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## Darkness in the City: A Comparative Study of Life, Society and Politics in Dublin, Chicago, and Moscow

**Harsha Senanayake**

Department of International Relations, South Asian University, India.  
sharshacpbr@gmail.com

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## **Darkness in the City: A Comparative Study of Life, Society and Politics in Dublin, Chicago, and Moscow**

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**Senanayake, H.**  
South Asian University  
sharshacpbr@gmail.com

### **Abstract**

*The paper discusses the political and social life of the citizens of Dublin, Chicago, and Moscow based on three classics: Dubliners by James Joyce, Sister Carrie by Theodore Dreiser and Master and Margarita by Mikhail Bulgakov. The novels describe the cities in the early World War period and how they changed due to a variety of external factors and social forces. These changes influenced the life and political behaviour of the people. Thus, the researcher analyzes the political and economic changes of the cities based on the concepts of voice, loyalty and exit. The social context of each city is analysed in light of international relations and the Hobbesian nature of humans. Comparative analytical tools are used to study these three cities and their common social behaviour. The study identifies major social transformations and the external and internal forces that caused them. Capital and social classification are identified as the major influencers of social reformation. In addition, religious institutions also influenced the social life in these three cities. Capital and financial waves of the early war era drastically changed the social life of the cities. The conclusion discusses these two major factors and five additional reasons for the changes in Dublin, Chicago, and Moscow.*

*Keywords: Comparative analysis, Hobbesian Nature, Power, Religion, Social Classification*

## Introduction

“Everything will turn out right, the world is built on that.” (Bulgakov, 2011). The fight for change has formed the foundation of global politics and world affairs, and the gradual evolution of human society is visible throughout history. The untold stories of human history are visible around us, and a careful analysis of such elements is beneficial for anyone who wishes to study history. World literature offers a record of the socio-political life of mankind across time, which is open for analysis. Although it is difficult to judge which ancient settlements are true ‘cities’, they are worthy of study as they offer knowledge on history and world politics. Therefore, scholars who study human history should closely examine the history of towns and cities recorded in multiple sources. As the records of towns and cities found in the literature are a means of unearthing the socio-political history of mankind, this paper attempts to comprehend the social systems of the pre-World War period through a close reading of three literary masterpieces. They are *Dubliners* by James Joyce, *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser and *Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov. They present a detailed analysis of the three cities Dublin, Chicago, and Moscow and of the socio-political and cultural aspects of their societies during World War I.

The novels present the gradual transformation of the selected cities and their citizens as a consequence of the political-social and economic modernity caused by industrialization and capitalization that took place in Europe after World War I. The researcher mainly focuses on the changes that took place within the society as a result of industrialization, capitalism and urbanism and how the changes to the city structure advanced the life of one group of citizens while constraining the socio-economic and political capabilities of others. The paper comparatively analyses the narrations of the three selected novels by employing the framework of *Voice, Exit and Loyalty* introduced by Thomas Piketty in his work *Capital in Twenty-First Century*. The first section of the paper introduces the plot and major themes of the novels, followed by a discussion and the conclusion.

## Three stories yet one reality

### a. *Dubliners*

*Dubliners* was written by James Joyce in 1914 before World War I. Joyce narrates the socio-political changes of Dublin caused by internal forces such as the power struggle between the Dubliners and the British masters. *Dubliners* is a collection of stories, a record of the

perceptions on the socio-political transformation of the hierarchical society caused by the industrialization.

Joyce records the shift of power towards the Catholics with the decision to abolish the Irish parliament. The decision of abolishment aggravated the clash between the Irish independence movement and the British Christian devotees which eventually changed the structure of the city and its society. This power struggle was the main factor that caused the socio-political and physical transformation of the city and Joyce stresses that the “society [was] subjected to act of unions during the 1800s and [that] they [British] were able to abolish the Irish parliament. After that, power struggles between British supporters and Irish independence movement shaped the city lives up to 1922” (Joyce, 1914).

One year after the sanctioning on Dublin, World War I started which escalated tension and anxiety among Dubliners. It was used by the nationalist movement of Dublin to release their anger towards the British parliament by mobilizing political resistance movements. The resistance movement transformed the physical behaviour of the city. On the one hand, it forced British parliamentarians to realize that it was impossible to exploit Dublin for political advantages and on other hand, it allowed the Catholic elite to gain control over the industrial production and wealth accumulation.

In 1911, King George V, who was supported by the elites, decided to visit Dublin. The elites believed that their loyalty towards King George V would grant them political superiority over the Protestants, which would enable them to overrun the socio-economic and political structure established by the traditional protestant elite.

The changes in the physical structure of Dublin displayed the influence of the new Catholic elite. Joyce records this transformation in the Grand Georgian houses on Mountjoy division, North Great George Street, Henrietta Street and in other luxurious corners of the city that were occupied by the Catholic elite and professionals including lawyers, businessmen, civil servants who supported the British King. Conquering the heart of Dublin by accumulating power granted a license to the new elite to transform the city according to their wishes and they restructured the city with golf clubs, tennis courts and a new mode of transportation while restricting the labour force to the dark corners of the city.

The polarization of the Catholic elites and the Protestant labour community is visible through the physical transformation of the city and Joyce captured this through one of the principal metaphors in the novel: death. Although the transformation of the city fulfilled the wishes of the elite community, the dying and less fashionable north end of the city provided shelter to thousands of migrant unskilled labourers seeking employment. Majority of the Dubliners were crammed in tiny dirty rooms and lived under appalling conditions. The deterioration of the city and its economy restricted the activities of Dubliners and the foreign market establishments extracted wealth out of Dublin and further degraded the lives of the lower-middle-class. *Dubliners* written in a rich polarized language is a realistic portrayal of the life of these powerless citizens.

The writer has used metaphors and symbolic language to portray a realistic picture of Dublin. The status of the physically and mentally paralyzed citizens is captured in the themes, and according to the author, if Dublin disappeared from the world map, *Dubliners* would provide an account of the city and its life. The stories are woven around the characters of Old Collier, Father Flynn, Molly Bloom, Mohany and a few other main characters. Based on these stories, the author portrays a realistic picture of Dublin and its social changes. The book described the Hobbesian nature of humans and most of the stories focus on simony, truancy, pederasty, child abuse, spousal abuse, gambling, and brutal behaviour of humans. Joyce has used the concepts of paralysis, corruption, and death to link these behaviours to the city.

### **b. Sister Carrie**

The story of the courageous, honest, and intelligent Sister Carrie in Chicago during the World War was written by Theodore Dreiser in 1900. Dreiser presented Sister Carrie as a selfless character, grappling with the socio-political and economic changes of Chicago during the Industrial Revolution in America. The establishment of large-scale, profit-driven factories transformed the city structure, its humanistic appearance, and the life of its citizens.

The Industrial Revolution impacted Chicago and influenced its socio-political and economic compartmentalization. The city and its people were categorized based on their ability to generate profit and their control over the market economy. *Sister Carrie* presents an explicit account of the transformation of wealth in Chicago during the 1900s. The elites seized control of wealth and political supremacy while forcing the city to favour their political,

economic, and social interests. New housing programs were initiated with the influence of the elite and clubs, branded clothing stores, restaurants, pubs, polo and golf grounds, and other elements of lavish living were established for the benefit of the upper class.

The life of the working class in Chicago is also captured in *Sister Carrie* with its reference to how labourers poured into the city from Eastern and Southern Europe. They included Poles, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Greeks, and Italians who settled in the dark, less fascinating west end of the city dedicated to the poor. This caused polarization in the city and among its residents. The unskilled white labourers including characters like sister Carrie drifted to Chicago and settled in suburban areas and the south side of the city along with the Black labourers. With the support of the wealthier elite, northern and western parts of the city started to develop and attracted many reputed schools and public resources. However, the rest of the city remained stagnant and the life of the Black and White labourers remained unrecognized and silent. The city structure of Chicago during the 1990s represents the de facto segregation of the society and how industrialization and the lavish lifestyle of the elite destroyed its natural beauty which included polluting Lake Michigan.

Sister Carrie decided to settle in Chicago with the hope of achieving economic and political stability. Her train journey to Chicago started from a small village station and she was in a rural, outdated, middle-class attire. During the train ride, Sister Carrie encountered a decent, affluent member of the elite: Charlie Drouet, who later changed her life completely. Sister Carrie started her life in Chicago as an unskilled migrant worker with her sister who lived in a tiny room on the dark side of Chicago. After Sister Carrie lost her job, she decided to seek relief from Charlie Drouet. However, she was seduced first by Charlie and later by George Hurstwood; another person responsible for destroying Sister Carrie's life. Good looks, wealth and social status granted liberty to Hurstwood to ruin the life innocent people like Sister Carrie. The novel identifies this as a negative result of industrialization and material development which severed the ties of humans with religion.

'Industrial- Mechanistic Reality', the concept presented by Theodore Dreiser stressed the divorce of the citizen from religion as the result of recurrent waves of industrialization and urbanization which also increased deviant acts and Hobbesian characteristics of society. Chicago was struggling with depression, social stress and human behaviour shaped by

incompleteness and the competition. Industrialization promoted the notion of enjoying a material life which caused society to disregard morals taught by religion. Similar to Joyce, Dreier stresses the importance of “Voice, Exit and Loyalty” which moulded the socio-political and economic face of Chicago and the impact of industrialization that caused social classification, polarization and created class identity.

### **c. Master and Margarita**

The human political behaviour drastically evolved throughout history, including during the great communist revolution of Russia. In 1920, Stalin succeeded to gain power over communist Russia, causing a shift in the socio-economic and political map of the world. It eventually dragged Russia into a deep economic crisis and ended the last hope of liberalization for the Russian economy and society. This occurred as the central government began to control the dynamic social behaviour of people. Stalin controlled the territories of Russia and other republics of the USSR. The centralization of wealth and the control of the economy influenced the social order and the well-being of Russians. Agriculture and industries endured severe control under the Stalin regime, and socio-economic, cultural and political freedom was redefined by the government, which negatively impacted social stability. Thousands of individuals were killed by the government which propagated fear all over Russia. The Communist Party-controlled wealth and it influenced the life, liberty, and prosperity of the Russian labour force. These social transformations have been explored by Mikhail Bulgakov in the classic *Master and Margarita*, an impeccable record of socialist reality. The book was written between 1928 and 1940 and was published in 1967. The story draws a sophisticated picture of the arrival of Satan and his evil power into the Soviet Society (Belyk, 2012).

A wide range of red regiments replaced the traditional socio-political aspects of society because of industrialization. Collective Enterprises substituted individualistic efforts across the country including the heart of Moscow. The new socio-economic and political agenda of the Stalin government crippled the social development and cultivated terror which has been ingeniously captured in *Master and Margarita* through the symbolic theme of the arrival of satanic clouds over the Russian sky.

The story woven around the key characters of Master, Margarita, Woland and Yeshua captures the realities of Soviet Russia. The Imperialist government of Nicolas II followed

by the 1917 revolution brought political and socio-economic change to Russian society. The entire society was built on the pillars of collective labour and Soviet Russia experienced economic and industrial development. Moscow was identified as a pivot of the industrial process and many counterrevolutions suffered a natural death as a result of social stability. Yet, with the arrival of Satanic force- the Stalin government - physical, ideological, and epistemological changes took place in Moscow. Corruption, political crimes, prostitution, and bolshie behaviour grew within Moscow while humanity and religion were forgotten. The author presents how human behaviour was driven by the ‘Hobbesian Laws of Human Behaviour’ and how darkness pervaded as a result of his classic *Master and Margarita*.

The three classics record similar patterns in human nature seen in three cities during the selected period. Therefore, the paper employs ‘Hobbesian Nature’ and the ‘Separation of Religion and the Society’ as primary parameters of comparison along with the framework of ‘Voice, Exit and Loyalty’ presented by Thomas Piketty.

### **Selecting the three stories**

History is popularly conceptualized as a record of past events, arranged more or less chronologically, unalterable except for the occasional unearthing of a lost city with the discovery of a truck full of letters in an attic, for example. However, the problem lies in presenting history as a story with a fixed plot and a cast. This approach is indeed natural and to some extent unavoidable, but it is critically important to view history as a dynamic process. This entails viewing history as a rich, varied, evolving intellectual system that allows facilitates a deeper and better understanding of the world. In this way, history still deals with the past but conceptualizes the past as being in constant dialogue with an ever-advancing present, one that responds to new questions and reveals fresh insights into the human condition.

History presents different stories and demands a deep analysis of these complex events. However, presenting history has always been subjected to the politics of writing and presentism. Mankind has presented history as shaped by different political events, but it is important to understand that there is no single narrative of history. With that understanding, the author has chosen three novels which present the political history of Europe during World War I.



The plots of the selected novels reveal the dark realities of the pre-World War I Europe and present the socio-economic transformation of the city structure caused by widespread industrialization and capitalization. The struggle of the working class and how the city was influenced by the new elites who exploited the labour community are captured by the three authors: James Joyce, Mikhail Bulgakov and Theodore Dreiser. The paper attempts to understand the city, society and the politics of Europe during the world war I by employing alternative readings of history. The author has selected the above novels since they present the political history of the city and its society through different voices and loyalties shaped by industrialization.

### **Frame of analysis**

The author has used the concept of *Voice, Loyalty, and Exit* introduced by Thomas Piketty. In 2013, Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* provided a thorough explanation for the inequality in the Western world. Unequal wealth, Piketty posited, has less to do with productivity or efficiency but has much to do with the process by which wealth is accumulated and distributed which contains powerful forces pushing towards divergence, or at any rate towards an extremely high level of inequality. Piketty captured the economic and capital transformation of Europe and the USA in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and compared it with the inequality in Europe during World War I. He affirms that the inequality in Europe has been aggravated towards the 20<sup>th</sup> century resembling the World War I period. The paper uses the concepts of *Voice, Loyalty* and *Exit* to explain the connection between capital, profit, and the city.

Piketty has explained that the new wave of industrialization powered by the war-oriented European society has transformed the physical outfit of the city. The massive industrialization process demands more physical spaces from the city and has led to urbanization. These physical transformations and industrialization gave birth to capital elites who had power and controlled the decision-making process. Piketty stressed that during World War I, the richest ten per cent in London owned 62.8 per cent of the city's total wealth. This disparity led to other forms of inequalities among people such as a denial of rights, education, and political voice. Piketty has presented this reality through the concept of *Voice, Loyalty* and *Exit*.

According to Piketty, the ability to influence the decision-making process and the capacity to make policymakers listen to one's grievances is defined as having a *voice*. Piketty interprets *voice* as being defined by the capital and the wealthier members of the city who have secured better access to the decision-making process.

The idea of *loyalty* is defined as a fundamental principle of the state and the capital manifesto, and Piketty's work makes the connection between *loyalty* and the power of money. The ability to shift loyalty among states, governments, and different powerhouses of society is quite possible to the elite. For instance, Dubliners who controlled the wealth flow of the city decided to shift their *loyalty* by exiting the current place, space and status while the deprived community had to maintain their *loyalty* towards the leadership out compulsion since the people who had less access to money and the industrial process could not *exit* from the system or position their *loyalty* in a different political centre. In that context, *exit* defines the ability to shift towards new social- political and economic spaces physically and ideologically. The authors have used the concepts of *Voice*, *Loyalty* and *Exit* as the primary framework of analysis of the transformation in the cities.

### **Methodology**

The paper employs discourse analysis while using comparative analytical tools to draw connections among the three cities and in demarcating different levels of transformation. The methodological framework is based on a wide range of sources, both primary and secondary. The primary sources include three novels *Dubliners*, *Sister Carrie*, and *Master and Margarita* and the work of Thomas Piketty in *Capital in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Thomas Piketty's work is used as a tool of analysis and interpretation of the three novels. In addition to the primary resources, the study has also used a variety of secondary resources that include, but not limited to, journal articles, books, reports, and other online resources to analyze and compare the themes under study.

### **Discussion**

#### **Divorce of religion from the society**

The three classics *Dubliners*, *Sister Carrie* and *Master and Margarita* have been deconstructed in the analysis. They view the divorce of religion from society as a consequence of industrialization and polarization of society.

James Joyce discusses the power struggle between the two churches in Dublin which lead to the stagnation of the society and an increase in crimes. The Protestant and the church of Britain were involved in a continuous struggle to gain religious supremacy since the 1800s' and this struggle negatively affect the development of Dublin. Dubliners, who walked away from the religious institutions labelled the Church as a corrupt institution which promotes the interests of new elites who controlled the market. The responsibility of promoting morals and ethics was abandoned by the Church and this led to social stagnation and destroyed hopes of betterment in Dublin. The author has metaphorically captured this through the term "paralyzed" (Houghton, 2003).

The corrupted leaders like Father Flynn and religious institutions that endorse financial fraud and social ill behaviour was a symbolic criticism of the Roman Catholic Church. At the beginning of the first story, Joyce announces the death of the paralyzed Father Flynn. This shows the pathetic status of the 'paralyzed' church and also how society has been separated from the church. Irish political and social institutions were limited to the Roman Catholic Church and the British church, which had abandoned the city's social-moral development. Hypocritical behaviour of these religious institutions increased social unrest and the youth abandoned their religion. People started to discriminate other religious believers and the decision of the church to abandoned common people and support the elites who controlled the capital and industrial wealth prompted people to disregard human values and to fight to fulfil their daily needs. This increased the Hobbesian behaviour of society exhibiting the dark deeds of the citizens who had lost their voice and loyalty towards the religious institutions and their city.

In the second story, Joyce writes: "A spirit of unruliness diffused itself among us and, under its influence, differences of culture and constitution were waived. We banded ourselves together, some boldly, some in jest and some almost in fear: and of the number of this latter..." (Joyce, 1914). The spirit of unruliness has been influenced by the social formation, despite the time and space. The spark of unruliness and the lack of *voice*: the inability to convey grievances to the authorities caused unrest among the native Dubliners and the labour force while the decision of the Church to abandon the masses and support the elites caused a rupture between society and religion. The general mass who lost their *voice* was forced to settle in the dying city without any hope of *exiting* Dublin and they had to remain loyal to authoritarian political power controlled by the British church and profit-oriented

elites. These phenomena instituted abhorrence among the youth and the caused a process of othering, as captured by Joyce in the lines: “the ragged troop screaming after us: ‘Swaddlers! Swaddler!’ thinking that we were Protestants because of Mahony, who was dark-complexioned, wore the silver badge of a cricket club in his cap” (Joyce, 1914).

The Roman Catholic Church was corrupt, and it altered not only the perceptions and attitudes of the society towards the Church but also the spiritual and moral life of Dubliners. Many stories in *Dubliners* described the Hobbesian nature of the citizens of Dublin caused by the divorce of society from religion and the focus on the market-oriented socio-economic and political order created by new waves of urban industrialization. Dubliners were addicted to alcohol and evils such as prostitution pervaded the city. Religious institutions concealed their corruption and could not restore morals in society. Simony, truancy, pederasty, and drunkenness tainted the moral and spiritual life of people while humanistic values were lost in the darkness of Hobbesian living. The Roman Catholic Church defined the law and God’s word to get economic benefits from the new elites. The blessing and pardons offered by the Church by calculating the profit that Church could gain and Dreiser pointed out “the selling to its members by the Roman Catholic Church of blessings pardons or other behaviour” (Dreiser, 1981).

The three cities present similar social realities despite the differences in location. The depression seen in Dublin bears resemblance to Chicago and Moscow. These similarities had been caused by the global waves of industrialization and modernization that emerged after the World War. The religious polarization disturbed social progress and paralyzed Dublin and Chicago. It is presented through the character of Sister Carrie: a traditional religious virgin who happened to visit Chicago; a city of evil. Industrialization, new waves of modernity along with the profit-oriented society of Chicago seduced her and challenged the morals she lived by. Sister Carrie’s first thoughts on Chicago are given as: “She gazed at the green landscape now passing it shift review until her swifter thoughts replaced its impression with vague conjectures of what Chicago might be” (Dreiser, 1981).

Her romanticized expectations were shattered once she entered Chicago and her spirituality was challenged by material values of the industrial society. Dreiser presents her mindset as; “[It was a] city full of thousands of cars and a clangour of engine bells. Heavy traffics decorated the city with smoky mills. Chicago River was too little muddy creek, crowded

with the huge, misted wanderers from far-off waters nosing the black, posted banks” (Dreiser, 1981).

The description of Chicago presents an image similar to Dublin. The polarization of the city structure in terms of citizens’ relations to the industrial process makes it possible to identify a Dublin within the city of Chicago. Like Joyce, Dreiser discussed how industrialization distorted the values of the citizens of Chicago. He writes: “[T]he city [has] cunning wiles no less than the infinitely smaller and more human tempter” (Dreiser, 1981). In contrast to *Dubliners* and *Master and Margarita*, Dreiser presents a sensitive picture of the industrial reality which replaced the humane qualities of citizens with Hobbesian elements of life.

As a result of industrialization, morals have been replaced by incompleteness and competition. People in Chicago value money and are alienated from religious institutions. The reality presented by Dreiser shows how industrialization controlled the life and liberty of citizens and distanced them from morals. Most members of the middle-class started their day as labourers early in the morning and continued the mechanical routine till late evening. They continuously struggled in factories and became victims of the profit-oriented market. They are deprived of human emotions and a voice, and the profit-oriented brutal system created an arbitrary flow of power from the powerful to the powerless. The system did not grant any space for morals and was driven by the Hobbesian theory of survival of the fittest. Dreiser stressed that the entire society turned into a goal-seeking community and that the wishes of the elites were favoured more than communal values. Chicago and its people were detached from the Church and suffered the consequences of the capitalist social order shaped by industrialization and the post-World War mentality.

These circumstances and the alienation of the youth from religion increased tyranny among the people of Chicago. Their lives were vulnerable to deviant social activities including drugs and prostitution. On other hand, the elites who controlled the economy and other industrial forces exploited and seduced labourers. For instance, Sister Carrie failed to report to her workplace after experiencing an intense winter in Chicago, which lead to her being fired. This question the moral conduct of society and elites. The split between religious institutions and society exacerbated the tyrannies of Dublin, and a similar situation was visible in Chicago. Had society been guided by religion, Sister Carrie would have been treated with compassion. She would have been granted leave, which was not possible in a

society whose sole interest is the accumulation of wealth. The industrial revolution in America built an elite who inevitably prioritized profit over the well-being of their employees. The system demanded profit while creating an immoral environment constraining the mental and physical freedom of its workers. Through the story of *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser exhibits the Hobbesian nature of human society which is eager to meet industrial demands and lacks religious empowerment.

“Even at night, in the moonlight, I have no rest... Why did they trouble me? Oh, Gods, Gods...” (Bulgakov, 2011) Although religious teachings and their social implications are not universal, the core values of religions are universal. *Master and Margarita* examined the universality of religion and religious institutions, in a context where religious interpretations and values were different in Russia compared to Western Europe or the United States of America. In the Euro-American context, the abandonment of religion was caused by heavy industrialization during the pre-World War I era. It was a sudden social transformation, and that vacuum was filled by the power of money. The divorce of religion from society was the result of state-sponsored propaganda initiated under the Russian Orthodox Church and the empire Nikolai II Alexandrovich Romanov followed by the social revolution in 1915.

The separation of religion from society started as a resistance movement against the Russian Orthodox Church, which legitimized the brutal power of empire Nikolai II over Russian society. Later, the social resistance movement was hijacked by the revolutionary red, after their successful revolution in 1915 and constructed a new social reality free from the power of religion. The revolutionary forces in post-1915 Russia launched state-sponsored propaganda to detach society from the Orthodox Church and other religious institutions and the vacuum was filled by the communist party and its followers. The classic *Master and Margarita* captured the gradual socio-political, economic, and cultural transformation experienced by Russia and it has questioned the universality of religion and religious institutions by illustrating the realities in Moscow which are comparable to Dublin and Chicago.

*Master and Margarita* present the realities of post-revolutionary Russia which enables a comparison between communist Russia and capitalist Chicago. For instance, *Sister Carrie* stresses how the notion of industrial reality endorsed the idea of individualism and caused

the polarization between elites and the lower classes in Chicago. Even though the establishment of communism in Russia promoted collectivism and communal life, the polarization visible in the society and the city presents a picture similar to Chicago and Dublin. The members and elites of the communist party seized the wealth and the capital of former elites. The most prestigious territories of the city were enjoyed by the communist leaders while unleashing brutality and structural violence towards the rest of the society. The rejection of religion increased corruption and communist brutality at every level of society. Particularly, the main thematic discussion of *Master and Margarita*, which in the arrival of Satan, captured the negativity in the city of Moscow. The classic captures the status of the ordinary people who worked as labourers. They resorted to drugs, alcohol, and prostitution to forget their pain and misery.

The corrupt socio-political order and (counter) revolutions consumed the moral spirit, created social unrest within the Soviet system, as the brutality and tyranny of the Stalin government destroyed humanity in Russian society. The former elites, liberal thinkers, revisionists, and powerful individuals employed their *voice*, bribed the communist party and *exited* from the evil realities in Russia and became *loyal* to new states elsewhere in Western Europe. The voice of the communist party and its elites destroyed the alternative voices. The citizens who lived in Moscow were forced to be loyal to the communist regime, without any option to exit. Morality and humanity were replaced by the power of wealth, while war and conflict spread in Russia under the satanic regime of Stalin. The classic presents the life of citizens in Moscow and their grievances voiced in prayer to God: “Even at night, in the moonlight, I have no rest... Why did they trouble me? Oh, Gods, Gods...” (Bulgakov, 2011)

*Master and Margarita* present the arrival of dark satanic forces in Russia under the power of Stalin and communism. The labourers were dispatched to agricultural and economic sites, and though the economy of Russia experienced a sudden growth, the profit circulated only among the elites of the communist party. The life, liberty and prosperity of individuals were jeopardized under the communist regime while individualism came into play as people started to secretly secure favours from leaders. Bulgakov states that the disappearance of religious institutions and morality lead to a Hobbesian form of life in Moscow.

The three classics *Dubliners*, *Sister Carrie*, and *Master and Margarita* have presented the social realities of Dublin, Chicago and Moscow through multiple narratives of the



marginalized who lived the cities during World War I. The paper discussed these realities and how humanity was lost from the socio-political order as a result of the divorce of religion from the citizens, fueled by the new waves of industrialization. The three stories metaphorically highlighted the physical and moral changes, societal segregation and polarization between the new industrial elites and the deprived unskilled labourers brought about by industrialization and urbanization. However, all three cities experienced negativity caused by the profit-oriented market forces and socio-economic, political elites who controlled the market economy. The absence of a *voice* and being forced to lead a deprived, unfortunate, and stagnated life increased the evils among the lower working class. It highlights the Hobbesian elements of human behaviour. The abandonment of religion had caused evil, dark forces to control human life during the World War, as seen in the three novels.

#### **“Voice, Exit and Loyalty”**

“No one’s fate is of any interest to you except your own” (Belyk, the Master and Margarita) The above quote from *Master and Margarita* presents the individualism within Communism. A Self-centered Hobbesian nature has resulted from the socialist revolution when the former elites decided to *exit* Russia, withdrawing their *loyalty* to the state and placing it on more liberal states which appreciated the *voice* of others. Yet, *exit* and shift of *loyalty* were possible only to those who had socio-economic and political power. As portrayed by Bulgakov in *Master and Margarita*, with the emergence of communism in Russia, the wealthiest community left Russia while the unfortunate who had less power and no voice suffered under the power of the communist regime. To survive they had to remain loyal to the communist regime while accommodating the demands of the Russian labour market.

The communist agents under Stalin, whom Bulgakov refers to as the “agents of darkness” (2011), spread their socio-political and economic ideology and monitored the life of the labourers. Industrial zones, villages, and common labour collectives were under surveillance of the secret agents of the Stalin regime and the communist party reintroduced a socio-politically and economically hierarchical communist social order in place of a class-free society. The primary theme of *Master and Margarita* presents the notion of messengers of the devil and their existence among the citizens and labourers. The metaphoric use of messengers of the devil portrays the presence of Stalin’s secret agents who smothered the



voices of the masses. The labourers could not voice their grievances, demands, and thoughts as the *voice* of the common man was never acknowledged by the communist regime. Yet the Stalin government forced them to be loyal to the communist regime, without any hope of *exit* or shifting their *loyalty*.

The metaphorical language presented the ground realities of Russia under the Stalin regime and the failure of the economic, socio-political order which led to the Hobbesian, self-centred behaviour of people. However, labourers who lived under the dark clouds without any *voice*, *loyalty*, or possibility of *exit* always had an unrealistic hope for a free society as seen in *the Master and Margarita*. Bulgakov writes: “But what is most terrifying is not the executioner, but the unnatural lights in the dream, coming from, could that is boiling and tumbling on the earth, as always as the moments of world catastrophe” (Bulgakov, 2011, p211)

The novels set in the East and the West during World War I present different social orders and city structures. However, interestingly, the three novels portray similarities in their stories, and the realities presented through them. The negative forces of the communist regime under Stalin bear resemblance to the socio-political and economic realities of Chicago and Dublin during industrialization. The labourers and the middle class were not granted the opportunity to project their grievances to the government consisted of the elites. The city failed to acknowledge the needs of the labourers due to the polarization caused by industrialization. The *voice* of the majority of the citizens was smothered by the industrial process while the elites who controlled the social capital voiced their political and socio-economic needs. They constructed a city suited to lead a lavish life and disregarded the voice of the underprivileged masses. The transformation of the city flourished the lavish life of the new industrial elites. The elite character of Sister Carrie: Charlie Drouet describes the transformation of the city as follows; “You want to see Lincoln Park, he said, and Michigan Avenue. They are putting up great buildings there. It’s a second New York, great. So much to see-theatres, crowds, fine houses- oh you’ll like that all” (Dreiser, 1981).

*Exit* does not necessarily mean finding a new county or a region but settling in a place that addresses communal needs and acknowledges one’s voice in the socio-economic and political order. The city structure displays the economic, socio-political background of its citizens and demonstrates their links to the market economy. This is seen in the

fragmentation and polarization of Chicago during World War I by the elites who controlled the economy. The industrial revolution in America changed the socio-political conditions of the society and as well as the physical city structure by attracting unskilled workers and migrants. They settled in the periphery of the city next to the industrial hubs without any infrastructure while the city centres prospered with wealth and facilities. The transformation of the city has been captured by Joyce and Dreiser in *Dubliners* and *Sister Carrie*.

The industrial revolution changed the city physically and metaphorically as the industrial hubs started to pollute the peripheries while the centre stood as the lavish space dedicated to the elites. The elites who controlled the market *exited* the periphery and settled in the heart of the city while the working class was forced to inhabit the dark corners of the city. A similar polarization was seen in Dublin as a result of industrialization. The British elites enjoyed the lavish life in the city while the Protestant community was forced to settle in the neglected marshlands in Dublin. This physical polarization of the society represented the power of the capital to define *voice* and *loyalty*. The elites could speak to the political centre and have their socio-political and material needs met. New cinema theatres, cafés, coffee shops, branded clothed, dress factories, luxurious apartments, sky towers, parks, gardens, waterfalls, and other facilities were established in the centre. Yet the periphery remained the same as seen in *Dubliners* and *Sister Carrie*. The migrants, labourers and the middle-class families could not speak up and were forced to be loyal to the city. In Chicago, most of them settled near the polluted Chicago River with minimum facilities. The lack of social capital smothered their voice and possibilities of exit and forced them to live under deplorable conditions.

For instance, Minnie and her family struggled to pay the rent of their small apartment and while the elites in Chicago were betting over horses on weekends. The middle-class including Minne was deprived of a voice without any possibility of exit. They were forced to spend their entire life in factories to meet the demands of the industrialized economy.

The industrialization has changed the physical appearance of the city and it has been captured by the *Dubliners* and presented it as ‘they used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people’s children. Then a man from Belfast bought the field and build houses in it. (Joyce, 1914)

The waves of industrialization and modernity transformed the physical outlook of Dublin. The residential areas of the upper class and the devotees of the British Church were developed readily while the rest of the city remained under-developed and suffered injustice and corruption. The people who could afford to shift their loyalty decided to exit Dublin and as Joyce says, “most of the children and citizens left the country or else they settled in better places in the country. Dublin city is deep into economic and political crisis...channels of poverty, corruption, religious struggle and inaction of continent sped its wealth and industry” (Joyce, 1914).

The citizens of Dublin who exited the country to be loyal to other states condemned the life of Dublin by referring to it as a muddy, deprived and dying city with no future. Joyce refers to the remaining Dubliners who struggled to survive and were forced to be loyal to the government as the enginemen of a sinking ship.

### **Conclusion**

The three classics: *Dubliners*, *Sister Carrie*, and *Master and Margarita*, present the marginalized narratives of the city and its people which were deliberately or inadvertently neglected by the mainstream history writers. The politics of presentism and the agenda of writing history are challenged by these three classics as they narrate the untold history of Dublin, Chicago, and Moscow during World War I. Human life is inherently present in the political and economic expression of the city and the city should acknowledge the voices of its citizens equally. Yet the city and its representatives favoured the elites and catered to their needs. The three novels have metaphorically and strategically visualized the politics of the city and how it is manifested in the city structure during its transformation led by the new waves of industrialization in the late 1900s.

These diverse narratives unearth the politics of the city while critiquing its material development, which was limited to the residential areas of the elites of Chicago. Parks, gardens, theatres, branded shopping complexes and other physical developments should ideally cater to all. But ironically, they were limited to the powerful elite.

The three novels have discussed diverse social realities such as religion, social stagnation, industrialization, and the communist regime. They exposed the politics of industrialization, materialization, and its impact on human life. Religion was replaced by the market economy and the social order embraced Hobbesian values. Only the fittest could survive which

encouraged individualism. People of the cities ignored humanity and religious values and sought the power of money. Hobbesian values encouraged profit-making at any cost, which increased crime and evils in society. The metaphors such as the arrival of dark- satanic spirits and the devil captured the Hobbesian nature of the citizens caused by industrialization and rejection of religion.

*Voice, exit, and loyalty* demonstrate the connection between money and life in the city. The ability to influence the decision-making process and to project grievances is defined as *voice*, and it is a luxury enjoyed by the powerful. Hence, the three stories narrate how powerful people project their voice to have their demands met by presenting the requirements of elites as the necessities of the city. People who enjoyed the power of money exited the city and shifted their loyalty, while the powerless were forced to be loyal to the state till the state ultimately decided to address their grievances. These recurrent patterns of *voice, exit and loyalty* encouraged individualism and created a profit-oriented society that disregarded the methods, means and source of wealth formation.

The three novels *Dubliners, Sister Carrie* and *the Master and Margarita* have captured the notions of social classification and polarization of the city during World War I. It is important to understand that the fragmentation of the society and the politics behind the material manifestation of the city remain unchanged across different locations and times in history. *Voice, exit, and loyalty* portray the politics behind the industrial reality and the Hobbesian nature constructed by the market-oriented society. As Joyce states, the city served the elites the others fought to be one of them.

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