

I. Neo Marxist Posture in Ballard's *High Rise*

The research is a critical reading of J.G. Ballard's *High Rise* from the perspective of neo-Marxism. Capitalism is mode of production which is always witnessed to have been endangered with the contradiction arises from the system itself. In the course of development of this mode of production, this system faces crises due to the skirmishes between the power holders of the system itself. J.G. Ballard in *High Rise* depicts such contradiction between different layers of the power holders of capitalist mode of production because of which the system of High Rise building goes in crisis. This very crisis exemplified in this novel shows the inevitability of division of the capitalism as it always becomes difficult to manage hegemony and spread ideology over the subjects who are said to be manipulated by the system. Though capitalism has been proved beneficial for the upliftment of the life and society, its social, political and cultural harms are always challenging the humanity and its everlasting progress. The research claims that capitalism makes the individuals live in open air prison of capitalism and the evils of capitalism contribute the inhuman barbaric capitalistic society as it is too much demanding. Moral and social etiquette, restraints raided for privilege that result into anarchist surroundings with extreme violence. Residents of three stairs of same building treat each other as their antagonist even though they are said to be the people of same system and ideology. The research uncovers the dialectics of capitalism in J.G. Ballard's *High Rise*. The dialectical aspect of capitalism has been analyzed through the analysis of the novel from the viewpoint of neo-Marxism.

The building is one of two thousand occupants of an ultra-modern apartment building for the wealthy which contains entertainment facilities, grocery stores, an endless supply of alcohol, swimming pools, and schools. A few minor

inconveniences leads to the escalation of tension between the occupants. Although all the occupants are wealthy, those that live higher up band together against the lower floors and a 'class struggle' breaks out. The ultra-wealthy dart down the stairs and allow their dogs to pee in the hallways and swimming pools of those lower in the building. The less wealthy dart upstairs on daring raids stealing items. The highest floors take on a perceived "Eden-like" quality and our main characters aspire to venture to the higher floors.

The building, High Rise, seems to give its well-established tenants all the conveniences and commodities that modern life has to offer: swimming pools, its own school, a supermarket, and high-speed elevators. But at the same time, the building seems to be designed to isolate the occupants from the larger world outside, allowing for the possibility to create their own closed environment.

Life in the High Rise building begins to degenerate quickly, as minor power failures and petty annoyances over neighbors escalate into an orgy of violence. The High Rise occupants divide themselves into the classic three groups of Western society: the lower, middle, and upper class, but here the terms are literal, as the lower class are those living on the lowest floors of the building with their "proletariat" of film technicians, air hostesses, tax collector and so forth, the middle class in the centre who are basically docile members of the professions the lawyer, doctor, accountants and tax specialists who worked, not for themselves, but for institutes and large corporations, and the upper class at the most luxurious apartments on the upper floors like television actress, architect, careerist academics, jeweler and tycoons.

Soon, skirmishes are being fought throughout the building, as floors try to claim elevators and hold them for their own, groups gather to defend their rights to the swimming pools, and party-goers attack "enemy floors" to raid and vandalize

them. It does not take long for the occupants of the entire building to abandon all social restraints, and give in to their most primal urges. The tenants completely shut out the outside world, content with their new life in the High Rise; people abandon their work and family and stay indoors permanently, losing their sense of time. Even as hunger starts to set in, many of the characters in the novel still seem to be enjoying themselves, as the building allows them a chance to break free from the social restrictions of modern society and toy with their own dark desires. “The night passed noisily, with constant movement through the corridors, the sounds of shouts and breaking glass in the elevator shafts, the blare of music falling across the dark air” (37). The people are living disturbing life. And as bodies begin to pile up and the commodities of the High Rise building break down, no one considers alerting the authorities.

The tenants of the building abandon all notions of moral and social etiquette, as their environment gives way to a hunter/gatherer culture, where humans gather together in small groups, claim food sources from where they can (including the many dogs in the building, and eventually even the other tenants), and every stranger is met with extreme violence. Ballard here offers a vision of how modern life in an urban landscape and the advances of technology could twist the human psyche in hitherto unexplored ways. A night patrol creeps along a dark hallway past a barricade of desks; a flash of white birds leap into the air like a fluttering flag of surrender; a dog lies drowned in the middle of a community pool.

Ballard has often told interviewers that his characters all seek a kind of highly personal psychic salvation, and that they will, if necessary, create their own self-defining mythologies and pursue them to their furthest logical ends, no matter how illogical it seems, or what the cost.

Evaluating the impacts of his writings on the readers, Ballard evaluates oneself that:

I would say that a lot of my fiction is, if you like, open-ended. I leave for the reader to decide what the moral and psychological conclusions to be drawn from my fiction should be. For example, in the case of *Crash*, *High-Rise* and *The Atrocity Exhibition*, I offer an extreme hypothesis for the reader to decide whether the hypothesis I advance is proven. (23)

In this novel, Ballard has created an isolated environment for the close study of how an ultra-modern apartment block can transform its denizens into a new, aggressive society based on the premise that living in a motherly machine will allow neurons to re-wire into whatever psycho state they've been unconsciously repressing in the real world - that place Ballard believes is the ultimate fiction.

The building has forty storey of shock corridor ahead. The premise is fascinating: just after the last property in a thousand-suite tower is occupied, the first little signs of social change begin to become public. A party is in progress. A wine bottle crashes and smashes all over a resident's balcony. Soon crazed, drunken, momentality parties are breaking out all over the building, and now we're deeply into the action, led in shocked wonder as Ballard brilliantly describes the metamorphosis of group psychopathological desire into a new kind of childlike urban social model, a twisted adult mirror of *High Rise*, with no resolution to any kind of recognizable reality principle.

Ballard's *High Rise* examines the evils of capitalism to replicate how capitalism not only loots the freedom of commoners but how it is also reductive for the capitalists themselves which tempts the critics of neo-Marxism. Neo-Marxism is

a socio-cultural theory which attempts to redraw the boundary laid down by classical Marxism standing in the vantage point of post-Structuralism. As Karl Marx and his colleague Friedrich Engels explain the vertical division of society on the basis of economic status what they call bourgeoisie and proletariats. What they claim that proletariats are ruled by the ideology spread by capitalism and they find only negative roles of ideology. This thesis laid down by Mark and Engels is redrawn by neo-Marxist Antonio Gramsci, Louis Althusser, Erik Olin Wright and Terry Eagleton as they assert that ideology along with maintenance of domination and manipulation yields to develop subjectivity of the subjects existing in the contemporary socio-political society. What we can contrast between classical idea of Marxism and neo-Marxism is that classical Marxism attempts to address the fundamental of society via class struggle between haves and have nots but neo-Marxism credits different fundamentals like religion, sex, race, region and so forth for the existing contradiction of the society. The objective of the study is to find out the reason behind the injustice, anarchism, antagonism within the class and with the class that reside outside the High Rise building. Declination and abnormality of human values and morality and creation of hierarchy and its effect of human society in capitalism is carried out through the critical analysis of the three major characters Dr. Robert Laing, Richard Wilder and Anthony Royal using neo-Marxism.

This novel depicts the situation of contradiction and dialectics as capitalism is the system of accumulation of means and resources at the hand of limited elitists of the system, residents of different layers of high rise building want to have access upon available means and resources solely. Such greed to have accumulation upon facilities result into the antagonism and hatred within the bourgeoisie of High Rise building and with the commoners who reside outside the High Rise building.

This novel received several critical appraisals since the time of the publication. Different critics have analyzed the novel from multiple perspectives which proves the multivocal nature of the novel. In this novel, Ballard once again attacks our uneasy break with the artificial. Four futuristic High Rise apartment buildings have been built. Catering to the wealthy, these buildings are in fact enclosed worlds, featuring day-care, schooling, swimming pools and grocery stores. As the new tenants adjust to life aboard one of the high-rise complexes, violence escalates and members from adjacent floors break off into tribal factions that roam the corridors at night. The failure of the elevators was blamed on people from the upper and lower floors, not on the architects or the inefficient services designed into the block. Regarding the situation of the contemporary time critic Mac Tonnies, in *High Rise*, (1975), avers:

It gets more frightening and visceral (if a bit predictable); “*High-Rise*” is the 21st century's “Lord of the Flies”, a sometimes profound statement on what we are doing with technology--and what technology is doing to us. Additionally, it is a scathing commentary on leisure culture (a topic Ballard returns to in “Cocaine Nights”). If you haven't yet read Ballard, *High-Rise* is a great starting point. (12)

Thus, it is proved that the novel has significantly raised the contemporary issues and evils brought up by hierarchical elitist society. Foregrounding the difficult situation facing by people Ballard dexterously depicts enclosed world of suffocated human beings. Ballard's *High Rise* is at once deeper and more topical; by infusing his story with a compelling and people's unsuccessful attempt to scale those compelling situation.

Ballard reveals plightful situation of people through an aesthetic versatility. An electrical failure temporarily blacked out the floors. During the electricity blackout the wife of a fashion photographer on the 38th floor had been assaulted on the hairdressing salon by an unknown woman. Rick McGrath has given psychic interpretation of the novel as:

A night patrol creeps along a dark hallway past a barricade of desks; a flash of white birds leap into the air like a fluttering flag of surrender; a dog lies drowned in the middle of a community pool . . . welcome to High-Rise, J.G. Ballard's deeply subversive study of a society in transformation.(7)

Ballard has often told interviewers that his characters all seek a kind of highly personal psychic salvation, and that they will, if necessary, create their own self-defining mythologies and pursue them to their furthest logical ends, no matter how illogical it seems, or what the cost.

The building is a huge machine designed not to serve the collective body of tenants, but the individual resident in isolation. The tenants had been rejected more by the High Rise than by the Anthony Royal. While critiquing the novel, David Dempsey opines:

J.G. Ballard's 1975 novel *High Rise* contains all of the qualities we have come to expect from this author: alarming psychological insights, a study of the profoundly disturbing connections between technology and the human condition, and an intriguing plot masterfully executed. Ballard, who wrote the tremendously troubling *Crash*, really knows how to dig deep into our troubling times in order to expose our tentative grasp of modernity. (23)

Despite having all the luxury that people utilize in capitalist society, yet they are not found to have been satisfied with their life style. Individuals living in capitalist society are noticed to have been schizophrenic due to the mechanical life style. This very plight of human beings is the result brought by capitalism and its ideology. As the week continues more bottles are dropped and other assorted trash begins to fall from the sky. A rich jeweler plummets from his upper level apartment onto the roof of a car. Resentment is building between levels. The perceived richest people, where Anthony Royal resides, are on the upper levels. The middle level people, where Dr. Robert Laing resides, are resentful of the upper levels, but also becoming more disdainful of the lower levels. Richard Wilder, a man working on a documentary about human behavior, lives in the lower levels. The trash is accumulating on the ground floor, the trash chutes become jammed and more and more trash is being hoisted over the side of the building creating an intolerable situation for the lower tenants.

Alias is of the view that women are the most disturbing sector of the novel. They are portrayed very negatively. In some cases they only become sex partners and in other at crucial time they are deliberately ignored. He adds:

The most disturbing sector of the high-rise is the women. In the beginning they are either living as ignored wives or casual sex partners descending into a series of polygamy, incest and submissive accepting victims of violation. However, conversely by the time we reach the end of this vile journey a group of the women have occupied the top floors and have started refurbishing it for their own uses and are for want of a better term a family of cannibalistic women girl power indeed. (16)

Electricity winks out leaving entire floors without power for days at a time. Five floors were without electricity. At night the dark bands stretched across the face of the high-rise like dead strata in a fading brain. The air condition goes out and when it does come back on it only trickles out for a few minutes before failing again. The lower levels bear the worst of the malfunctions with the upper levels remaining relatively unaffected.

Resentments build and as tenants become more and more irritated the civilized structure of the building start to erode. Highlighting the issue and strength of machine over human mind Robert quotes:

In *High Rise*, Ballard has created an isolated environment for the close study of how an ultra-modern apartment block can transform its denizens into a new, aggressive society based on the premise that living in a motherly machine will allow your neurons to re-wire into whatever psycho state you've been unconsciously repressing in the real world. (21)

However the strong trait of the novel is the way the author plays with the sense of characters' will to self defining mythologies, their illogical attempt to prove their actions and behavior. Ballard here offers a vision of how modern life in an urban landscape and the advances of technology could warp the human psyche in hitherto unexplored ways. The high rises seemed almost to challenge the sun itself. These huge buildings had won their attempt to colonize the sky. Though outwardly it claims to provide a motherly protection but the people faced lots of trouble. What the people thought before living in high rise building is totally different after their settlement. The High Rise occupants divide themselves into the classic three groups of Western society: the lower, middle, and upper class, but here the terms are literal, as the lower

class are those living on the lowest floors of the building, the middle class in the centre, and the upper class at the most luxurious apartments on the upper floors.

Neo-Marxism is a loose term for various twentieth-century approaches that amend or extend Marxism and Marxist theory, usually by incorporating elements from other intellectual traditions, such as: critical theory, psychoanalysis or existentialism.

Erik Olin Wright's theory of contradictory class locations, which incorporates Weberian sociology, critical criminology, and anarchism, is an example of the syncretism in neo-Marxist theory. As with many uses of the prefix neo-, many theorists and groups designated as neo-Marxist have attempted to supplement the perceived deficiencies of orthodox Marxism or dialectical materialism. Many prominent neo-Marxists, such as Herbert Marcuse and other members of the Frankfurt School, were sociologists and psychologists.

Neo-Marxism comes under the broader framework of the New Left. In a sociological sense, neo-Marxism adds Max Weber's broader understanding of social inequality, such as status and power, to Marxist philosophy. Strains of neo-Marxism include: critical theory, analytical Marxism and French structural Marxism.

The fundamental difference between classical Marxism and neo-Marxism is in classical Marxism's focus on economic determinism differentiating from neo-Marxism's broader consideration of social and intellectual influences that perpetuate oppression of the working-class. Essentially this twentieth-century approach attempts to extend Marxist theory by incorporating critical theory, psychoanalysis or Existentialism. This new emergence on Marxism was the foundation of neo-Marxist theory. Critics began to argue that Marx saw the economic sector as preminent, ignoring the dialectical processes such as politics, religion, and mass-media. Neo-

Marxists argued that the disregarded processes could not be reduced to something determined purely by the economy.

One neo-Marxist critic, Louis Althusser, set out to solve how a society was able to reproduce its basic social relations, thereby ensuring its continued existence, considering Ideological State Apparatuses, Interpellations, Imaginary relations, and Over determination. Althusser believed that “one tactically learns the practice of obedience to authority, for dominant social order would not survive if it relied only on force” (*Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, 1477). The proposal of these new adaptations to Marxist theory suggest that while Marx’s concept was restricted to the economic system, these concepts relative to all systems of society provided the social structures for one’s objective character.

Althusser’s cultural theory explains the structure and function of ideology. His thesis works from Antonio Gramsci’s concept of hegemony. Originally, hegemony “referred to the way that one nation could exert ideological and social, rather than military or coercive, power over another” (Fiske, 1998; 310). Today, in cultural theory, the term describes the dynamic by “which a dominant class wins the willing consent of the subordinate class to the system that ensures their subordination” (310). Consent is not static, but must be won and rewon, for courageous individuals may rebel and advocate alternative or oppositional ideologies, rather than hegemonic ones. Althusser’s theory of ideology accounts for the manner in which ruling, or hegemonic, discourses and institutions perpetuate the necessary consent for their dominance.

Ideology is the powerful force behind the dominance of hegemonic institutions. Althusser defines ideology as an imaginary relation to the real relations of existence. He posits that the ideas of representations that make up ideology do not

have an ideal or spiritual existence, but a material existence. This material existence is twofold. The representations that constitute ideology are based in the material world. Such representations exist in those individuals who advocate particular ideologies, as well as their collective ideas and belief systems. Secondly, ideologies exist in apparatuses and their practices, which also have material existences.

Louis Althusser builds on the work of Jacques Lacan to understand the way ideology functions in society. He thus moves away from the earlier Marxist understanding of ideology. In the earlier model, ideology was believed to create what was termed “false consciousness”, a false understanding of the way the world functioned (for example, the suppression of the fact that the products we purchase on the open market are, in fact, the result of the exploitation of laborers). Althusser explains that for Marx “Ideology is . . . thought as an imaginary construction whose status is exactly like the theoretical status of the dream among writers before Freud. For those writers, the dream was the purely imaginary, i.e. null, result of the day’s residues” (*Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, 108).

Althusser, by contrast, approximates ideology to Lacan’s understanding of “reality”, the world we construct around us after our entrance into the symbolic order. For Althusser, as for Lacan, it is impossible to access the real conditions of existence due to our reliance on language; however, through a rigorous scientific approach to society, economics, and history, we can come close to perceiving if not those real conditions at least the ways that we are inscribed in ideology by complex processes of recognition.

Clearly, neo-Marxism was a relaxation of the economic determinism and positivism of classical Marxist theories. It incorporated other sociological views developed after the Marx to provide a more holistic view of social class structures and

dynamics with a focus more on society than the economic system alone. Critics such as Louis Althusser, Horkheimer, Adorno and Jameson offer views on the importance of both social and intellectual forces on the emergences of class-consciousness and provide insight into the dialectical process which explains why capitalism remains so pervasive in light of the people's awareness or unawareness of their oppression.

Erik Olin Wright is a leading neo-Marxist theorist. His work addresses the criticism that society consists of more than two classes. He also addresses the criticism that class differences are due to more than ownership of the means of production. Wright argues that there are multiple classes as different skills make employees more or less valuable to capitalists. Neo Marxism also incorporates some components of analytical conflict theory, such as the work of Max Weber.

The tentative chapter division and allocation of the time of dissertation is as follows. The first chapter provides the bird eye view of the research and the neo-Marxist posture in Ballard's *High Rise*. The second chapter is the discussion of the dialectics of capitalism in *High Rise* from the viewpoint of neo-Marxism. With the help of Althusser's marxist analysis, the second chapter delves into the neo-marxist posture of the novel *High Rise*. The different extracts of the novel prove the relativity of incorporation of neo-Marxism in order to drag out the socio-cultural, economic, political conflicts and class struggle as the domination factors of the society. The last chapter concludes the research.

II. Dialectics of Capitalism in *High Rise*: Neo-Marxist perspective

This research depicts the situation of contradiction and dialectics as capitalism is the system of accumulation of means and resources at the hand of limited elitists of the system, residents of different layers of high rise building want to have access upon available means and resources solely.

Despite managing hegemony and the subjects living in capitalism being manipulated by ideology, capitalist mode of production definitely meet its division due to the contradiction arisen from the system itself. In order to manipulate individuals by ideology capitalism spreads different kind of ideas so that it can easily rule individuals existing in capitalistic mode of production. Classism is one of the ideologies in capitalism which maintains power so that it easily works Lois Tyson in her book *Critical Theory Today* under the chapter of “Marxist Criticism” writes in reference to the system how ideology like classism works:

Classism, for example, is an ideology that equates one’s value as a human being with the social class to which one belongs: the higher one’s social class, the better one is assumed to be because quality is “in the blood,” that is, inborn. From a classicist perspective, people at the top of social scale are naturally superior to those who are below them; those at the top are more intelligent, more responsible, more trustworthy, more ethical, and so on. People at the bottom at the social scale, it follows, are naturally shiftless, lazy and irresponsible.

Therefore, it is only right and natural that those from the highest social class should hold all the positions of power and leadership because they are naturally suited to such roles and are the only ones who can be trusted to perform them properly. (59)

Hierarchy according to the economic status maintained in the capitalist society maintains ideology in order to rule the individuals who are inferior in rank what is spread in capitalism is that individuals having low socio-economy do not deserve any things to be dealt with them. They are thought to be irresponsible.

This very tendency of manipulating individuals via ideology and hegemony is witnessed in the novel *High Rise* as occupants of High Rise building are also categorized into three classes as occupants of lower class, middle class and upper class. Ideology of classism is the fundamental configuration of capitalism via which it manages its sustainability but in the course of spanning of time this very system meets contradiction among and between the different classes existing in capitalism:

In effect, the high-rise had already divided itself into the three classical groups, its lower, middle and upper classes. The 10th-floor shopping mall formed a clear boundary between the lower nine floors, with their “proletariat” of film technicians, air hostesses and the like, and the middle section of the high-rise, which extended from the 10th floor to the swimming-pool and restaurant deck on the 35th. The central two-thirds of the apartment building formed its middle class. Above them, on the top five floors of the high-rise, was its upper class, the discreet oligarchy of minor tycoons and entrepreneurs. (124)

The High Rise building is clearly divided into the three different social groups and they also live in their own hierarchal position of the building as lower, middle and upper classes. The tenth floor shopping mall formed a clear boundary between the lower nine floors, with their proletariat of film technicians, airhostesses, and the like, and the middle section of the High Rise, which extended from the tenth floor to the

swimming pool and restaurant deck on the 35th. These central two-thirds of the apartment building formed its middle class, made of self centred but basically docile members of the professions the doctors and lawyers, accountants, and tax specialists who work, not for themselves, but for medical institutes and large corporations. Similarly, on the top five floors of the High Rise was its upper class, the discreet oligarchy of minor tycoons and entrepreneurs, TV actresses and careerist academics, with their high speed elevators and superior services, their carpeted staircases. It was they who set the pace of the building. They decide to use the swimming pools and roof garden, restaurant for the children and other who resides below them.

In this regard ideology manages to manipulate people get them accepted the way and situation they are living in thinking that their existence is determined by their status as they are not aware to the contemporary material condition of their life. A new forty-story luxury apartment building is both location and protagonist of this gripping and unforgettable novel. With amenities that include its own movie theater, swimming pools, supermarket, and elementary school, the building offers a self-contained world of comfortable living for its two thousand tenants. It is only with full occupancy that the residents' repressed antagonisms begin to break through the surface, at first in such half-playful occurrences as the dropping of debris from the top floors onto the balconies below. Then, in rapid retaliatory succession, violence breaks out in the halls and stairways, children are abused, a dog is drowned in a swimming pool, and a rich jeweler is flung to his death from his penthouse. Tenants separate into three rival groups relative to the level of their apartments, and inexorably all are carried back into a kind of stone-age primitivism. We follow about a dozen lives through this terrifying process—in particular, the architect who designed the building and lives on its top floor, a middle-echelon doctor who first realizes what is going on

and gives himself up to its new logic, and a TV producer from the bottom floor who determines to fight his way to the top. By a strange paradox they continue with their lives in the world outside as if nothing is amiss, clinging all the while to the hope of making sense of the technological landscape they have helped to create, even as it crumbles around them.

Ballard tempts fate in this novel by setting the story up as a flashback, which means we actually start at the end (so much for suspense), and then Ballard muddies the waters slightly by extending the second ending to a sister building. *High-Rise* may have one of the best introductory sentences and paragraph in all of Ballard's novels. Ballard sets the story on edge in the first sentence when he calmly intones: "Later, as he sat on his balcony eating the dog, Dr. Robert Laing reflected on the unusual events that had taken place within this huge apartment building during the previous three months"(4). Only Ballard could offer us the image of a doctor eating a dog on a balcony and calmly reflecting on events. Yes, one could casually say, "unusual events"(4), and it is with this curious bit of understatement that Ballard then proceeds to tell the twisted tale of Laing and his neighbors as they embark on a perverse logic of freedom extended very, very far into the surreal. And this opening paragraph closes with Laing, "on this balcony where he now squatted beside a fire of telephone directories, eating the roast hindquarters of the Alsatian before setting off to his lecture at the medical school" (4).

Variouly described as a spaceship, or a "Pandora's Box whose thousand lids were one by one opening inward" (45), this giant housing structure is a marvel of technologies which Ballard credits for freeing its occupants. How can it do this? As a sort of giant robot "mother", the building has been designed to cater to all the physical needs of its occupants. But what of their psychological needs? It is basically

an isolation tank for two thousand people, and as in *Concrete Island*, this removal from exterior social reality unfetters repression. Never one to worry much about scientific proof, Ballard simply informs us, “the building took away the need to repress anti-social behavior” (6). Like a seatbelt perversely gives you the freedom to drive faster.

a cool, unemotional personality impervious to the psychological pressures of high-rise life, with minimal needs for privacy, who thrived like an advanced species of machine in the neutral atmosphere. They felt no particular objection to an impersonal steel and concrete landscape and if anything welcomed these invisible intrusions, using them for their own purposes. These people were the first to master a new kind of late twentieth-century life. They thrived on the rapid turnover of acquaintances, the lack of involvement with others. (46)

Ballard was interested in what made abhorrent subject positions appealing from the inside – what equilibrated them, harmonised them – but we don’t have to take these systems’ self-understandings uncritically. For one thing, often Ballard was exploring a quite recent comodification of ontology. Cost-benefit analysis (with a dash of Yippee-ish, gap year-vintage permissiveness) is how homo capitalist might articulate encroaching violent rebirth to her- or himself but it doesn’t prevail universally over all such violent rebirths. It’s only because we’re so accustomed to varying forms and levels of alienation that we can coolly appraise extreme forms of alienation and reconciliation like articles rummaged from a bargain bin.

The development of neo-Marxism came forth through several political and social problems which traditional Marxist thought was unable to answer. Erik Olin Wright’s theory of contradictory class locations, which incorporates Weberian

sociology, critical criminology, and anarchism, is an example of the syncretism in neo-Marxist theory. As with many uses of the prefix neo-, many theorists and groups designated as neo-Marxist have attempted to supplement the perceived deficiencies of orthodox Marxism or dialectical materialism. Many prominent neo-Marxists, such as Herbert Marcuse and other members of the Frankfurt School, were sociologists and psychologists.

Neo-Marxism comes under the broader framework of the New Left. In a sociological sense, neo-Marxism adds Max Weber's broader understanding of social inequality, such as status and power, to Marxist philosophy. Strains of neo-Marxism include: critical theory, analytical Marxism and French structural Marxism. Besides, even when the multitude is content with their (parking) lot, there are outliers who are not. The disaster area is set in a probably-infinite urban space, the kind of platform shooter Mobius would have designed if he hadn't been into strips. Most of its residents are down with that, but not the protagonist and he grows unhappily obsessed with the exotic concept of free space.

There are plenty of signs in *High Rise* that, for some residents, adaptation to a new way of life is psychically harrowing:

Helen moved silently around the apartment, barely aware of her husband. After the fit of compulsive laughter the previous evening, her face was waxy and expressionless. Now and then a tic flickered in the right apex of her mouth, as if reflecting a tremor deep within her mind. She sat at the dining-table, mechanically straightening the boys' hair. Watching her, and unable to think of what he could do to help her, Wilder almost believed that it was she who was leaving him, rather than the contrary. (160)

When the uneven misery begins to follow contours of gender, class or race, questions of justice creep into the picture. Before the high society disintegrates into a freak show of lonesome copings, it goes through a period of explicit class struggle. The top five floors wear fancy pants and balkanize the middle twenty-five floors, guarding their own privilege by playing off class fractions one against the other. The bottom ten floors are muddled scum, abused, sullen and sickly.

There are hints that the sexual violence against the High Rise's neo-cavewomen is only a minor insult, that the cultural form of rape is wrenched out of recognition but Ballard didn't come out and say that, and he was an author who could unflinchingly come out and say things. This novel strongly implies mass war rape, experienced as such. Ballard avoided first-person testimony (the book has three main characters as Anthony Royal, Dr. Robert Laing and Richard Wilder, all male) because the sexual victim, as a matter of cultural form, invites pity, indignation, craving of custody and thirst for reprisal. These responses are all part of the same system of gendered and sexualised violence which *High Rise* is wrestling with on the dissection table. "Six women lived together in the adjacent apartment, ostensibly so that they could be more easily protected from a surprise attack" (496). There is insecurity for females. Ideologies in order to ensure the domination and manipulation for the acceptance among the individuals pass themselves off as natural ways of seeing the world instead of acknowledging themselves as ideologies. Lois Tyson in *Critical Theory Today* under the chapter of Marxist Criticism incorporates her ideas in regard to the domination managed by ideology writes, "it is natural for men to hold leadership positions because their biological superiority renders them more physically, intellectually, and emotionally capable than women is a sexist ideology that sells itself as a function of nature, rather than as a product of cultural belief (56).

Women are considered weaker sex in comparison to men according to the sexist ideology and patriarchal ideology. So in order to be protected from different types of violence that women have to face is said to be escaped away only by their collective effort or from the male support. So in High Rise building, women anticipating coercion lived together to do away the evils imposed upon women in capitalism. There is a subtext to the *High Rise*'s pervasive all-women groupings. In the world of High Rise, those women who can live without men.

Justice emerges as an important makeshift division between utopia and dystopia. The idea of justice lets that division go beyond determination by individual subjects. But justice is part of bourgeois morality, and implicated in that morality's indifference to injustice. As such, Ballard seldom if ever introduces justice as clear-cut concept. It is always peripheral, always vanishing, the lines to invoke it coinciding with those to banish it.

On the level of characterization the building is, in Ballard's oddly amoral universe, a mindless liberator, an assembly of services, "a model of all that technology had done to make possible the expression of a truly free psychopathology" (50). This is what Ballard means by "extreme metaphor" (52). No longer a simple building, it is in reality a "huge machine designed to serve, not the collective body of tenants, but the individual resident in isolation" (8). The occupants are in isolation from the world outside the high rise building and within the building as the division of class.

By opening up the necessary neural pathways to the reckless exploration of psychopathic desires, the High Rise allows this enclave of competitive, middle and upper class worker bees to succumb to the demands of their inner needs, which, in

this case, is explored in the physical acting-out of all the dark, driven activities of the lives of the High Rise occupants.

It is important to realize, however, that the building itself is the metaphor. High-Rise is a machine coddling a community, yet still catering to each individual's every whim. The old social rules are quickly replaced, and individuals revert to inner cunning and extreme behavior.

The high-rise was a huge machine designed to serve, not the collective body of tenants, but the individual resident in isolation. Its staff of air-conditioning conduits, elevators, garbage-disposal chutes and electrical switching systems provided a never-failing supply of care and attention that a century earlier would have needed an army of tireless servants. (8)

High-Rise represents a wide variety of themes -- social, political, psychological. Is it society, just waiting to regress, given the right circumstances? The state of politics, as the occupants divide themselves along class lines. Is it a Skinner Box on end, as Ballard explores the depths to which obsessions will reach? Some twisted variation of Lunghwa Internment Camp in Shanghai, where Ballard spent three years as a youth and witnessed unthinkable social upheaval while learning how to survive in a suddenly hostile environment. Probably all of the above. In the novel, Dr. Robert Laing is in search of peace, quiet and secrecy after his divorce but the case in the building is different. His efforts to detach himself from his two thousand neighbors and the regime of trivial disputes and irritations seem different at the very beginning of his life in high rise building. It soon becomes apparent what really interests Ballard are the abnormal antics of the high-rise inhabitants. Very quickly in the story the building becomes the landscape generated by the fears and anxieties, aggressions and

hates, schemes and capitulations of the dwellers within. Its condition and usefulness is reflected the various mindscapes of the protagonists.

One idea that many branches of neo-Marxism share is the desire to move away from the idea of open, bloody revolution to one of a more peaceful nature. Moving away from the violence of the Red revolutions of the past while keeping the revolutionary message. Neo-Marxist concepts can also follow an economic theory that attempts to move away from the traditional accusations of class warfare and create new economic theory models, such as Hans-Jürgen Krahl did.

Ballard, who usually likes to spice up his stories with ironic sociopolitical commentary, does little to hide his initial disdain for the repressed, blinkered denizens of these expensive vertical caves. He purposely fills the *High Rise* with a wide range of successful and unsuccessful professional and media types, those with “a cool, unemotional personality impervious to the psychological pressures of high-rise life, with minimal needs for privacy, who thrived like an advanced species of machine” (46). Prime examples of Ballard’s obsession with the death of affect in modern society. Ballard smugly lumps them into what he calls: “The orthodoxy of the intelligent . . . a well-to-do and well-educated proletariat of the future boxed up in these expensive apartments with their elegant furniture and intelligent sensibilities, and no possibility of escape” (8).

As noted by one of the characters, TV Producer Richard Wilder, Living in *High Rise* building required a special type of behavior, one that was acquiescent, restrained, and even perhaps slightly mad. But there’s more. According to the novel’s only psychiatrist, Adrian Talbot, the model here seems to be less the noble savage than our un-innocent post-Freudian selves, outraged by all that over-indulgent toilet-

training, dedicated breast-feeding and parental affection -- obviously a more dangerous mix.

Internally each and every people in the *High Rise* are suffocated and spiritually died but their pretention in order to be coped up with capitalism is devastatingly ghastly and sensational. They never want to show their reality to anyone in any condition. Despite the scarcity of water and heating, the men and women were well dressed and groomed. Helen says "Everything is fine. There is some slide trouble with the air conditioning, but it is being fixed" (140). But the reality is that Helen is living as the life of docile dog with swamp fist of firing capitalism. The residents of the building were like creatures in a darkened zoo lying together in surly quiet, tearing at each other in brief acts of ferocious violence.

Though many characters in the *High Rise* want to show the happy go lucky life style but there are some characters who are eager to show the extreme reality of *High Rise* to the people, as:

The only open space turns out to be someone else's car-park. By the way, doctor, I'm planning to do a television documentary about high-rises, a really hard look at the physical and psychological pressures of living in a huge condominium such as this one. You'll have a lot of material. (13)

So Ballard gives us his benchmark: thousand apartments filled with overly-coddled, intelligent, wealthy, bored, socially-successful tenants. As long as the building satisfies their needs, they're happy to mind their own business. This happy state lasts mere hours. The breaking or damaging of car of Anthony Royal by tenants below shows the anger of lower class towards upper class. Then the *High Rise* building begins to frown. Power outages. Elevator malfunctions. Add to this the vertical

division of the building into a class system, and the stage is ripe for mayhem: “an apparently homogenous collection of high-income professional people had split into three distinct and hostile camps” (10). From floors one to nine live the “proletariat” of film-technicians and air hostesses. The 10th floor is commercial, and from it to the restaurant and swimming pool on the 35th floor is the domain of the middle classes – “self-centered yet basically docile members of the professions . . . puritan and self-disciplined, they had all the cohesion of those eager to settle for second best” (124). The top five floors house the upper class, “a discreet oligarchy of minor tycoons and entrepreneurs, television actresses and career academics” (124). Aside from the irony of including academics, this group sets the pace for the building . . . and kept the middle class in line by offering the “carrot of friendship and approval” (127). Some things never change.

The novel’s plot revolves around the activities of three major characters, all tainted with Dickensian names: Richard Wilder, “television producer . . . a thick-set, aggressive man who had once been a professional rugby-league player . . .” (12), who lives with the other people on the second floor; Dr. Robert Laing, recently-divorced doctor of physiology looking for solitude, who hides in middle class obscurity on the 25th floor; and Anthony Royal, wealthy architect who was part of the complex’s design consortium, who holds court in his opulent penthouse.

And although Laing, the observer, is the novel’s only surviving male character – no doubt Ballard himself, as he has publically stated that *High-Rise* was in part driven by his attempt to explain the cruel ways of God to himself in the years following his wife’s sudden and senseless death -- the other two points of the triangle are thematically and structurally necessary, as Wilder and Royal inhabit the extremities of the vertical world of *High-Rise*. Stuck in their grooves, unable to

evolve as the new society evolves, Wilder and Royal dance inexorably to their long-anticipated, desired ends.

The deadly incidents of *High Rise* are narrated normally and trivially. They are simplified in such a way that killing and murdering are not the matter of heart derailing only because they are natural and unchallenging phenomenon. As incidents, of middle class who live in ten to 35th floors, are presented as;

During the previous hour a few trivial incidents had occurred - the middle aged wife of a 28th floor account executive had been knocked unconscious into the half empty swimming pool, and a radiologist from the 7th floor had beaten up among the driers in the hairdressing salon – but in general everything within the high rise was normal.

(303)

As Ballard has often said, the *modus operandi* for all his characters is to first survive, then to adapt and ultimately to control and dominate their severely-altered landscapes. This desire to self-create to success is expressed in the various survival strategies of Laing, Wilder and Royal, and their ultimate doom is foretold in their more various forms of self-expression -- Wilder is political, violent and cunning, but his ‘real needs might emerge later’ (49).

Anthony Royal is an artsy-intellectual snob facing the results of his own social experiment; Laing is clever, detached, lazy, boring and practical.

The building had just been completed, and by coincidence the first tenants were arriving on the very morning that the last had moved into his own block. A furniture moving van was backing into the entrance to the freight elevator, and the carpets and stereo- speakers, dressing-

tables and bedside lamps would soon be carried up the elevator shaft to form the elements of a private world. (14)

There is a telling moment halfway through *High-Rise* when Richard Wilder, the id-like former pro ragger player, reflects before his final assault up the war-torn building. He hoped to be a midwife to a new society forming, that his actions, had given people a means of escaping into a new life, and a pattern of social organization that would become a paradigm of all future high-rise blocks. These, of course, are the obsessive dreams of the man whose anger and frustration starts the whole seismic social shift when he drowns an afghan hound in the 10th floor swimming pool during a power outage.

Wilder, the TV producer early on reads the signs of impending change and decides to shoot a documentary himself on the trials and tribulations of life cramped into such a singular structure. A resident of the lowly second floor, Wilder is afflicted by a phobia in which he feels the weight of the building crushing down on him. His desire to “shoot” the building with his camera becomes part of a “calculated attempt to come to terms with the building, to meet the physical challenge and to dominate it” (106). Sounds like this character is right on track.

As the first waves of escalating violence ebbs, Wilder is caught up in his delusion of fate, and decides to make his assault to the top of the building. By doing so, he severs all ties with his withdrawn wife and children, and by so doing reveals his deeper, more sinister pathology: “By leaving Helen he would break away from the whole system of juvenile restraints that he had been trying to shake off since his adolescence” (418). Needless to say, the psychic conversion experienced by Wilder as he breaks away from his restraints will escalate as he rises through the building.

Wilder becomes a sort of Green Beret hunter, strategy-smart and using a trained dog as a partner. He successfully clears the last hurdle of resistance on the 37th floor, and escapes into the now-deserted upper levels. Just before the final assault, and armed with a pistol and his ever-present cine camera, Wilder pauses for a rest. When he awakes, he has regressed from purpose-driven adult to play-acting child, and completes the irony of his liberation by darting with his gun through the empty corridors and apartments, playing a shock trooper in door-to-door fighting. By chance he stumbles into Royal's refurbished apartment. "He wandered round the refurbished rooms, almost expecting to find his childhood toys, a cot and a playpen laid out for his arrival" (52). But he's happy. After accidentally meeting with, then playfully shooting Royal on the last steps to the roof, Wilder steps over the prostrate body and into the sunlight at the top of the building. Naked, small children are playing in the sculpture garden, and Wilder strips off to join them. He is soon surrounded by a coven of women all of whom he knows -- and then recognizes his wife, tending the fire below an empty spit. The women move in. "In their bloodied hands they carried knives with narrow blades. Shy but happy now, Wilder tottered across the roof to meet his new mothers" (642).

Anthony Royal is the de facto king of *High-Rise*, an object of desire and fear, although Ballard treats him more like some kind of mad scientist, toddling around his laboratory and waiting for his social Skinner Box to reveal its data. Ballard is cagey about Royal, and only drops the most subtle of hints about his true agenda. He was all too aware of the built-in flaws of the High Rise building, and his imperial manners reveal, "he seemed to be checking that an experiment he had set up had now been concluded" (18). Enigmatic as always, Ballard doesn't let us in on the nature of Royal's experiment, but one might assume it has to do with some fantasy of control

and dominance. Or, like Wilder, something more subversive . . . an act of violence as the precipitant for a new order. A snob, full of prejudice and yet fascinated with the antics of those who live downstairs, Royal is Ballard's most delicate character in the novel, a successful, self-made man who always wanted his own zoo, and who sketched many designs of zoos, one -- ironically -- a high rise whose birds could fly.

During the hour Laing and his wife waited for their son to fall asleep. Her hands never left Laing. But even before they sat down together on her bed Laing knew that, almost as an illustration of the paradoxical logic of the High Rise building, their relationship would end rather than begin with this first sexual act. In a real sense this would separate them from each other rather than bring them together.

By the same paradox, the affection and concern he felt for her as they lay across her small bed seemed callous rather than tender, precisely because these emotions were unconnected with the realities of the world around them. The tokens that they should exchange, which would mark their real care for each other, were made of far more uncertain materials, the erotic and perverse. When she was asleep in the early evening light, Laing let himself out of the apartment and went in search of his new friends. (58)

Outside, in the corridors and elevator lobbies, scores of people were standing about. In no hurry to return to his apartment, Laing moved from one group to another, listening to the talk going on. These informal meetings were soon to have an almost official status, forums at which the residents could air their problems and prejudices. Most of their grievances, Laing noticed, were now directed at the other tenants rather than at the building. The failure of the elevators was blamed on people from the upper and lower floors, not on the architects or the inefficient services designed into the

block. The garbage-disposal chute Laing shared with the Steeles had jammed again. He tried to telephone the building manager, but the exhausted man had been inundated with complaints and requests for action of every kind. Several members of his staff had resigned and the energies of the remainder were now devoted to keeping the elevators running and trying to restore power to the 9th floor.

Royal's birdman proclivities are emphasized by Ballard, who introduces a flock of predatory seagulls as part of Royal's ongoing symbolism. Gulls, of course, are scavengers and are associated with death as well as the liberating aspects of flight. A metaphor for the novel. The gulls are on the roof of the High Rise building because they've been attracted to all the garbage tenants are throwing out of their windows, but Royal mythologizes them, they had flown here from some archaic landscape, responding to the same image of the sacred violence to come.

But for all his posturing and anticipations, Royal suffers an ignoble ending. After being shot by Wilder, he somehow manages to descend to the 10th floor, where he is discovered by Laing. Taken into the swimming pool area, which now doubles as a graveyard/dump, Royal slowly shuffles off to die: "He was moving towards the steps at the shallow end of the swimming pool, as if hoping to find a seat for himself on this terminal slope" (651).

While Royal and Wilder come to us bearing the burden of their class, Laing is Ballard's invisible man - a tenant who wishes anonymity in the crowd. In fact, he only buys his apartment on the advice of his sister, who points out that the High Rise is perfect, as Laing can easily hide in a group of social clones. Laing immediately likes life in the High Rise, and once in its embrace he begins to disassociate from his past: London belonged to a different world, in time as well as space. Safely ensconced within the building, he felt that he had travelled fifty years forward in

time, and, as a result, his life in the high-rise was as self-contained as the building itself. “A group of his neighbors was arguing in the elevator lobby, voices raised. A minor confrontation was developing between them and the 28th-floor residents. Crosland was bellowing aggressively into the empty elevator shaft” (41).

Neo-Marxism, as the name suggests is an extension or a sort of an amendment to the Marxist theory, which has gained prominence in the second half of the 20th century. The term does not refer to a single theory or approach, but rather is a colloquial reference to the combination of various 20th century schools of thought and approaches that amend or extend Marxism and Marxist theory. The neo-Marxist school of thought adds elements of other intellectual traditions to the classical Marxist theory. It is a loose term with no fixed definition as per say and finds application in various fields. Neo-Marxism includes elements of psychoanalysis as in the case of critical theory, Weberian sociology as in Erik Olin Wright’s theory of contradictory class locations, or anarchism as in the example of critical criminology (Marshall and Scott, 2005).

Basically, the theories originally designated as neo- Marxist are “concerned in particular with culture and ideology, and with the role of capitalist states’ welfare institutions in retarding rather than advancing socialism” (Kolakowski, 1978).

Like Royal, but unlike Wilder, Laing rarely leaves the building once the social changes begin, although he does leave once to examine the unfinished lake in the centre of the five-high-rise complex. It is not a pleasant journey, as “The absence of any kind of rigid rectilinear structure summed up for Laing all the hazards of the world beyond the high-rise” (359). In fact, as Laing forces himself down the steep gradient of concrete into the center of the oval lake, he felt as if he was descending into a forbidden valley all of which helped to expose a more real vision of himself.

Of the three protagonists, Laing is the most self-obsessed with the creation of a new, isolated world which he can control and dominate. Near the end of the novel, when the worst waves of violence have passed, and those who still remain in the building were well on their way to completing their transformations, he slips even further away:

Laing had decided to separate himself and his two women from everyone else he knew he was far happier now than ever before . . . he was satisfied by his self-reliance above all, he was pleased with his good sense in giving rein to those impulses that involved him with Eleanor and his sister, perversities created by the limitless possibilities of the high-rise. (580)

Is it surprising to discover that the two women treat him like “two governesses in a rich man’s menage, teasing a wayward and introspective child” (658)? His power is complete. Funky stuff, but just a taste of the more sinister ending Ballard only hints at: “all this, like the morphine he would give them in increasing doses, was only a beginning, trivial rehearsal for the real excitement to come” (664). And the pathologies concur. Already the building is beginning to heal as everything is beginning to return back to normal -- a classic overstatement. The transformation is complete; the stage is set for the next step. And Laing, now truly in control of his two patients, will look forward to a new future with a truly free life, rather than a free lifestyle.

While the action of *High-Rise* is dominated by the men, the women play a very real role as indicators of the ‘post-Freudian’ state of the building’s politics. By the end of the story, after suffering through as ignored wives or casual sex partners, two of the women – Laing’s sister, Alice Frobisher, and a hard-drinking TV critic,

Eleanor Powell, have gravitated to Laing's side and appear to be happy to take on the role of women to the solitary doctor in his rectilinear desert. Polygamy and incest -- are these guys morons. By the end of the story the rest of the women, including Charlotte Melville (mistress of Wilder), Helen Wilder, Anne Royal, and Jane Sheridan, have occupied the top floors and have started refurbishing it for their own uses, which appears to be a group home for a coven of cannibalistic babes intent on dealing with the male competition by eating it. Or were they merely large white birds that Wilder imagined were women?

As the sociology of the inhabitants moves up the uncivilized spinal column to increasingly violent levels, Laing, Wilder and Royal dream and plot, observe and partake in the events as they unfold, while Ballard spices the pot with a veritable encyclopedia of perverse and forbidden activities, including random acts of senseless violence, torture, cannibalism and incest, mostly drug- and hate-fuelled, and described in what by now has become Ballard's patented, meticulous realistic style, with liberal use of irony and black humor to flatten out the jaw-dropping antics of the relentless action.

One of the most widely accepted and popular forms of neo-Marxism are the Frankfurt School. It emerged from the Institute of Social Research at the University of Frankfurt in Germany. This school follows the critical theory, which means a specific kind of social philosophy. The Frankfurt school maintains its position as one of the severest critics of capitalism, but they also steer themselves clear of the classic Marxist school of thought, saying that Marxism was starting to become very close to communism, because Marx's followers had chosen to support only a narrow selection of his broad ideas. The neo-Marxist ideology states that changes and amendments need to be made to the classical Marxist theory in order to make it relevant and useful

to the current times. It incorporates those changes keeping in mind the changes in social conditions from Marx's time to ours.

In fact, it's almost as if Ballard had set out to confound the sensibilities of those ultimate voyeurs, his readers, with a purposefully dry and logical account of what any right-thinking reader would consider to be outrageously anti-social behavior. The tenants of *High-Rise* seem to be caught in a vortex which has no apparent beginning, and which escalates along a relentless geometry of violence until the new order, the new freedom, roughly forms itself from the ashes of the old. The horror of meaningless acts piled high with Ballard's trademark detached omnipotent narrator. *High-Rise* can both shock and exhilarate its reader, and its insistence that the ends justify the means reinforces Ballard's geometry of violence: personal salvation is a lonely, harsh, and demanding mistress, whose lonely logic is impeccable and implacable, no matter where it leads.

High-Rise has the unsettling effect of being attractive and repulsive at the same time. If freedom is a paradox insofar as the rules of society mean we all live free in a self-regulated prison of civilization, then what is the freedom that the tenants of *High-Rise* so actively desire? Is it, as Ballard describes, the freedom to act as a self-centered individual in a violent society based on the power of force and strength? Is it the pleasure-seeking pathology of the Id now supplying reality to the Ego? Is it designed to destroy the media fiction of normal society and reveal our inner feelings as the ultimate reality?

Laing waved reassuringly to the two women, who sat on the mattress with the tray across their knees, eating from the same plate. Laing finished the dark, garlic-flavored meat, and looked up at the face of the

high-rise. All the floors were in darkness, and he felt happy at this situation. (662)

The novel that clearly had no qualms about its world, had the confidence to disarm probably half of its possible readers with the bleak and unnerving image of a human casually eating a dog on a balcony. If this is where Ballard began, I knew there would be hell to pay in what came after. *High Rise*, as the title portends, concerns the lives of people living in a forty floor high-rise apartment building and sharing common areas such as a gym, grocery store, liquor store, pool, etc. The book follows several different protagonists through the landscape of the building during a time in which something is wrong and getting worse by the minute, though no one seems to know precisely what. When the book begins, the sound of cocktail parties and jubilation fills the building's halls; men and women conduct their lives under the throes of daily work and casual sex; people come and go from the apartment into the larger world for work and return at night alongside their neighbors. Ballard is very good at establishing an ambience of life among people with an almost Victorian sense of exposition – each character has their daily manners and conversations, amid which small interruptions begin to bleed in.

Several important advances to neo-Marxism came after World War I from Georg Lukacs, Karl Korsch and Antonio Gramsci. From the Institute for Social Research founded in 1923 at the University of Frankfurt am Main grew one of the most important schools of neo-Marxist interdisciplinary social theory, The Frankfurt School. Its founders were Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno whose critical theories had great influence on Marxist theory especially after their exile to New York after the rise of National Socialism in Germany in 1933.

Louis Althusser builds on the work of Jacques Lacan to understand the way ideology functions in society. He thus moves away from the earlier Marxist understanding of ideology. In the earlier model, ideology was believed to create what was termed

false consciousness, a false understanding of the way the world functioned. Althusser explains that for Marx “Ideology is . . . thought as an imaginary construction whose status is exactly like the theoretical status of the dream among writers before Freud. For those writers, the dream was the purely imaginary, i.e. null, result of the ‘day’s residues.” (*Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, 108)

Althusser, by contrast, approximates ideology to Lacan’s understanding of reality, the world we construct around us after our entrance into the symbolic order. For Althusser, as for Lacan, it is impossible to access the real conditions of existence due to our reliance on language; however, through a rigorous scientific approach to society, economics, and history, we can come close to perceiving if not those real conditions at least the ways that we are inscribed in ideology by complex processes of recognition. Althusser’s understanding of ideology has in turn influenced a number of important Marxist thinkers, including Chantalle Mouffe, Ernesto Laclau, Slavoj Zizek, and Fredric Jameson.

First, an unknown man gets into an altercation at the pool with a group of children. It is a strange and restrained scene that lets the reader know there is something wrong with some of the people here. The next night the electricity goes out on several floors for no apparent reason. In Ballard’s world, that bit of darkness is all humanity needs to be pushed over the edge. Increasingly thereafter fights break out on various floors throughout the apartments. Things are thrown from balconies onto

the world below. Some elevators fail and others are taken over, blocking access for the families on lower floors to the more expensive and exclusive ones above. Tribes begin banding together to protect their territory, food, and valuables. By page 40, violence and rape abound within the building, establishing in its confined territories a kind of survival-of-the-fittest world of living hell.

Most gripping about Ballard's portrayal of his isolated arenas is how even-handedly his characters report the mania that surrounds them. No matter how high the boiling waters rise, the narrators remain logical, within their means, progressing from one psychopathic act to the next, as if this dystopia were a fact of life, as if there were no other choice but to continue. As the terrain gets darker, the stakes of life change, as do the manners of survival and social norms.

It's rare to witness such a balanced report within an environment where almost anything can happen, and Ballard makes it seem natural, matter of fact. A swimming pool of skeletons feels comfortable alongside men screening videos of their brutality in a theatre covered in blood. The prose is bright and steady, like an IV drip through which the reader continues feeding right alongside each character, delving deeper and deeper into a world as it is ripped. Novel's most central power seems to come not from how its world unravels but how clearly and steadily the narration holds the reader as he descends. From the start, the conceptual framework of the book (citizens within a communal living space gradually become unhinged unto total chaos) provides the reader with a feeling of a laboratory experiment, less a narrative where we are supposed to change or care, and more like a documentary through which we are made witness to a condition of the world amidst us all. This isn't a parable or even a nightmare; it's a possible future. The narrators could be our children, their children or ourselves.

Equally unnerving is Ballard's use of media to provide a kind of normalizing effect within the book's world. In a state of total chaos, people wander the trashed floors and hallways recording videos of people being attacked, of women being made slaves by men hungry for power, of pets running rampant in the corridors. One character records himself hiccupping and puking as a woman moans for the sole purpose of playing it back and filling the air with sound. Even though they have descended into complete perversion, the building's residents are desperate to continue documenting themselves. In the era of the selfie and Facebook and Twitter, this dementia feels all too real.

Meanwhile, the world beyond the High Rise building goes on as if the terror inside did not exist. The narrators make little effort to reach out for help, as if they love the new power structure. On the flip side, when cops show up outside the building, they just park and do not enter. The contained hell is symbiotic with the peace that walls it in. Perhaps the most compelling thing is how, in the face of all the awful shit that happens, the narrators continue, searching abandoned rooms for liquor, television, sex. Even on the roof, where countless birds wait for the bodies to become food, there is not a yearning for a return to normalcy or even survival as much as to uncover what lies at the end of this one hall, what that person locked in his or her room alone might be doing, how his or her shriveling body might soon feel. The inaction of humans is as unnerving as any action.

Moreover, the novel tacitly exhibits the concept of hegemony. The characters are put in such a condition that their living pattern has been dominated by the influence of other characters. Antonio Gramsci, evaluating such human behavior considers on hegemony. According to Gramsci:

In Marxist philosophy, the term cultural hegemony describes the domination of a culturally diverse society by the ruling class, who manipulate the culture of that society- the beliefs, explanations, perceptions, values, and mores- so that their ruling-class worldview becomes the worldview that is imposed and accepted as the cultural norm; as the universally valid dominant ideology that justifies the social, political and economic status quo as natural, inevitable, perpetual and beneficial for everyone, rather than as artificial social constructs that benefit only the ruling class. (*The New Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought*, 387)

Ruling class manipulates the dominant ideology i.e. cultural values and norms of society. The ruling class can intellectually dominate the other social classes with an imposed value. They imposed their ideology and develop it as a culture in society which ultimately benefits the ruling class and the others classes have to accept that. While Dr. Robert Laing was preparing breakfast soon after eleven o'clock one Saturday morning, he was startled by an explosion on the balcony outside his living room. His balcony was filled with broken glass, wine bottles and beer cans. He has no option for objection so he cleared all the wastage of balcony. "After breakfast, Laing cleared the glass from the balcony. Two of the decorative tiles had been cracked. Mildly irritated, Laing picked up the bottle neck, still with its wired cork and foil in place, and tossed it over the balcony rail" (11).

In this novel, all the characters from lower two classes have to accept the ideology and domination of upper class. As the Robert Laing accepts the wastage of balcony from upper floor and without any complaint clears the balcony. Laing

thought that it is his work to clear the wastage from upper floor. This shows his silent acceptance and passive resistance.

This novel is more of a cool description of fact than an exercise in moralist or social predictions. These people do not devolve from being professionals, with their cool, unemotional personality, into noble savages. As in all Ballard novels, the action resolves into the fate of one protagonist -- in this case, Laing. Laing survives because his driving psychic force is self-preservation through isolation and passivity. Mentally shattered by his divorce, seeking to withdraw from human contact, Laing's psychic state is what we see in his landscape of experience. Wilder, the extrovert, clashes with the cerebral Royal and they both perish. Our suspension of disbelief is that we accept no one ever tries to leave the place. *High-Rise* explores and reveals Ballard's ideas about the quick mutability of reality, and the kind of mental state most likely to adapt and succeed in times of extreme and rapid change in an isolated environment.

This novel is a highly successful metaphor for an extreme situation. Given an opportunity to reenact Ballard's vision, would a hi-tech building have this effect on today's professionals. Probably not, but *High-Rise* is peculiar, it finally becomes a symbol which exists on its own terms, and adds an interesting extension to the themes of social withdrawal which form Ballard's trilogy of urban techno-disaster novels.

Conflict between Anthony Royal and Richard Wilder of two different spectrums in the same *High Rise* resembles the conflict of classes within capitalism. As neo-Marxists claim capitalism fails due of own misdeeds rather than other external barriers contradiction within the capitalistic system and its antagonism with its opponent results into the inevitable fall of capitalistic system. Since the dawn of capitalism and its full fledged development what individuals have witnessed that capitalism has often met its misfortune due to the contradiction between the layers of

the system itself. J.G. Ballard in his novel *High Rise* allegorically stands his High Rise building occupants lower class, middle class and upper class sheltering in the lower ten storied floors, middle storied floors from tenth to thirty-fifth floor and upper most five floor respectively.

III. Depiction of Inevitable Fall of Capitalism in *High Rise*

The ever continuous evolution, mechanization, and eventually digitization of built environments, and particularly residential dwellings and urban infrastructure, has had a profound and even violent affect on the way individuals internally experience the modern world and social culture as a whole. Within this novel infrastructure is not merely symptomatic or reflective of the modern condition, but also is responsible for its conditions and behaviors in invisible and subtle ways. Infrastructure is the object of no one's desire. It is not illuminated in a shop window for all to see but rather tucked away out of the usual sight lines, indeed often inaccessible to all but authorized personnel. After covering the existing criticism on Ballard with reference to modes of infrastructure and architecture, I will expose the knowledge gaps and absent critical insight that may better illuminate the profound psychological and social presence of infrastructure within High Rise building and within the modern world. This type of infrastructural reading hopes to identify what is morally and socially at stake within the realm of the postmodern, with particular interest in the ways elevator systems, ventilation shafts, corridors, electrical wiring, plumbing, and garbage disposal chutes affect gender, violence, and the individual's experience of interiority.

Neo-Marxists view class divisions under capitalism as more important than gender/sex divisions or issues of race and ethnicity. Neo-Marxism encompasses a group of beliefs that have in common rejection of economic or class determinism and a belief in at least the semi autonomy of the social sphere. They also claim that most social science, history, and literary analysis works from within capitalist categories and say neo-Marxism is based on the total political-economic-cultural system. In *High-Rise*, the building is a microcosm of the violent atrocities of which people are

capable when left to their own devices. None of the residents move out of the building, even as the violence escalates toward and beyond absurd proportions. Many of the residents die, illustrating the book's theme of survival of the fittest.

The research depicts technology as something that can destroy humanity. The High Rise building is a model of all that technology had done to make possible the expression of a truly free psychopathology. It indicates that the process of technology and subsequent civilization of people does great harm, in that natural instincts are repressed in order for the civilizing process to occur. As natural instincts are repressed, the inevitable outcome is violent and psychotic behavior. Ballard shows readers a world in which people can do absolutely anything they want and it makes no difference; they are not subjected to laws or punishment. Those who survive in High Rise building do so through personal fortitude and the ability to kill if necessary.

In this way, *High Rise* is one of the fittest novels to scan the wounds and fall of capitalism from the view point of neo-Marxist taking the lead from Luckas and Althusser. Death of the designer of the High Rise, Anthony Royal, at the last of the novel depicts the fall of capitalistic system as High Rise itself is the mark of capitalism. The metal rod struck the hand-rail and whipped across Wilder's left arm. Stung by the pain of the blow, Wilder dropped the cine-camera. His arm was numb, and for a moment he felt helpless, like an abused child. As the architect advanced down the steps towards him, Wilder raised the silver pistol and shot him through the chest. The devastating and horror picture of High Rise and its occupants at the last pressures the magical collapse of capitalism. At the end of the novel, High Rise faces a number of barriers inside and outside the building. The water had long since drained away, but the sloping floor was covered with the skulls, bones and dismembered

limbs of dozens of corpses. Tangled together where they had been flung, they lay about like the tenants of a crowded beach visited by a sudden holocaust. The characters in the novel and the incidents are only the representative of capitalism and their downfall has reciprocal effect to capitalism and its system.

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