jim has a dishonourable past and would like to hide it, whereas Brown does not make any such attempts.

But the text of *Lord Jim* works in a very interesting way here. By placing Jim and Brown as apparent polar opposites, the dominant discourse in the novel tries to portray Jim as good as against Brown, the evil, thus attempting to legitimise the economical and political motives for his being there in Patusan. Jim is a god-like figure, a moralist and commands the respect of the people of Patusan who otherwise are hapless. Brown is a hated

figure, an intruder who disturbs the tranquility of the place. The dominant discourse legitimises Jim and attempts to portray him as its representative at the same time portraying Brown as an aberration of the western progress. In plain words, the discourse suggests that the aim of the imperialists is not to plunder like Brown, but to bring civilisation to the colonies like Jim attempts to do. Here is discernible how the bourgeois society creates outcasts out of those who have been alienated from the system because of its inherent contradictions. Further, the ahistorical, 'discoursified' acts of Jim in Patusan are largely legitimised through the seriousness imparted to the narrative by the tragic death of Jim - the ultimate sacrifice. Marlow's concluding words about Jim after his death are replete with intensity.

Now he is no more, there are days when the reality of his existence comes to me with an immense, with an overwhelming force; and yet upon my honour there are moments too when he passes from my eyes like disembodied spirit astray amongst the passions of this earth, ready to surrender himself faithfully to the claims of his own world of shades.

'who knows? He is gone, inscrutable at heart and the poor girl is leading a sort of soundless inert life in stems house. (*Lord Jim*, p. 261)

Lord Jim may be described as the chronicle of man fallen because of the intense alienation he suffers within the bourgeois system, yet unable to dream of society in which man could be cured of alienation. Jim acquires qualities of a hero in a bourgeois only at the latter phase of his life in Patusan. In spite of his individualistic longings, he is a part of the system that once disowned him. But then, Jim does not have a past to refer to in order to change the social order in Patusan. Jim is not a hero even in the bourgeois sense, as he does not display such a level of consciousness that could change the social being in Patusan. According to Caudwell, social consciousness is not a mirror image of the social being, because if it were so, it could change like an image without the expenditure of energy when the object that it mirrored changed. Social consciousness is a functional superstructure that interacts with the foundations, each altering the other:

When men dissatisfied with the inherited social formulations of reality - governments, institutions and laws - wish to remake them nearer to their new and as yet unformulated experience and because such institutions, unlike words possess inertia, because the men with new experience represent one class, and the men without it clinging to the old formulation represent another class, the process (of change) is violent and energetic. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 17).

Jim is a fallen character before the bourgeois laws but the moralist and the romantic in him prevents him from being conscious of the society that formulate the laws. Rather, he prefers to blame it on himself and tries to mould himself better to represent the system that outcaste him. Caudwell says that man himself is composed like society of current active being and inherited conscious formulations.

He is somatic and psychic, instinctive and conscious, and these opposites interpenetrate. He is formed, half-rigid, in the shape of the culture he was born in, half fluid and new and insurgent, sucking reality through his instinctive roots. Thus he feels, right in the heart of him, this tension between being and thinking, between new being and old thought, a tension that will give rise by synthesis to new thought.

(Studies in a Dying Culture, p. 17).

It is the weight of his heredity, the precepts of his past that works in Jim and the dynamics of the present does not work in him. As he does not apply his will (human agency) or conscious effort, the ideology that entered his system in his formative years - the ideology of religion and morality - works in him. Caudwell talks about the time of change thus:

At such a time, because of the force that is being generated, there must be motion. The sum of things is tottering and man must go either

backwards or forwards. Just as the neurotic goes back to a childhood solution, faced with impossible adult problems, so civilisation in times of stress such as we have pictured may move towards a previous solution to some golden age of autocracy or feudalism which once was fertile. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 19.).

Conrad portrays the character of Jim in such a way that he is somatic and instinctive where as not conscious and psychic. The working of consciousness in Jim makes him move towards the centre of the system that rejected him. In effect, his movement is backward and not forward. He reinforces the bourgeois system and becomes its champion in Patusan.

But he commands the respect of men. Even though there is an attempt to paint him as a hero, Jim is not quite a hero. Caudwell reasons this:

Heroes are known not only by their power and men, which charlatans share, but over events, over external reality, over matter. Their intuition of the new social reality extends beyond knowledge of the tension between the two and teaches them, not fully and clearly but enough for action, the path to be followed to give this tension a creative issue. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 20).

Jim has power over men, but not quite over the external reality, rather, he is more a product of it. His intuition is not that of a new social reality but

it only cements the idealism inherent in his being which ultimately results in his taking recourse to inaction at the time of need.

Having analysed Jim's character in the light of the material realities that shape him, it is important to go back to the narrative that canonizes the fallen Jim. Why is Marlow interested in Jim? The apparent reason that the text presents is to place the discourse in a sympathetic way, of a fallen man as against the system, which fell him. But having mentioned the class nature of Marlow and the circumstances in which he narrates Jim's story, it may be found that the reasons for the narrative may not merely be sympathy for a fellow human being, who fell from grace. This is the problem of the 'official vs unofficial' discourse analysis, based on Bakhtinian dialogics that is mentioned in the early part of this chapter. This approach negates history, which is crucial for understanding the politics of an even in a materialist perspective. It may be seen that Marlow himself is instrumental in sending Jim over to Patusan in an effort to erase his checkered history. But the text itself proves that history cannot be erased. It resurfaces in the present of the text through Brown and then through Jim's instincts which can be traced back to his childhood experiences in the 'little church' of the Parish and the high esteem in which he holds his father's (a priest) advice.

One would agree with Frederic Jameson, who reads Conrad's sea stories as containing history and thus as complicitous with the hegemonic structures of his day. Jameson claims that these stories are part of a modernism, which invokes history only to recontain it:

The modernist project is more adequately understood as the intent...to "manage" historical and social, deeply political impulses, that is to say, to diffuse them, and the like. But we must add that such impulses cannot be managed until they are aroused; this is the delicate part of the modernist project, the place at which it must be realistic in order in another moment to recontain that realism it has awakened. (*The Political Unconsciousness*, p. 266)

One of the primary means of sealing off the textual process from the issues of history in Conrad's stories is the strategy of the "metaphysical, which projects a proto-existential metaphysic by singling out Nature, and in particular the sea - what crushes human life - as ultimate villain" (*The Political Unconscious*, p. 267)

Thus it is discernible that Marlow's effort is to reinstate the ideology of his class through the story of Jim by blurring the reality of material history using metaphysical devices.

Chapter - III

SONS AND LOVERS

In his discussion on Lacan in *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Terry Eagleton says that Lacan was not much interested in the social relevance of his psychoanalytic theories, and he certainly does not 'solve' the problem of the relation between society and the unconscious. He adds, however that Freudianism as a whole does enable us to pose this question. He goes on to examine this in terms of a concrete literary example, D.H.Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*. Eagleton admits that there is something at work in this text which looks remarkably like Freud's famous drama. *Sons and Lovers*, without appearing to be at all aware of it (it is said that though at the time of writing this novel, Lawrence knew something of Freud from his wife Frieda, there is no evidence that he was well acquainted with the works of Freud), is a profoundly Oedipal novel. Eagleton goes on to explain this view: "the young Morel who sleeps in the same bed as his mother, treats her with the tenderness of a lover and feels strong animosity towards his father, grows up to be the man Morel, unable to sustain a fulfilling relationship with a woman, and in the end achieving possible release from his condition by killing his mother in an ambiguous act of love, revenge and self-liberation. Mrs. Morel, for her part is jealous of Paul's relationship with Miriam,

behaving like a rival mistress. Paul rejects Miriam for his mother, but in rejecting Miriam he is also unconsciously rejecting his mother in her, in what he feels to be Miriam's stifling spiritual possessiveness". (*Sons and Lovers*, pp. 174-175).

In the above summary of the novel crafted on Freudian lives, Eagleton brings into play various elements of Freudian psychoanalysis--that of Oedipal complex as the situation when a child, grows into his phallic stage recognises his mother's body as an 'other' or 'object'. But in the unconscious of the grown up child rests his 'innate desire' to go back to his mother. Freud says that this desire resting in the unconscious gets manifested in dreams. Lacan adds that language is structured like the unconscious. An extension of this theory would tantamount to arguing that literature or any art form has a dream like quality to the extent that they manifest the desires of the individual latent in the unconscious.

But a materialist view of art forms would protest against limiting a social act such as writing a novel to the sphere of the individual consciousness (or the unconscious) of the author. It may be added, however, that Eagleton does not stop with the above - mentioned analysis. He goes on to trace the social roots of the main protagonists of *Sons and Lovers*.

The attempt in this chapter is to view the novel in the background of the society of its setting, to look at the dominant ideology working in the society and analyse how the relations of production in such a society is central to a better understanding of the characters and the novel itself. The next step would be to analyse the central issues presented in *Sons and Lovers* in the light of our understanding of the dominant ideology and power relations.

While attempting a study of the class relations in a novel like *Sons and Lovers*, it is important to be clear, in the first place, whether the material contains anything so cerebral and systematic as to constitute evidence of coherent thinking, as opposed to shafts of intuitive insights unconnected one with another and irreducible to a speculative pattern. Lawrence had been more often seen as a novelist who spurned the contemporary bourgeois society for its ills. But as a thinker, the solutions he offered were all of running away from the ruins of modernity into the primitive glory in which man lives in uncorrupted bliss. Two opinions on Lawrence's political thought, -- one by Michael Bentley in "Lawrence's Political Thought: Some English Contexts, 1906-19" (D.H.Lawrence: New Studies, edited by Christopher Heywood) and the other by Jessie Chambers (the real life Miriam) -- are important in this regard:

So far as the political dimension of his thought is concerned, however, the immediate impression is one of patent paucity. Take away *Kangaroo* and some of the pieces from the *Phoenix* collection and surprisingly little direct comment on politics is evident: Indeed, there are obvious senses in which Lawrence is not a political novelist at all. (*D. H. Lawrence: New Studies*, p. 61)

And Jessie Chambers adds in the same view:

As an artist he is superb; but when he assays to be a thinker I find him superficial and unconvincing and quite soon boring... his long arguments about aristocrats and democrats and the rest are only the dusty miles he covered in his pilgrimage.

But at a different stage in the same article, Bentley says:

Alienation itself supplies a context important to the understanding however, and the deduction ought not to be made that Englishmen and English society did not find their way into Lawrence's thinking despite his tantrums ... it is clear that his social analysis are frequently set in an English context and often in a half-rural half-urban one. It is clear also that his administration of the communities he knew was authentic and occasionally, as in the depiction of the Bestwood class system (*Sons and Lovers*, p. 69), masterly. (p. 63-64)

Bentley identifies three aspects of Lawrence's development : the context of nascent socialism; the wartime period of reorientation and the contact, in particular, with Russel's reconstructionism; and the later development, finally, of a more emphatic and bizarre individualism. It has been argued that Lawrence's social thought derives from traditionally 'English' attitudes. This means that he had developed a fair amount of warmth for the aristocracy whereas he felt no admiration for the elite composing the rising new middle class.

Ileana Cura - Sazdanic opines that Lawrence's social writings raise some important questions with regard to modern industrial society and its consequences for genuine human living:

Lawrence is clearly at his best as a novelist when he is concerned with his vital study of relationships. This, we believe, constitutes the most relevant part of his social criticism in so far as it indicates the destructive influence of industrialism upon the individual and, consequently upon the whole of our society. Hence, according to Lawrence, the main evil of industrialisation lies in "the base forcing all human energy into competition of mere acquisition" which, eventually, destroys the very core of our being. (*D.H. Lawrence As a Critic*; p. 105)

How much ever varied these opinions may be from one another on the social and political thought content in Lawrence's novels, most of them reinforce the underlying presence of ideological content in his novels. However, the effort henceforth would be less of examining clearly stated ideological positions in *Sons and Lovers* than to study it in order to decipher positions taken unconsciously by the author which manifests in the text in the form of ambiguities, (over) emphasis, omissions, prejudices etc.

The delienation of Paul's psychological development, it is important to note, does not take place in social void. Cura-Sazdanic mentions three possible stages of an industrial era, which Lawrence engaged with. She brackets *Sons and Lovers* (1913), *The White Peacock* (1911) and *Twilight in Italy* (1916) together as this novel in which Lawrence presents the transition from a rural community to an urban society. (p. 106). The setting in *Sons and Lovers* is that of the age of coming in of industrial capitalism. It effects a change in the landscape as much as it changes the social and production relations.

Then some sixty years ago, a sudden change took place. The gin pits were elbowed aside by large mines of the financiers. The coal and iron field of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire was discovered. Carston, Waite and co. appeared. Amid tremendous excitement, Lord

Palmerston formally opened company's first mines at Spirney Park, on the edge of Sherwood Forest. (*Sons and Lovers*, p.3)

This is a distinct change from what was before. There were some gin pits in the same area since the time of Charles II. The pre-industrial Bestwood is described as

And the cottages of these coal-miners, in blocks and pieces here and there, together with odd farms and homes of the stockings, straying over the parish formed the village of Bestwood. (*Sons and Lovers*, p. 3).

Paul's father, Walter Morel, is a miner, whereas his mother once (in her formative years) belonged to a slightly higher class. It may be understood that deep-rooted in her self is the consciousness of having belonged to a higher class once financial troubles meant that her family had to take to more laborious means of survival. Mrs. Morel is concerned that her sons, William, at first and then, Paul should not follow their father into the pit, and wants them to take up clerical job instead. Terry Eagleton describes the family set up of the Morels as part of what is known as the 'sexual division of labour', which in capitalist society takes the form of the male parent being used as the labour-power in the productive process while the female parent is left to provide the material and emotional 'maintenance'

of him and the labour force of the future (the children). Mrs. Morel remains a housewife throughout the novel.

Mr. Morel's estrangement from the intense emotional life of the home is due in part to its social division--one which alienates him from his own children, and brings them emotionally closer to the mother. If, as was with Walter Morel, the father's work is especially exhausting and oppressive, his role in the family is likely to be further diminished: Morel is reduced to establishing human contact with children through his practical skills about the home. (*Literary Theory: An Introduction*, p. 175)

Further, he is presented as clumsy. His lack of education makes him less articulate, and this further distances him from family. The fatiguing, harshly disciplined nature of his work process creates in him a domestic irritability and violence which drives the children deeper into the mother's arms, and which spurs on her jealous possessiveness of them. To compensate for his inferior status at work, the father struggles to assert a traditional male authority at home, thus estranging his children from him further.

A sense of heirarchisation based on class difference is evoked in the description of Walter Morel and Mrs. Morel has what the novel makes out to

be the characteristically proletarian in articulateness, physicality and passivity.

Sometimes, when she herself wearied of love-talk, she tried to open her heart seriously to him. She saw him listen deferentially, but without understanding. This killed her efforts at a finer intimacy, and she had flashes of fear. Sometimes he was restless of an evening: it was not enough for him just to be near her, she realised. She was glad when he set himself to little jobs. (*Sons and Lovers*, p. 12).

The way the novel projects Mr. Morel's physicality as against his pronounced inarticulateness reminds one of Edmund Burke's infamous phrase describing the proletariat: 'Swinish multitudes'. *Sons and Lovers* portrays the miners as creatures who live the life of the body than the mind. Eagleton says that:

This is a curious portraiture, since in 1912, the year in which Lawrence finished the book, the miners launched the biggest strike which Britain had ever seen. One year later the year of the novel's publication, the worst mining disaster for a century resulted in a paltry fine for a seriously negligent management, and class-warfare was everywhere in air throughout the British coal-fields. These developments, with all their acute political awareness and complex

organisation, were not the actions of mindless hulks. (*Literary Theory An Introduction*, p. 176.)

On the contrary, Mrs. Morel is of a lower middle class origin, reasonably well educated articulate and determined. She is described as the very opposite of Mr. Morel. She had 'a curious receptive mind, which found much pleasure and amusement in listening to other folk'. She is presented as having intellectual bent of mind. Yet, what she enjoyed more was listening to people talk about themselves rather than an argument on politics or religion. The description of her physic is semi-aristocratic:

In her person she was rather small and delicate, with a large brow, and dropping bunches of brown silk curls. Her blue eyes were very straight, honest and searching. She had the beautiful hands of the Coppards. Her dress was always subdued...She was still perfectly intact, deeply religious, and full of beautiful candour. (*Sons and Lovers*, p. 10)

She therefore symbolizes what the young, sensitive and artistic Paul may hope to achieve: his emotional turning to her from the father is, inseparably, a turning from the impoverished, exploitative world of the colliery towards the life of an emancipated consciousness. It may be argued that the potentially tragic tension in which Paul then finds himself trapped,

and almost destroyed, springs from the fact that his mother--the very source of the energy which pushes him ambitiously beyond home and pit- is at the same time the powerful emotional force which draws him back.

Thus it may be seen that as Eagleton suggests, a psychoanalytic reading of the novel need not be an alternative to a social interpretation of it. What is discussed, as the central problem in the novel is two aspects of a single human situation. Certain social forces and relations are as much important in understanding the human relationships between an absent, violent father, an ambitious, emotionally demanding mother and a sensitive child. The portrayal of the development of the character and life of Paul has to be seen in this light.

The problem in the lives of both William and more pronouncedly in Paul's is born out of the class nature of their parents as well as that of the society they live and develop in. Their father, a miner, reflects the qualities of a proletariat which are to his wife, clumsy; she herself, though, now is downgraded to the situations of the lower class in terms of economic status and ways of earning one's living, does not quite belong there. She has a past which is enmeshed in the glories and fetishes of (lower) middle class life.

The life situations of the central character in *Sons and Lovers* could be understood better using the Marxist concepts of class-consciousness and

alienation. E. P. Thompson, in his *The Making of the English Working Class* says that class is a historical phenomenon unifying a number of disparate and seemingly unconnected events, both the raw material of experience and in consciousness:

We can not have love without lovers, nor deference without squires and labourers and class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs. The class experience is largely determined by the productive relations into which men are born or enter involuntarily. (*The Making of English Working Class*; p. 9)

In *Sons and Lovers* is depicted a society, which is in the process of undergoing a change from the old productive relations (which could be explained in the feudal paradigm), into capitalist mode of production. In most of the idealist ways of looking at society, there is a tendency to view the relations of production based on which the society is structured as 'given' or already 'determined'. This develops out of a 'casual' way of looking at life which are central to religion, theology and spirituality. This has held sway in western philosophy over a long period of time till the flowering of

materialist philosophy, which questioned 'causality' of nature and presented an alternative in the 'causality' of things. The 'causal' analysis of capitalist society tries to understand its coming into existence and the ways it operates where as the casual mode feels that inspite of the ills of such a society, nothing much can be done to change it.

It may be argued that D. H. Lawrence identified the ills of the modern society as that of the bourgeois society. But rather than attempting a materialist analysis based on the dialectical principle of progression, he preferred to take a retrogressive motion away from all forms of consciousness into the womb of the unconscious state or as he puts it 'to the primitive existence of mankind'.

Before dwelling into the novel towards an analysis of the problem presented in the novel, it is important to understand D. H. Lawrence's ideas about mankind and its history.

It is clear that Lawrence, at least initially in his career claimed socialist moorings. He always made it a point to refer to himself as one who belonged to the class of proletariat. Colin Holmes in the article 'Lawrence's Social Origins' published in *D. H. Lawrence: New Studies* addresses this question:

Lawrence had a great deal to say about the process of industrialisation and the social consequences which grew out of the transformation of England from an agrarian to a 'mechanical disintegrated, amorphous' industrial society. Growing up in Eastwood he saw every day a blend of the old and the new. The blackened pit tips where the earth's core accumulated on the surface and the iron headstocks below which men were taken into an underground world which rose stark and sudden among such stretching woodlands and country fields. Through the class of such visual symbols Lawrence could hardly fail to be aware of the impact of industrialisation. On a more animate level, the sight of colliers in their pit dust spilling into Eastwood when their shift was over was another permanent feature of industrial landscape. (*Sons and Lovers*, p. 2)

On Lawrence's origin Holmes comments:

The usual view of Lawrence's background derives from Lawrence himself, who wrote 'I was born among the working classes and brought up among them' ; he went on to comment that he was in fact 'a man from the working class'.(D.H.Lawrence: *New Studies*,p.7)

Holmes cites the opinions of Raymond Williams in *Culture and Society* and Terry Eagleton in *Criticism and Ideology* both of whom referred

to Lawrence as of a 'proletarian origin'. Further he adds that when Christopher Caudwell refers to Lawrence as a bourgeois artist, this constituted an attack upon his ideas rather than a reference to his social origin. In this context he cites a debate which involved George Watson who contradicts Lawrence's claims of belonging to a working class family:

'The common assertion that his father was a miner, though not false, is misleading in context; he was not by the period of Lawrence's upbringing dependent upon wages, being in charge of group of miners, and his income was good'. Further more, it is claimed, 'If his manners were rough and at times even wild, this needs to be measured against the superior existence his wife created in Eastwood for the sons who, as she successfully resolved, would never work in a mine'.
(*D. H. Lawrence: New Studies*, p. 3).

Watson argues that Lawrence's claims of working-class origins are without foundation and he emphasises that after the age of six Lawrence left 'the mean terraced house marked as his birth place' and lived in a superior residence on the hill until he was eighteen:

And going to Nottingham High School for the best type of local education, and thence to the university in Nottingham and a schoolmaster's post in Croydon, and marrying the daughter of a

German aristocrat were, whose lives, it is argued, *Lawrence had observed rather than experienced.* (italics mine) (*D. H. Lawrence: New Studies*; p. 4)

D. H. Lawrence's social origins and the debates surrounding it are not the points of discussion here. However, it may be noted that Holmes rebuts Watson's charges that Lawrence feigned his origins to be that of a proletariat. But, later in this essay Holmes himself comes up with some interesting insights about the early years of Lawrence and how his mother Lydia Lawrence influenced him. A look at these would be of help in understanding what prompted Lawrence to portray the kind of social relations he has done in *Sons and Lovers* Holmes says,

But it would be unwise, having countered Watson's argument, to insist that Lawrence social background was typically working class. Lawrence's father even though he enjoyed some status in the mining community as a result of his role as a little butty, was working-class...he could read only with difficulty and could only just sign his name. His culture was of a non-literate kind. (*D.H.Lawrence: New Studies*, p. 9).

It would need to stretch one's imagination too far beyond the boundaries of social analysis to argue that Arthur Lawrence was not a

proletariat. But Lawrence family was made up of more than Arthur Lawrence.

It is also necessary to take account of the strong mother figure, Lydia Lawrence, who played a critical role in the family and on the development of the Lawrence children(*D.H.Lawrence:New Studies*,p.9)

She was committed to respectability and was always striving to 'get on' which resulted in a certain puritan abstinence. Thus, she displayed her attachment to virtues worshipped in Samuel Smiles's catechism, and such qualities helped to secure her children against a working-class future. But more than bringing these values to the household, she also injected into it other cultural influences:

She read a good deal, wrote poetry, insisted on standard English and refused to make any concession to the local dialect. The result was that the home contained the culture of Lawrence's father, which Lawrence came to regard as 'the old instinctive sensuous life of pre-industrial England', and that of a woman who was keen on self-improvement and who had been a pupil teacher and possibly a governess in the South before straitened family circumstances brought her to Nottingham as a lace drawer.

In other words, colliding plans of consciousness were present and Lawrence was tossed between opposing sets of influences. And as Lydia Lawrence took a grip on the family, as the children were turned against their father, Arthur Lawrence expressed himself increasingly in the company of his fellow miners in the local public houses. Consequently, the gap in family widened. (*D.H. Lawrence: New Studies*, pp.9-10)

Here is the real life situation which is imaginatively presented in *Sons and Lovers*. The above mentioned arguments make an effort at placing the central problem in *Sons and Lovers* in a social context. But Cura-Sazdanic is against the attempt at equating Lawrence's social criticism with a piece of sociological research:

Lawrence's explicit condemnation of industrialisation as an attitude of mind continues the line of Carlyle and the nineteenth century tradition. But his social values, as well as their presentation, are strikingly personal placing emphasis on intensity and acute perception we, therefore suggests that his immediate approach is not that of a historian relying on facts and evidence and examining the origins of industrialisation as such. (p. 106)

The argument falls apart before the claim of many other scholars that Lawrence was, at least early in his career influenced by socialism. But Curazdanic presents an interesting argument when she says that Lawrence was influenced by the nineteenth century tradition of thought. Dominant form of thought in England in the early phase of nineteenth century was a kind of idealism inspired by romantic traditions. It may be argued that his analysis of the contemporary social situation is tinged with romanticism. This point shall be addressed at a later phase in this chapter.

Many scholars have commented about Lawrence's encounters with socialism. Other than the earlier mentioned influence where Bentley talks about three influences on Lawrence's development, his article 'Lawrence Political Thought' also mentions sundry influences on Lawrence by the members of the Eastwood group especially Edward Carpenter. Lawrence had come into contact with socialists at a formative moment in his life:

The outlook of the early years is certainly characterised, by the 'passionate feeling for "the workers"...Much of the reading on which this sentiment was based was done in Nottingham and Croydon rather than at Eastwood. (*D. H. Lawrence: New Studies*, p. 66).

Later in the essay Bentley makes an interesting observation that in *Sons and Lovers* Lawrence voices an interest in and knowledge of some

notions of political economy. There is an announcement of what was to be a life long contempt for laissez-faire complacency. Land question and the dispute surrounding it figures in *Sons and Lovers*.

On the Leiver's farm, ... Paul observes in the interstices of avoiding Miriam, that 'all the men, Mr. Leivers as well, had bitter debates on the nationalisation of land and similar problems. (*D. H. Lawrence: New Studies*, p. 69).

Lawrence's social consciousness hinged on problems deeper than those of the structural aspects of existing polity. Even as one differs with the perspective and ideological base from which he addressed such issues, it has to be accepted that he made an attempt at diagnosing the sickness of the modern man. Michael Kirkham in his essay *D. H. Lawrence and social consciousness* argues that

His analysis exposes a divorce between man and his instincts, man and his physical environment, and a general breakdown of relationship between human beings. Key terms in that analysis are words like 'disintegration' and 'disconnection'. The malady seems to be the result of gradual loosening of communal ties which has happened in the last two centuries and is linked with industrial revolution. (*Mosaic: Literature and Ideas*, Fall 1978, p. 79)

To put it in a materialist perspective the malady Kirkham talks about is alienation. In a bourgeois society, the existence of man in society is related to his 'profession'. By profession is meant that man partakes in only one way throughout his life in the process of production. Thus a miner remains a miner. He has no control over the future shape of the coal that he mines out of the field.

This 'profession', which is a direct fall out of division of labour in a bourgeois society, when man comes into contact with nature only in one specified way, he is estranged from it in all other spheres. This keeps him from understanding the material reality around him and thus acts as a hindrance to the development of the multi-faceted personality that he is. Edward Ahearn in *Marx & Modern Fiction* argues that:

The concept of division of labour, initially visible in the family and attaining myriad productive and estranged guises in modern society, has its historically most fundamental role in the opposition between country and city which is said to sum up "the whole economic history of society". (*Marx and Modern Fiction*, p. 5)

It is through this estrangement of man from nature that alienation comes into being. The situation in the Morel household is clearly on the lines of sexual division of labour, a product of the industrial revolution. As

Mr. Walter Morel goes to the mines at the break of dawn, it is Mrs. Morel who is left at home to take care of the children. She influences not only the emotional and intellectual development of the children, but also implants a certain class-consciousness in them. This has deep-lying roots in her attitude towards the clumsiness of the miner. This is manifest in various ways one of them is the opposition between the town and the country, itself a product of industrial revolution. Behind the failure of Mrs. Morel's marriage, was her failure as a girl hailing from the middle class, to adopt to the working class milieu in which Walter Morel lived, worked and had his being. It is not just that she was more fastidious and would not mix familiarly with her neighbours, but that she feared something in atmosphere of the colliery town, as Paul himself would come to fear it. Early in the first chapter Gertrude is pictured waiting for Morel to come back from the pub. She is depressed with the thought of her life:

The front garden was a small square with a privet hedge. There she stood, trying to soothe herself with the scent of flowers and the fading beautiful evening. Opposite her small gate was the stile that led uphill, under the tall hedge between the burning glow of the cut pastures. The sky overhead throbbed and pulsed with light. The glow sank quickly off the field; the earth and the hedges smoked dusk. As it grew dark, a

ruddy glare came out on the hilltop and out of the glare the diminished commotion of the flair. Sometimes, down the trough of darkness formed by the path under the hedges, men came lurching home. One young man lapsed into a run down the steep bit that ended the hill and went with a crash into the stile. Mrs. Morel shuddered. (*Sons and Lovers*, p. 60).

In this passage, there is an attempt at presenting nature as an entirely alien to Mrs. Morel. It is evident that Mrs. Morel does not enjoy nature in a natural relationship with it as a part of her novel. All the middle class tendencies in her coupled with her petit bourgeois insecurities lead to this alienation. In a final analysis of the novel, it may be seen that all the characters in the novel suffer from varying degrees of alienation. Lawrence traces the cause of alienation to the class nature of the industrial society in England of his times. He realises that man is cut off from his 'social instincts' as a result of this alienation. Indeed, befitting his role as an artist who also has to be a thinker and social philosopher, he suggests a way out for the man in a bourgeois society. It is this suggestion that forms the message of the novel that needs to be examined in the light of historical materialist readings of art in society. The theoretical formulations proposed by Christopher

Caudwell in *Studies in Dying Culture* could help a great deal in analysing Lawrence's propositions.

Christopher Caudwell's study on D. H. Lawrence subtitled 'A Study of the Bourgeois Artist' throws valuable insights into the existence of art in society and on Lawrence as an artist of his times. Many of these arrangements may be used to understand the social relations in *Sons and Lovers* better. Caudwell starts with the premise that art is a social function for '

they only become art when they are given music, forms or words, when they are clothed in socially recognised symbols and of course in the process there is a modification. The phantasies (of a dreamer) are modified by the social dress; the language as a whole acquires new association and context. (*Studies in Dying Culture*, p. 29).

He says that in a bourgeois society, social relations are denied in the form of relations between men, and take the form of a relation between man and a thing, a property relations which is a disguise for relations which now become unconscious and therefore anarchic. This type of relation is still between man and man and in particular exploiter and exploited. Anything, which helps the artist to escape from the bourgeois trap and become conscious of social relations inherent in art, will help to delay the rot.

Caudwell says that novel is the last surviving literary art form in bourgeois culture, because in it the social relations inherent in art process are overt.

It is inevitable that at this stage the conception of the artist as a 'pure' artist must cease to exist. Lawrence, Gide, Romain Rolland, Romain Rolland and so on, can not be content with the beautiful art work, but seem to desert the practice of art for social theories and become novelists of ideas, literary prophets and propaganda novelists. They represent the efforts of bourgeois art exploded into individual fantasy and commercialised muck, to become once more a social process and so be reborn. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, pp. 31-32).

According to Caudwell, at this particular movement of the crisis in bourgeois society and bourgeois culture, where 'cash relations' define the role of an artist, there are two ways that an artist could take: either to go forward or back. To him, this is a choice between communism and fascism, either to create the future or to go back to old primitive values, to mythology, racialism, nationalism, hero worship. This Fascist art is like the regression of the neurotic to a previous level of adaptation.

It is Lawrence's importance as an artist that he was well aware of the fact that the pure artist can not exist today, and that the artist must inevitably be a man hating cash relationship and the market and

profoundly interested in the relationship between persons as they are, but interested in changing them, dissatisfied with them as they are, and wanting newer and fuller values in personal relationship. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 37).

The clinching argument is that the 'final tragedy' of Lawrence is that his solution was ultimately fascist and not communist. In a retrogressive motion, Lawrence wanted to return to the past, to the 'Mother'.

He sees human discontent as the yearning of the solar plexus for the umbilical connexion, and he demands the substitution for sharp sexual love of the unconscious fleshly identification of foetus with mother. All this was symbolic of regression, of neurosis of the return to the primitive. (*Studies in Dying Culture*, p. 37).

What one finds in Paul is a rejection of the contemporary formulations of consciousness. Because all the relationships that Paul develops during the course of his life are within the bourgeois norms, he is unable sustain any of them. Thus Miriam, painted in a spiritual light and Clara, the 'material woman', are ultimately discarded by Paul. He has a problematic relationship with his father, Mr. Morel and also Clara's husband Baxter Dawes. He is conscious of the demanding love his mother imposes on him and he tries to break loose from the clutches of her love. But, Lawrence, ultimately

suggests that Paul finds an instinctual solace in his mother's love and affection. This is a metaphorical representation of going back to the primal state of man, where, according to Lawrence, instincts governed human relations.

The above idea, viewed politically is problematic because it suggests a backward movement. At this point of capitalist development, a backward movement in terms of culture means reinforcing fascism, because even in such a movement, the productive relations do not change. Caudwell says:

It is simplifying the drama to make it a struggle between contemporary consciousness and old being. It is a conflict between productive relations and productive powers between the contemporary formulations of consciousness and all the possibilities of future being including consciousness latent in society and struggling to be released from their bonds. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, pp. 42-43).

and

in any civilisation the role of consciousness is to modify instinctive responses so that they flow smoothly into the mill of social relations and turn it. Today this exaltation of the instincts is seen in all demands for a return of deeper 'feeling' as with Lawrence, and in all worships of unconscious 'mentation', as with the surrealists, Hemingways, and

Fascists. In individuals this mechanism is infantile regression seen in its pathological form in the neurosis. (*Studies in Dying Culture*, p. 43).

The failure of Lawrence is that even as he hated bourgeois culture, he could never escape its limitations. Man's freedom, in Lawrence, is linked to his 'free' instincts. Man is free not through but in spite of social relations. This is a bourgeois illusion. Lawrence could never go beyond selfishness, which is the pattern of bourgeois culture and is revealed in pacifism, Protestantism, and all varieties of salvation obtained by individual action. Thus, in a retrospect, it is discernible that the problems that the Morel family finds within itself tantamounts to a rejection of social life and hailing the individuals liberation outside the social sphere, in a symbolic way. This is the political idea expressed in *Sons and Lovers*.

Chapter - IV

MRS. DALLOWAY

It is in her fourth novel, *Mrs. Dalloway* that marks an important stage in the development of Virginia Woolf as a writer. In this novel, she departs from the form of the traditional English novel, establishing herself as a writer of genius and representative of her times. The stream of consciousness style that she has employed in this novel is supplemented with a lyrical and haunting prose.

The action in the novel is restricted to events of one day in central London where Clarissa Dalloway, the wife of Richard Dalloway M.P. and a fashionable London hostess, is to give an important Party. Her character is gradually revealed through her thoughts on that day, through her memories of the past and opinions and thoughts of other characters with whom she interacts, such as her one-time suitor Peter Walsh, lately returned from India after five years absence, her childhood friend Sally Seton, her daughter Elizabeth and spinster tutor Miss Kilman, a political hostess Lady Bruton and some of the prominent figures of the London high society -- Sir William Bradshaw and Hugh whittbread. The techniques used are interior monologues and stream of consciousness.

An interesting presence in the novel is the complementary character Septimus Warren Smith, a war hero, but now, a shell shocked victim who has retreated into a private world and is on the verge of insanity and ends the day by committing suicide.

Different critics have approached the text with diverse critical attitudes. In her essay 'Trauma and Recovery in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*', Karren Demeister opines that modernist literature is a literature of trauma. According to her Virginia Woolf's characterization of Septimus Smith in *Mrs. Dalloway* illustrates not only the psychological injuries suffered by victims of severe trauma such as war but also the need for them to give meaning to their suffering in order to recover from the trauma. Septimus's death is the result of his inability to communicate his experiences to others and thereby give those experiences meaning and purpose. Here she talks of trauma psychology where in recovery of the victim can be affected through providing meaning to the experiences (which to him/her have no meaning) he has undergone in his consciousness. This article on trauma psychology in *Mrs. Dalloway* presupposes the fact that the 'war' is one of the major discourses in the novel.

Reginald Abbott in 'What Miss Kilman's Petticoat means: Virginia Woolf, shopping and Spectacle' presents an analysis of modern consumer

culture centred on a proliferation of commodities and a sophisticated representation of them through the 'spectacle' in *Mrs. Dalloway*. Modernism's rejection of realism and its celebration of the artist as an alienated personage producing an arcane product -- superior to and outside the common marketplace -- would seem to have set it in opposition to consumer/commodity culture and guaranteed its immunity from studying them as commodities. But Reginald Abbott presents a spectrum of predecessors, such as Regina Gagnier's analysis of Woolf and his manipulations of his marketplace, Jennifer Wicke, with her reading of the interdependent relations in between advertising and modern fiction in James and Joyce, and Jonathan Freedman who studied James, and asserts that they have irrevocably opened the modernist canon to consumer theory. In her article, Reginald Abbott says:

Woolf's image of the writer as trouser mender in Oxford street is packed with her ambivalence toward the modern marketplace. It juxtaposes elements of her class, cultural heritage, and personal preferences head on with what for Woolf were the exciting but terrifying realities of the modern consumer world. Here we have the traditional upper- class institution of the personal tailor placed in the very untraditional environment of plate glass window and exposed to

a class of middlemen who create a spectacle of his work. ... The modern market place from cultural guardian to not even an outmoded producer whose goods have lost the secrets of their production. (Modern Fiction Studies, 38.1, Spring 1992, p195)

Abbott analyses the contradiction between tradition represented by the aristocrat upper class and the commodity-market driven bourgeois emerging in the first few decades of this century, in the novel. However, what is of interest here is fact that the two discourses mentioned above - war and market economy - owe their existence to the relations in the mode of production, which in turn reinforces class relations. The effort in this study, therefore, is to place the text Mrs. Dalloway in the background of the class nature of its society in order to understand the problems addressed and the positions that the writer takes.

Art is a social function. This arises from the very way in which art forms are defined. Only those things are recognised as art forms, which have a conscious social function. Christopher Caudwell identifies two common problems that art faces in a bourgeois society on the one hand, there is the commercialisation or vulgarisation of art and on the other hypostatisation of the art work as the goal of the art process, and the relation between art work and individual as paramount. The second necessarily leads to a dissolution

of those social values which make the art in question a social relation, and therefore ultimately results in the art work's ceasing to be an art work and becoming a mere private fantasy. Thus, as a result 'art becomes more and more formless, personal, and individualistic, culminating in Dadaism, surrealism and 'steining" says Caudwell (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p. 3).

According to him all the forms of bourgeois art have shown the steady development of this bifurcation. He says that roughly till 1910, when social values inherent in an art form were not disintegrated, the artist who hypostatized the art form and despised the market could produce good art. In the sense, a writer who thought of art as an entirely individualist project and that the market forces of bourgeois culture not affect his work directly, could produce good art. The complete acceptance of the market, being a refusal to regard any part of the art process as a social process, is even more incompetent to produce great art. Thus,

Anything which helps the artist to escape from the bourgeois trap and become conscious of social relations inherent in art, will help delay the rot. For this reason the novel is the last surviving literary art form in bourgeois culture, for in it.... the social relations inherent in the art process are overt. Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce, and Proust all in different ways are the last blossoms of the bourgeois novel, for with

them the novel begins to disappear as an objective study of social relations and becomes a study of the subjects experienced in the society. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, p.31).

At this stage any serious artist must cease to exist as a pure artist, for the commercialised art has become base and negated itself and equally 'art for art's sake' (that is, the ignoring of the market and concentration on the perfect work as a goal in itself has negated itself as the art form has ceased to exist, and what was art has become private fantasy). Where as writers cannot be content with the 'beautiful art work', they seem to desert the practice of art for social theory and become novelists of ideas, literary prophets and propaganda novelists. They represent the efforts of bourgeois art, exploded into individualistic fantasy and commercialised muck, to become once more a social process and so be reborn.

A look at the stream of consciousness technique in the light of this theoretical position proposed by Caudwell would be revealing. It is clear that the issue of private consciousness has enjoyed considerable critical attention when critics discuss the representation of thought in Virginia Woolf's novels in terms of stream of consciousness.

Such attention apparently has no lack of justification in *Mrs. Dalloway*. At the outset it looks as though each character in the novel is

caught up in his or her own inner consciousness, has an idiosyncratic way of perceiving and thinking, and tends to create the 'room of his/her own'. The novel can be taken for a depiction of various disparate, monadic consciousnesses, isolated from each other and impossible to be unified into a spiritual community. Ban Wang in her article ' "I" on the Run: Crisis of Identity in *Mrs. Dalloway*' talks about the above mentioned issue of private consciousness:

The preoccupation with private consciousness nevertheless, presupposes an outmoded notion of the subject that is believed to be autonomous, self-contained, and fully conscious of itself and which is assumed to be the source of meaning and thought independent of social structure, discourse and systems of signification—a notion of the subject which has been stripped of its validity by contemporary critical discourse. This idea of the subject, deeply mortgaged to western philosophical tradition, underpins such related critical terms as character, personality, individuality, self and identity. (Modern Fiction Studies,38.1, Spring 1992, p. 177).

Caudwell opines in the same view, though in a different context:

... it is the old bourgeois illusion to suppose there is such a thing as pure individual expression. It is not even that the artist nobly forces

his self-expression into a social mould for the benefit of the society. Both attitudes are simply expressions of the old bourgeois fallacy that man is free in freely giving vent to his instincts. In fact the artist does not express himself in art forms, he finds himself therein. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, pp. 34-35).

Further, he adds that the artist finds free self-expression only in social relations embodied in art and that the artist does not adulterate his free self-expression to make it socially current or fashionable. This presumption leads to the argument that the value of art to the artist is that it makes him free. Even though art forms are normally considered, especially in bourgeois parlance as 'self-expression', they are in fact not the 'expression' of a self but the discovery of a self. In synthesising one's experiences with the society's, in pressing his inner self into the mould of social relations she/he not only creates a new mould, or a socially valuable product, but also moulds and creates his own self.

Mrs. Dalloway is a novel about experiences. As suggested by Caudwell, the variety in creative output in man's history is largely due to the varied forms of individual experiences. But the basis of all these experiences is man's (woman's) interaction with nature. Nature here includes man himself, his society, and the animate and inanimate environment around him.

Now, just as the bourgeois social order imposes an order and hierarchy on the society, which permeates into an artform, it invokes convention to unify and hierarchies the narrative voices and order individual experiences accordingly. But Woolf refuses to unify and hierarchies narrative voices in the conventional mould. In the novel, characters and events happen through thought, opinions and comments of a spectrum of characters.

Johanna Garvey, in her article 'Difference and Continuity: The Voices of *Mrs. Dalloway*' says that *Mrs. Dalloway* offers a dynamic illustration the interaction between women and the modern city:

In *Mrs. Dalloway*, as in other female visions of the city, women's voices must contend with theories of urban space, an arena traditionally defined and experienced as masculine. As Craudine Hermann has observed "physical or mental, man's space is a space of determination, hierarchy and conquest, a sprawling showy space, a full space" (169). Surprisingly, Woolf's novel may at first appear to recreate just such an approach to space, as its third person narrator often suggests the teller's vast control, an imposition of uniformity; furthermore, salient linking devices such as the motor car in Bond Street, the slagwriting and the hourly chimes can be criticised as

transitions too simple and intrusive, ones that emphasise the narrator's victory over urban complexity-a mastery over both time and space (Rosenberg 212, 217). Nevertheless, even such overt methods of connection and unification point to more crucial concerns of the text: the nature of a social order and women's place(s) in relation to it; the passage of time, with implications of an irretrievable past and inevitable death; ways of reading and interpreting the city, particularly as a bastion of patriarchal institutions. (College English, Vol. 53, No.1, Jan 91, p. 59).

Virginia Woolf works with the different voices of her re-created London in two seemingly antagonistic ways, both to unify and to fragment space and time. In Woolf's language is a sea of voices, waves of words that continually pass between what Julia Kristeva has identified as the semiotic and the symbolic in such a way as to erase hierarchies and to emphasise multiplicity and transformation. As the narrative of this continuing process, *Mrs. Dalloway* subverts masculine visions not only of urban space but also of institutions that have served to bound and maintain it.

Further, as Ban Wang testifies, private consciousness or the unifying entity would not appear so private and intimate or unifying as soon as one examines the ways in which consciousness, or various forms of subjectivity

of characters in this novel are constructed in language, discourse, systems of signification and in short, the symbolic order. In a final analysis, it is commendable that Woolf through her stream of consciousness methods makes an effort at making consciousness a social entity and not an individual possession anymore. In the novel, the individual consciousnesses interact with each other at a social level rather than remaining closed entities. The progression of the novel takes place at the interactive realm of these consciousnesses. Moreover, it is discernible in the novel that one set of consciousnesses is in direct conflict or contradiction with another set of consciousnesses. It is the character and nature of these consciousnesses that set up the political positions in *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Having established the stream of consciousness method in *Mrs. Dalloway* as key to socialising of monadic consciousnesses and setting up the political discourse in the novel, one may move to the major discourses in the novel in order to identify the underlying metadiscourses in terms of class, gender and society. 'War' and the discourse of consumerism have already been mentioned as perceptible discourses, earlier in this chapter. But they do not form the fundamental issues from which emanates the problems discussed in the novel. Rather, they are problems themselves

which are their existence to the larger reality of class relations in society which the novel is placed, which in turn is reflected in the novel.

At this juncture it would be important to recall some of the presumptions made earlier in this chapter. *Mrs. Dalloway* is a novel about experiences and the basis of these experiences is man's interaction with nature - nature, here includes man himself, the society and the animate and inanimate environment around him. Social categories define this relationship and interaction. Hence, they define experiences too. Class and gender are two of the foremost, social categories at work in the novel. A Communist society envisages a dialectical relationship between man and nature, where man is in close interaction with nature through labour. This relationship is not one of exploitation as in bourgeois society, but that of a complementary nature. Growths of capitalism and subsequent changes in the social order have resulted in the emergence of certain classes, which have been alienated, from nature. This has come into being because in bourgeois society social relations are denied in the form of relations between men, and take the form of a relation between man and a thing, a property relation, which because it is a dominating relation, is believed to make man free. Caudwell says that this is an illusion:

The property relation is only a disguise for relations which now become unconscious and therefore anarchic but are still between man and man and in particular between exploiter and exploited. (*Studies in a Dying Culture*, pp. 29-33).

The society portrayed in *Mrs. Dalloway* is an upper and upper-middle class one. The hallmark of such a society is its paying willing obeisance to the institutions of convention and tradition, which in turn sustain them, and their class interest in opposition to the lower classes. The Dalloways have lived in Westminster for over twenty years. Big Ben appears time and again in the novel in order to symbolise patriarchal notions of time:

There! Out it boomed. First a warning, musical then the hour irrevocable. The leaden circles dissolved in the air. Such fools we are, she thought crossing Victoria street. For heaven only knows why one loves it so, how one sees it so, making it up, building it round one, tumbling it creating every moment afresh; but the veriest frumps, the most dejected of miseries sitting on doorsteps (drink their downfall) do the same; can't be dealt with, she felt positive, by Acts of Parliament for that very reason, they love life (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p.38).

Here she wonders what are the material reasons behind Big Ben coming to hold a central position in their lives. The leaden circles are

concentric and they dissolve in air. This along with 'Acts of Parliament' suggests how conventions (devoid of material reasons) come to hold central positions in their lives. In the same page, she introduces the main discourse in the text:

In people's eyes in the swing tramp and trudge; in the bellow and the uproar; the carriage motor cars, omnibuses, vans, sandwich men shuffling and swinging; brass bands; band organs; in the triumph and the jingle and the strange high singing of some aeroplane overhead was what she loved; life; London, this moment of June. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 8).

Here is the city -- London. Marx has explained that the modern city is one of the main theatres of alienation. Edward Ahearn says:

The concept of division of labour, initially visible in the family and attaining myriad productive and estranged guises in modern society, has its historically most fundamental role in the opposition between country and city, which is said to sum up "the whole economic history of society". (*Marx and Modern Fiction*, p. 5).

Immediately afterwards, Woolf introduces two other discourses - war and consumerism. The way she juxtaposes these two seemingly antagonistic aspects of human history is suggestive of their deep-lying complementarity.

For it was the middle of June. The war was over, except for some one like Mrs. Foxcroft at the Embassy last night eating her heart because that nice boy was killed and now the old man or house must go to a cousin; or lady Bexborough who opened a bazaar, they said, with the telegram in her hand, John, her favourite, killed; but it was over, thank Heaven -- over. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 8).

It may be noted that the juxtaposition of the modern war and market has certain significance in the sense that both are offshoots off capitalism. Western capitalist forces in their bid to get in control of unified markets to get their raw materials and sell their finished products took to imperialist expansion in Asia and Africa. The resultant contradictions within the forces of imperialism led to a series of wars which culminated in the First World War which was known as the war to end all wars. Lives of many were sacrificed in order to protect the interests of the few.

The already alienated individual in the bourgeois society accentuated his sense of estrangement as a result of the war. This is manifest in the character Septimus Warren Smith. The traumatic septimus who later turns neurotic is a product of alienation first by the bourgeois society and then by the war which itself is a product of the former. Such a person finds no

meaning in the conventions of proportion of which Sir William Bradshaw, the actor is a guardian:

Sir William had a friend in Surrey where they taught, what Sir William frankly admitted was a difficult art - sense of proportion. There were, more over, family affection; honour; courage; and a brilliant career. All of these had in Sir William a resolute champion. If they failed, he had to support him police and the good of society, which he remarked very quietly, would take care, down in Surrey, that these unsocial impulses, bred more than anything by the lack of good blood, were held in control and then stole out from her hiding-place and mounted her throne that Goddess whose lust is to override opposition to stamp indelibly in the sanctuaries of others image of herself. Naked, defenceless, the exhausted, the friendless received the impress of Sir William's will. He swooped; he devoured. He shut people up. It was this combination of decision and humanity that endeared Sir William so greatly to the relations of his victims. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 110).

'Health we must have; and health is proportion' (107), according to Bradshaw. He is a person who is most willing not only to fall in line with the bourgeois system but also be its champion. "He had worked very hard; he

had won his position by sheer ability (being son of a shop-keeper); loved his profession (103). Septimus, on the contrary, has lost interest in gaining glory in the contemporary set up. The fact that money and consumerism has come to replace man-to-man relationship widens as a deranged war-hero, the one who managed the lives of his companions. He is financially well off, but that does not mean much to him. Disoriented that he is in terms of the Bradshawian proportion, it is through him that Woolf presents the horrors of war:

They never saw him drawing pictures of them naked at their antics in his notebook. In the street, vans roared past him; brutality blared out on placards; men were trapped in mines; women burnt alive; and once a maimed file of lunatics being exercised or displayed for the diversion of the audience...(*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 98).

To Rezia, nobody could be like Septimus the one who reads Shakespeare; so gentle; so serious; so clever. Yet he cannot bring children into this world.

One cannot bring children into a world like this. One cannot perpetrate suffering or increase the breed of these lustful animals who have no lasting emotions, but only whims and vanities eddying them now this way, now that. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 97).

In his hatred for the material world, he takes recourse to the illusory. This results in his death. He views death as a gateway to freedom. This tendency seems to be shared by Clarissa Dalloway also. This shall be examined later.

Alienation can be traced in each of the characters (represented by their consciousness) in Mrs. Dalloway at different levels of intensity. If Septimus Smith goes overboard and becomes a neurotic as a result of his felt experiences during war a Miss Kilman's is discernible a visible estrangement with society. At the outset Miss Kilman's history does not quite belong to England. Her ancestors have been Germans even when it became a patriotic necessity to do so during war. As Miss Kilman is introduced in the novel, there is a comparison with Elizabeth's dog:

Elizabeth really cared for her dog most of all. The whole house this morning smelt of tar. Still, better poor Grizzle than Miss Kilman, better distemper and tar and all the rest of it than sitting mewed in a stuffy bedroom with a prayer book...It might be falling in love. But why with Miss Kilman? Who had been badly treated of course... and how she dressed, how she treated people who came to lunch she did not care a bit, it being her experience that the religious ecstasy made people callous (so did causes); dulled their feelings, for Miss Kilman

would do anything for the Russians, starve herself for the Austrians but in private inflicted positive torture, so insensitive was she, dressed in a green mackintosh coat. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, pp. 15-16).

She has come to despise the lustful society. In her anguish she withdraws herself from the material and finds solace in being vigorously religious. Her appearance and attire made statements about her material poverty, which she thinks is indirectly proportional to spiritual richness. Her contempt for the society made Mrs.Dalloway fret:

Year in Year out she wore that coat; she perspired; she was never in the room five minutes without making you feel her superiority, your inferiority; how poor she was, how rich you were; how she lived in a slum without a cushion or a bed or a rug or whatever it might be, all her soul rusted with that grievance sticking in it, her dismissal from school during the war, poor, embittered, unfortunate creature! For it was not her one hated, the idea of her.(*Mrs.Dalloway*, p. 16).

Mrs.Dalloway hates her because she reminds her of the deep insensitivity of her class. This pierces through the fierce cloak of insensitivity she herself tries to wear:

Miss Kilman... one of those spectres who stand astride us and suck up half one life-blood, dominates and tyrants; for no doubt with another throw of dice, had the black been upper most and not the white she would have loved Miss Kilman! But not in this world. No. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 16).

The dominant facet of Miss Kilman is the vehement grudge with which she views the high society of London rather than her own spirituality. Spirituality is only a clutch like death if for Septimus Smith to hold herself against the sense of alienation.

Even as Septimus and Miss Kilman display higher levels of alienation that is discernibly the product of the bourgeois social system, Peter Walsh is portrayed as an incurable romantic. On his failure in love with Clarissa, he banishes himself to the margin of the empire-India, from its centre that is London. His life is a saga of romantic love affairs and miserable failures. Like many other marginalised eccentrics who do not imbibe the system, the members of the high society in London also view him with a sense of condescence and pity. Where as Richard, Clarissa, Lady Beverton Hugh Whitbred and Sir William Bradshaw have tales to tell of their families, Peter Walsh ploughs his lonely burrow. He views the object of his love as

someone with a static nature and he fails to understand the complexity in the character of Clarissa. The character of Richard is pictured in many ways in opposition with that of Peter Walsh. Richard Dalloway is a pragmatic part of the system and he is not a romantic in relationships. Even as Peter Walsh accuses Clarissa of being a prude in following the diktats of the system. Richard gives her that vital personal space and individual would need even in marriage.

She had been right...not to marry him. For in Marriage a little licence, a little independence there must be between people living together day in day out in the same house; which Richard gave her and she him...But with Peter everything had to be shared; everything gone into. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, pp. 11-12).

The class contradictions in society are suggested throughout the novel by juxtaposing opposing entities throughout the novel. Sally Seton, for instance even though is present only for a short while in the novel is an interesting parallel to Clarissa. After a youth full of exuberance and consistent flouting of convention, she settles down to marry and be the mother of five sons. Peter Walsh is reminded of Sally's smoking cigarettes in

her youth, her running down the corridor naked and her vehement arguments for women's rights when he thinks that:

It was Sally Seton the last person in the world one would have expected to marry a rich man and live in a large house near Manchester, the wild, the daring, the romantic Sally. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 79).

But it may be argued that even in her marriage, she flouted the customs - she married the son of a miner, far below her class, even though at the time of their marriage he had acquired enormous wealth.

If Sally sheds away all her romantic vagaries to settle down into a conventional married life, Hugh, with whom she had a fight, is presented as the upholder of conventions. Hugh's portrayal borders on the ludicrous.

And of course Hugh had the most extraordinary, the most natural, the most sublime respect for the British aristocracy of any human being he had come across. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 80).

Sally tells him that he represented all that was most detestable in British middle-class life and 'He's read nothing, thought nothing, felt nothing

and 'He was a perfect specimen of the public-school type. No country but England could have produced him.' (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 80).

Another interesting parallel in a whole chain of contradicting binaries is the city and the country. Edward Ahearn says that

Twentieth century novels...are utterly urban, confirming to Marx's argument that by the mid-nineteenth century nature unmodified by men had virtually disappeared and that the countryside was already both marginalized and regulated by the city-based economy. "The town already is in actual fact the concentration of the population, of the instruments of production, of capital, of pleasures, of needs, while the country demonstrates just the opposite fact, isolation and separation." (*Marx and Modern Fiction*, p. 6).

But even as the city provides illusion of fullness richness and grandeur the life here is replete with recurring spasms of emptiness, waywardness and disorientation. All these are explainable through alienation and commodification of relationships. Here, the architecture, the monumental buildings, Big Ben, aristocratic manners etc. become symbols of the official as against the personal represented in the intimate longings of Peter Walsh, Clarissa, the neurotic Septimus Smith, and the young Sally

Seton. Clifford Geertz formulation of 'symbolics of power' may help define this state oriented symbolic network:

At the political centre of any complexly organised society...there is both a governing elite and a set of symbolic forms expressing the fact that it is in truth governing. No matter how democratically the members of the elite are chosen (usually not very) or how deeply divided among themselves they may be... they justify their existence and order their actions in terms of a collection of stories, ceremonies, insignia, formalities and appurtenances that they have either inherited, or in more revolutionary situations, invented. It is these-crowns and coronations limousines and conferences - that mark the centre as centre and give what goes on there its aura of being not merely important but in some odd fashion connected with the way the world is built. (*Local Knowledge*, p. 124).

Class experience is largely determined by the productive relations into which men and women are born or enter into involuntarily and class-consciousness is the way in which these experiences are handled in cultural terms embodied in traditions, ideas and institutional forms. If the class experience appears as determined, class-consciousness does not. Class

consciousness is a constructed entity born out of an individual's interaction with his/her society. We can see logic in the responses of similar experiences, but we can not predicate any law. It is this logic in the responses of similar occupational groups that Woolf attempts at discovering even as her main character, Clarissa Dalloway, around whom the story revolves does not fit in entirely within this paradigm of ruling-class experiences. E. P. Thompson argues that class consciousness is not one entity that it does not have a real existence which can be defined almost mathematically.

There is a cultural superstructure through which this recognition dawns in efficient ways. (*The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 12).

Woolf prefers to analyse the ruling class politics of the England of the first quarter of this century through the character of Clarissa. The contradictions of the ruling class born out of its inherent alienation are best expressed in Clarissa who always remains at the margins in terms of class consciousness in spite of her apparently being at the centre of it. Thus, even as the party thrown by Clarissa is the symbol of ruling class experience, the protagonist is portrayed as going through the whole experience in a

mechanical way. Examples and instances to prove the above point abound in the novel:

The Prime Minister was coming, Agnes said so she had heard them say in the dining room, she said, coming with a tray of glasses. Did it matter, did it matter in the least, one Prime Minister more or less? It made no difference at this hour of the night to Mrs. Walker among the plates, sauce pans, cullenders, frying pans, chicken in aspic, ice-cream freezers, pared crusts of bread, lemons, soup tureens, and pudding basins which, however hard they washed up in the scullery, seemed to be all on top of her...all she felt was one Prime Minister more or less made not a scrap of difference to Mrs. Walker. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 77).

Clarissa herself is not enjoying it

It was too much like being-just anybody, standing there; anybody could do it...every time she gave a party she had this feeling of being something not herself, and that everyone was unreal in one way, much more real in another it was, she thought, partly their clothes, partly being taken out of their ordinary ways, partly the background; it was possible to say things you couldn't say any how else, things that

needed an effort; possible to go much deeper. But not for her; not yet anyhow. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 182).

Further through Ellie Henderson, a poor cousin of Clarissa, there is a deconstruction of the Prime Minister:

One could not laugh at him. He looked so ordinary you might have stood him behind a counter and bought units - poor chap, all rigged up in gold lace...they just went on talking, yet it was perfectly plain that they all knew, felt to the marrow of their bones, this majesty passing; this symbol of what they all stood for, English Society. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, p. 184).

As all these happen during the party, it is evident that Mrs. Dalloway herself is alienated from the party. The above - mentioned opinions are in a way reflections of Clarissa's attitude towards the party she herself throws. Even during the party, her thoughts are more about Sally, Peter and an unconscious identification with Septimus. Clarissa and Septimus share an obsession with death. Some of Clarissa's thoughts during the party and her concern about how Septimus committed his act bear testimony to this:

This would grow old. A thing there was that mattered; a thing, wreathed about with chatter, defaced, obscured in her own life, let

drop every day in corruption, his, chatter. This he had preserved. Death was defiance. Death was an attempt to communicate, people feeling the impossibility of teaching the centre, which mystically, evaded them; closeness drew apart; rapture faded; one was alone there was an embrace in death. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, pp. 196-197).

All the metaphorical suggestions and images, which build up the likeness between Septimus and Clarissa, take a concrete shape as Clarissa takes some time off to contemplate suicide during the course of the party:

But what an extraordinary night! She felt somehow very like him - the young man who had killed himself she felt glad that he had done it; thrown it away while they went on living. The clock was striking. The leader circles dissolved in the air. But she must go back...she must find Sally and Peter. (*Mrs. Dalloway*, pp. 198-199).

It is interesting that as she walks back to life from the verge of suicide, her urge is to meet Sally and Peter, who share her sense of alienation. Both Sally and Peter are similar in a way because they both have banished themselves to the margins of the bourgeois society -- Peter to India and Sally to the countryside -- of which Clarissa is at the centre. Clarissa's attempts at suicide and strong identification with Septimus reveals that

Mrs. Dalloway is the story of the centre in a bourgeois society breaking up under intense alienation. But it may be added that there is a contradiction in portraying Clarissa at the centre. She is a woman, one who is sensitive to her oppression by the weight and norms of the system.

Steeped and surrounded by the bourgeois norms, she is unable to find a progressive way out of it. This suffocation leads her to thoughts of death more or less in the same way D. H. Lawrence hints at a journey back to the womb.

Finally, all these arguments lead to the conclusion that unconsciousness is not an individual factor, rather social one and art, a product of societal relations. The attempts at 'discoursifying' the modernist novel as an aspect of the individual psyche do not hold. It may be seen that stream of consciousness does not limit art to the individual psyche, but that it can be used to trace history in art. Using this method in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Woolf tells the tale of the bourgeois society's efforts at resolving its inherent contradictions symbolically within the system and casting away the one's who can't fit into its scheme.

CONCLUSION

At the outset, there was a mention of the evolution of the concept of civil society in the western society from the classical political economists, Hegel through Marx to Gramsci. Further, the socio-economic-political history that facilitated the development of civil society was mentioned. However, the premises on civil society on which this analysis of the three novels are based are as follows: 1. It is the development of capitalism, which necessitated the concept of civil society, which means civil society is a product of the capitalist mode of production and the social relations that follow it. 2. Even as civil society works in between the individual and the state, it is the theatre of history - or the arena of ideological conflict. In this conflict, there are efforts from the non-establishment ideologies against the dominant ideology of the state. However, in this struggle state comes out domineering because of the very fact that the system goes on. Thus, it is discernible that the civil society is not quite independent of the state.

In order to analyse the ideology of the state and to lay bare the causality of the state and to question its yet unquestioned logic, in a materialist way, historical materialism is the most comprehensive method. The effort in the above three chapters were to look at three canonized novels of literary modernism - Joseph Conrad's *Lord Jim*. D. H. Lawrence's *Sons*

and Lovers and Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* from the perspective of historical materialism.

It may be noted that the politics of canonization gives legitimacy, not only to the canonized, but the authority that canonizes also. This, when these three novels are claimed to be representative of the movement called literary modernism there is an effort from the part of the establishment to strengthen itself using the concepts of tradition and authority which are seldom questioned. Thus, a reading in historical materialism essentially has an iconoclastic nature.

Historically, *Lord Jim* is an important novel because it appeared on the literary scene at the break of the century. Moreover, in Joseph Conrad, those vital elements of Victorianism such as strict adherence to morality, religion and a sense of idealist-romanticism are clearly visible. It is Conrad who brought these Victorian principles to early modernism. Following this logic, it may be found that, in spite of Conrad apparently differing with systemic intervention in individual lives, he is complicituous with the logic of the system. In the analysis based on this novel, the effort was to show how those qualities in Jim such as a romantic sense of honour and redemption are used to legitimise the historic oppression of a whole race of people. Biblical allusions and constant recourse to an individual sense of

morality are used to legitimise this oppression, which in turn legitimises these structures, used to this end.

In D. H. Lawrence, there is an apparent attempt at realising these structures of oppression, which also happens at the center of the imperial Empire. This attempt at realising the way oppression works are seen in Paul's attitude towards Miriam who is painted in a spiritual light. Spiritualism works to take one's glance away from the malady that has infected industrial capitalism Man's position and the sense of alienation that he undergoes are the main issues addressed in D. H. Lawrence. However, it is evident that the suggestions he makes as a way out are retrogressive and not progressive in nature. He suggests that man take recourse to his primal states and life in the pristine glory of his instincts. This is a solution which can not work in the bourgeois-society as an individual cannot run away from the society. The potentialities of the individual are realised materially through the society. Thus, Lawrence's suggestions couched in a wonderful and moving plot is problematic since it is retrogressive in nature.

The poetic passages in *Mrs. Dalloway* presents Virginia Woolf's understanding of the deep sense of alienation that a woman suffers in a ruling class set up of capitalism. Through out the novel, nature and society are portrayed as alien to Clarissa Dalloway who is forced by circumstances

to merely remain as Mrs. Dalloway, the wife of Richard Dalloway MP. The 'professional role' that she plays is that of a 'wife' and a 'hostess'. Her way out of this alienation is presented symbolically in her identifying herself with Septimus Smith, a war-hero turned neurotic.

On an overall analysis, it may be found that all these three novels problematise the social situations that emanate out of industrial-capitalism and bourgeois social order. The attempt at a historical materialist reading as undertaken in the chapters II, II and IV is a result of the understanding that the problems presented in these novels are deeply rooted in the material conditions of the society.

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