CHAPTER III
Reflecting on the postwar temper of the thirties, Richard Aldington observed:

We at least, had seen something, been something, done something, but they couldn't do any thing or be anything. They were ushered into life during one of the meanest and most fraudulent decades staining the annals of history. And it is still going on — forgery, fraudulent bankruptcy, false bank notes, intensive commercial warfare, lying conferences to deceive the nation's demand for peace...

The process, which Richard Aldington so venomously condemns in *Death Of A Hero* ends with the death of George Winterbourne in the battlefield, continues in *Parade's End*, even after the great ordeal is over. *Parade's End* is, therefore, resplendent with all these themes which only go to show that the world is on the brink of yet another disaster—the moral disaster.

*Parade's End*, on surface may mean the end of a disaster, as the title of the novel suggests, yet it is not so. It only symbolises the continuation of the process set in by the breakout of the First World War. The breakout of the First World War symbolised a rebellion against the established authority and the powers that be. This is very vividly portrayed by Ford Madox Ford in the first two novels of his tetralogy—*Some Donot* and *No More Parades,*
which essentially show the negative effects of war on the human psyche. But the end of the war did not come as a relief to the tormented souls of its participants. The unsuitable condition of sudden peace at the end of the war only compelled them to carry the wartime sense of intensity and frantic activity into their social lives. Subsequently, despair and disillusionment, frustration and anger dominated their lives. Whereas some reacted violently, others like Christopher Tietjens tried to bear it with equanimity, as is demonstrated in the third novel of the tetralogy *A Man Could Stand Up*. Hence J.Hoffman observes: "Ford proposed the series as a study of the world as it culminated in the war."

Before the break out of the Great War, the world had registered tremendous progress, due to the advent of Industrialism and Europe was the centre of the world in political influence, cultural creativity, military and financial power. There was hope and glory all around. In England, God's England; "Tietjens exclaimed to himself in high good humour. "Land of Hope and Glory" :- F natural descending to tonic, C Major; Chord of 6-4, suspension over dominant seventh to common chord of C major ... All absolutely correct; a
'Double basses! cellos, all violins, all woodwind, all brass... Across the counties came the sound of bugles that his father knew... Pipe exactly right. It must be: pipe of Englishman of good birth: ditto tobacco. Attractive young woman's back. English mid day summer. Best climate in the world. No day on which man may not go abroad...

In the prewar world, man lived in perfect harmony with nature and the surroundings. But the war changed both. Because of the fearful price paid by the men who endured World War I, they had come to believe that a better world would emerge, but it was not to be so. All hope and glory vanished from this great land called England. There was utter confusion and chaos, and, in Hamletian phrase, 'Everything was rotten in the State of Denmark.'

"By God", he said, "Church: State: Army: H.M.Ministry: H.M.Opposition: H.M.City Man... All the governing class: All rotten: Thank God we've got a navy! ...But perhaps that's rotten too: (p.106).

It gave rise to utter disillusionment and despair. People were soon disillusioned and frustration gripped them. Along with it came the awareness that progress couldn't be measured in terms material, but in terms of spiritual, human and moral values, which were found wanting now. The narrator says,"And by God: Not a woman in
the country who won't let you rape her after an hour's acquaintance." (p.106).

Hence the gloomy reflections on the conditions of the day that would suffice to drive any man insane. Christopher Tietjens reflects:

I'm hysterical like that large-eyed whore! For same reason! Wrong diet and wrong life: diet meant for partridge shooters over the turnips consumed by the sedentary. England the land of pills... Dass Pillen - Land, the Germans call us. Very properly... And, damn it, outdoor diet: boiled mutton, turnips, sedentary life... and forced up against the filthiness of the world; your nose in it all day along! (p.107).

This omnipresent filthiness makes the living world foul and contemptible, unfit for human dwelling any more. If human beings are still to exist in this filthy, rotten world, then they should be without their humanity. Consequently, they are debased. Symbolically this shows the change that has been brought about by the war. People, who had registered themselves earlier as soldiers under the romantic hallucinations of war being a series of long marches, and adventuring into distant countries, now became frustrated because the torture was in no way nearing an end. Infact, with every day passing, its inflictions became more and more strong. In addition to the physical torture that had to be borne at the warfront, they were now, after the war, subjugated to mental torture, agony and
Instead of being treated as 'Returned Heroes', they were treated as creatures of the gutters and the scum of the earth. This shattered them and they came to question the utility of war. This bred in them a sense of war-weariness and its futility ultimately gave way to fear and horror, hysteria and frustration, anger and exhaustion, boredom and emptiness in their lives. This eventually resulted in "intense dejection, endless muddles, endless follies, endless villainies" (p.296). The very purpose of war of creating a newer and better world, was lost. What was left was the debris of the old established order, upon which man was to rebuild his new order, only to see it crumble like a house of cards in the 1935 quagmire. Ford Madox Ford rightly questions the utility of packing a million and a half of men into and round that small town... like baiting a trap for rats with a great chunk of rotten meat", (p.297) whom, "The Hun planes could smell... from a hundred miles away...do more harm there than if they bombed a quarter of London to pieces". (p.297).

This state of destruction and devastation was ushered in by the insatiable hunger for ego-centric power and national aggrandisement of the people at the helm of affairs. Consequently humanity became a victim in "...the hands of the most cynically carefree intriguers in long corridors who made plots that harrowed the hearts of the world". (p.296).

As a sequel to this "hundreds of thousands of men
tossed here and there... as if they were nuts wilfully packed and thrown over the shoulders by magpies..." (pp.296-97) were left to suffer, make sacrifices in the battlefield and ultimately pass away into nothingness, unsung, unheard, unremembered and worshipped. The tragedy was that:

These immense sacrifices, this ocean of mental sufferings, were all undergone to further the private vanities of men who amidst these hugenesses of landscapes and forces appeared pigmies... they could be massacred by the quarter million, in shambles. But that they should be massacred without jauntiness, without confidence, with depressed brows, without parade... (p.297).

This is what pains Christopher Tietjens, the main character of this tetralogy - Parade's End. No doubt, his is purely a human concern for his fellow beings, but he like anybody else, is not able to do anything constructive, because the system of which they are a part, is too powerful to prevent this catastrophe, into which they have been hurled headlong. Christopher Tietjens says:

It isn't the officers and it isn't the men. It's the foul system. You get men who think they've deserved well have of their country—and they damn well have! — and you crop their heads... They don't like being regarded as convicts. That's how they are regarded.
The system only makes them mechanical, and drains all spontaneous life out of them. It only makes them obey like machines, work like machines without any reward. Finally these individuals, these machines would be dumped as a junk. Thus the very system becomes demonic and it forces the individuals into meek submission. Christopher Tietjens condemns this mechanical and inhuman system en bloc.

...You allow'em out for an hour a day during the pub's closing time. You shave their heads to prevent "em appealing to local young women who don't exist, and you don't let them carry the swaggercanes! ...To prevent their poking their eyes out, if they fall down, I suppose. (p.225).

The purpose of all this is to make them subservient. The system requires the beating down of others, to crush the very core of an individual's being, so that he loses his identity, his self, his being and his soul. This loss of identity kills the instinctive and spontaneous life and the individual is maimed. The individual is, thus, forced to forget his past and a stage comes when he does not want to remember anything about it. Hence we see a shift—a shift from the living and the organic to the dead, inorganic world. This loss of identity, with an unconscious quest for one's search of one's own being, is a painful process to be undergone a
second time. Christopher Tietjens, when questioned by his wife Sylvia regarding the loss of his memory in France, says that "something burst - or exploded" near me and "...I don't know what happened and I don't remember what I did." (p.168) and in the hospital it worried him, "for not knowing who he was, for having lost all his identity, even his name." (p.169).

Christopher Tietjen's experience is nothing new. It only symbolises that war treats both the living and the dead alike. Infact, the break out of the war hastens the process to its final end. Preparations are made before hand to give the dead their due and the living are coaxed to face death in all circumstances. This is what Sergeant - Major Cowley explains to his fellows before they are sent to the front: "Any man who hasn't made his will in his Soldier's Small Book or elsewhere and wants to, to consult Captain Tietjens," (p.318) so that the monetary benefits, which otherwise would have accrued to him if he were alive can be passed on to his survivors, now that he is dead. It is, therefore, strictly laid down that all care of the soldiers would be taken, once they were only dead.

The Sergeant - Major Cowley stresses and says this in very clear words to his fellowmen: "Any man who has not been able to draw his blankets tell Colour - Sergeant Morgan. Don't forget. You won't get any, where you are going," (p.318) for obvious reasons. Ill-clad, ill-equipped, ill-fed and ill-rationed these young soldiers of
"The Rag, - Time Army" (p.57) with a romantic conception of war, were treated like "cannon-fodder" and became victims to the viles of the most incompetent officers, who had ever commanded army units. These young soldiers were herded into a tent for a sojourn. The narrator says:

Now then, men, you've got to go six extra in a tent. See if you can fall out six at a time at each tent. It's not the drill book, but see if you can do it for yourselves... Don't disturb the men who're already in the tents. (p.361).

This is military discipline which demands nothing, but complete and immediate obeys. The soldiers were expected to be emotionless and insensitive. This absolute reduction was necessary because only then they could be used as "cannon fodder" to the enemy guns. It was so designed that the shortage of warfare equipment should be balanced by hurling huge armies of masses into the battlefield so that they were able to hold the enemy forces from advancing any further. With the prevalent feeling among masses that war would be over within a few weeks, if not a few days, the designs of the forces that mattered could be easily fulfilled because their sentiments, of course purely patriotic and romantic, were exploited by the rulers. A sort of crude optimism could be seen both at home and on the warfront. Observes the narrator:

Getting cattle into condition for the slaughterhouse... They were as eager as bullocks
running down by Camden Town to Smithfield Market...Seventy percent of them would never come back...But it's better to go to heaven with your limbs than as a hulking lout...The Almighty's orderly room will welcome you better in all probability... (p.362).

It is instant death in the battlefield. No more shellshock, and no more pains to be borne. It came as such a great relief that the soldiers were tempted to embrace it all smilingly e.g Perowne's death (p.569), because they knew that after death every care shall be taken to dispose of their mortal remains, and that from now onwards, there shall be "No More Parades" and the last post shall be ruefully sounded by the army buglers. Army discipline certainly taught the soldiers to be as respectful and as caring as possible to the dead. The dead should be properly handled and it required immediate attention than if they were only alive. All personal animosity was to be set aside, and it was to be exhibited that there was no love lost between the two opposites and that is what Christopher, indeed did, when "Perowne...known to have been his wife's lover", (p.568) died.

But these readymade, mechanical rituals/ ceremonies only hardened them. Instead of chastening the soldiers, it simply made them insensitive, deadened their finer sensibilities, and they became creatures with wooden voices, symbolising that they were already lifeless.
Consequently, the soldiers come to despise the very profession they had so willingly joined. Mackenzie tells Christopher Tietjens: "I hate soldiering. I hate this whole beastly business..." (p.307). and given the option, he would have definitely tried to get out of that "bloody" business, which took one to one's ultimate end, slowly and slowly.

And when there's "another bloomin" casualty they are immediately roused to action, not to balm the living, but to see it to its legitimate end—the burial. When the injured runner from the Rhondda, is reported to Captain Tietjens, the two officers in the Tent are immediately roused to action. The scenario is really appalling: "In the bright light it was as if a whole part of scarlet paint had been dashed across the man's face on the left and his chest. It glistened in the firelight just like fresh paint moving." (p.307).

Tietjens, who had to take care of the runner O'Nine Morgan, before he finally collapsed to the ground, had hoped that "he would not get his hands all over blood..." and that "it was a breathless affair holding up the corpse with the fire burning in his face," (p.308) is greatly relieved when Sergeant-Major Cowley calls from outside, "Bugler, call two sanitary lance corporals and four men. Two sanitary corporals and four men," (p.308) because the agony of holding the dead body would be soon over. And then Tietjens to complete this mechanical process with utmost care and respect to the dead, "...let the trunk of
the body sink slowly to the floor. He was more gentle than if the man had been alive." (p.308).

This is the tragedy of human beings. We are more considerate and kind to the dead than to the living. This also shows that the reflexes of both the soldiers and the officers are too humane to invite any sentimentalism. Mechanised as these people are, the very word "casualty" spurs them to cleanse the room smeared with the blood, and "fourmen" - to act as pall bearers to see the dead to its final resting place.

But Christopher Tietjens reacts in a completely different manner under the given circumstances. Herein lies his heroism. Though a part of the system, yet he is not carried in its current. His reflexes and reactions to the dead are entirely different. Any death in the unit under his command always upsets him and shocks him beyond endurance. The very core of his being gets a jolt and he is left brooding. This gives rise to a guilt complex in him and he is left alone to bear the torture. It is evinced on the death of O'Nine Margan, which leaves Christopher Tietjens in a Hamletian dilemma, contemplating the cause of the death of O'Nine Margan because "the man's life and death had been in his hands." (pp.355-56).

The guilt complex, in Captain Christopher Tietjens demonstrates that his is a purely human concern for fellow beings and therein lies his humanity. To retain one's humanity and ones concern for fellow beings in war is
heroic and it is in this context that the heroism of Captain Tietjens is to be viewed in the battlefield. Heroic deeds, such as this show that man has not been completely beaten down. There is still hope, even if it be in the remotest possible sense and that everything was not over.

The world could still be saved from absolute disaster and destruction, if the man in civil, only learnt lessons from the experiences of the man in uniform. Further, the communication gap between the people at the helm of affairs at home, the soldiers in the battlefield, and the officers at the Headquarters resulted in an utter failure in comprehending the gravity of the situation into which the world had been hurled headlong. The resultant confusion spelt complete disorder, and things, thereafter, could not be straightened out. This affected the working of the troops and the whole army was in a state of disarray. It only increased the agony of the officers who were entrusted with the responsibility of seeing things to the finish. The narrator records:

To the elder officer burdened with the command of a unit of unreasonable size, with a scratch headquarters of useless subalterns who were continually being changed, with N.C.O.s all unwilling to work, with rank and file mostly all colonials and unused to doing things...had two thousand nine hundred and ninety four men to send off that night...(p.295)
This worried him. Further his responsibility demanded of him that these soldiers were properly documented before they went into the battlefield. This frustrates him because, "Everyman had nine sets of papers and tags that had to be signed by an officer ...and nine times two thousand nine hundred and ninety four is twenty-six thousand nine hundred and forty six..." (p.295).

But then, were all those who officered the army competent? They were all drawn from everywhere and nowhere. The narrator portrays the officer class as totally unfit, arrogant and not at all worthy to lead the men. They were highly incompetent and inefficient officers, and:

The officer in charge of draft is Second Lieutenant Hotchkiss...Hotchkiss could walk as far as the station, let alone march the men, him not knowing anything but cavalry words of command, if he knows them. He's only been in the army a fortnight... (p.313).

It is both tragic and ironic. The officers were never taken to task for the dereliction of duty. Instead, the war proved to be an easy ride for them. It was so because,

... It's only a rag-time army, as the saying is, when you've said the best for it that you can... It's an encouraging spectacle, really... We lie and betray and are wanting in imagination
and deceive ourselves... moving towards places
towards which they desperately don't want to go.
Desperately: Everyone of them is desperately
afraid. But they go on. (p.453).

This eventually resulted in a void between the
officers and the soldiers. This unbridgeable chasm was
the direct offshoot of the callousness and lethargy of the
highups. General Edward Campion, in fact, is one such
outstanding example of this. The General, who was "both
inexpert and very careless" always mistrusted his
subordinates, "It was probably that that made him so
successful an officer, Be worked for by men that you
trust: but distrust them all the time..." (pp.479-80).
Consequently, this exemplary mutual distrust of the
General-in-Command had negative effects on the minds of the
soldiers at his hands.

Socially, it shows the difference between the
position, status and the privileges that the landed
aristocracy and the newly developed middle classes enjoyed,
while the same were denied to the rest of the classes.
Whereas the aristocracy of the day, because of its
tremendous power, could occupy all the coveted positions
in the Army, the upper middle classes because of their
newly acquired riches and connections with the aristocracy,
procured for themselves good posts in the forces.

Colonel Levin, one of the many such
beneficiaries, used this great event in the great war, to
learn French from his junior officers such as Tietjens, instead of committing himself to warfare because: "...it was necessary for a G.S.O.II, or what ever the Colonel was, to be seen quite frequently in the company of very handsome V.A.D.s and female organisors of all arms..." (pp.325-26).

Whereas these affluent classes could make the battlefield a place for sexual assaults, the people belonging to the poor classes found life very hard and difficult.

The most glaring example of this disparity is to be found in case of an Oxford professor: "And Cowley had got a very goodman, a first class man, an Oxford Professor, now a lance Corporal at the depot." (p.369). Therefore, under these conditions, when merit was totally ignored, there was bound to be chaos in the battlefield. Frustration, disgust and despair gripped the mind of the soldiers. This eventually resulted in dereliction of duty. Gross nepotism prevailed all around.

Henceforth, the "rag-time" constituents simply associated themselves with the happenings in the battlefield. Infact, they had resigned themselves as the "silent spectators" to the great tragedy that was being enacted before them. This disinterestedness and the failure of the soldiers to equate and identify themselves with their fellow-beings reflects their mental condition. They were on the verge of a nervous breakdown. War had made them nervous wrecks. The strain was too hard to bear and they were bound to break under the stress.
Even the reinforcements sent to boost the sagging morale of the soldiers were inadequate to meet the challenge. It was a farce. This only aided in frustrating the soldiers.

Well...They were getting reinforcements. The Home Authorities had awakened to their prayers. They sent them sixteen Worcesters. They would be three hundred and forty four - no, forty three...lonely souls against...say two Divisions: Against about eighteen thousand, very likely. And they were to stick it till they burst. Reinforced: (p.597).

Despite this, army discipline still demanded strict observance of rules and exemplary conduct from all cadres, especially senior officers and generals. The battlefield for them is not a place to fight the enemy but a harem, where instead of military warfare being planned and discussed, the beautiful wives of other officers are discussed. Consequently military plans are chalked out to have sexual intercourses with them. Calculated encroachments are engineered to launch sexual assaults on the wives of the junior officers. Christopher Tietjens, too, is charged with "being drunk and striking a superior officer", (p.459) whereas the facts are contrary to the stated version: "General O'Hara came to my wife's room and burst in the door... My wife was in a state... bordering on nudity. I had put my hand under his chin and thrown him
through the doorway". (p.460).

No doubt, Captain Tietjens is able to thwart the nefarious design of General O'Hara to commit adultery with his wife, but he has to face a lot of humiliation at the hands of his superiors. Stories are concocted and Captain Tietjens is expected to explain his conduct in the light of army discipline. Captain Tietjens is treated with great scorn for having tried to trample upon the General's privilege to fuck the wife of the officer in his command: "who still insists that he had been invited to your wife's room..." (p.462). The charge against the General can easily be upheld because, asserts Captain Tietjens:

General O'Hara positively burst in the little sneak of the door that I had put down and came in shouting; 'where is the - blackmailer ?' And it was a full three minutes before I could get rid of him. I had the presence of mind to switch off the light and he persisted in asking for another look at Mrs. Tietjens. (p.463).

But the general gets away with impunity and it is Captain Tietjens who gets the 'reward' for having tried to obstruct the General's way into his (captain Tietjen's) wife's bed. The whole episode is ironic in the sense that it is Captain Tietjens - the legal husband of Mrs. Tietjens, who gets the kick on his ass and not the General. He is supposed to be under arrest and then as a punishment, meant only to liquidate him, he is despatched to the frontline.
This injustice happens to a man who lived very much by rules of conduct. Even the General-in-Command, General Edward Campion was convinced about it and had often sought his advice and counsel on important matters concerning warfare. This made him think that "Tietjens really ought to have more exalted employment" (p.352). But the General almost grew suspicious of him and was on the lookout for the least possible opportunity to send him packing because "...he's unsound. That's what he is, unsound. He is too brilliant..." (p.352).

"Brilliant" and "A Man of Intellect", are the adjectives used by the General officer-in-Command, to define Christopher Tietjens, who was determined that the men should not see him hurry during a 'strafe' along the trenches, for that would demoralise and discourage them. Exemplary conduct to instil confidence into the "rag-time army" was required and Captain Tietjens was the living embodiment of it. Consequently, his fellow officers and subordinates adored him. They reposed their full faith in him because they felt "Tietjens, all wise could direct the awful courses of war and decree safety for the frightened", (p.599). And this is why Aranjuez, a nice, dark, tiny boy, "From the very first - and naturally, frightened out of his little life, he had clung to Tietjens as a child clings to an omnipotent father". (p.598).

Under normal circumstances, these qualities of an officer, in a battlefield, should have won him recommendation and a gallantry award, but Tietjens is
despatched to the frontlines, not out of some war compulsion, but because of some personal consideration of the General. "The General wanted Sylvia Tietjens. So as to get her he had sent Tietjens into hottest part of the line." (p.663) This is a poor reflection on the state of affairs in the army because, on the one hand officers/soldiers went to the frontlines to uphold the great cause for which they were fighting, and on the other, back in the lines the highups in the army were making designs to fulfil their personal whims. On the face of it, it may seem that military consideration drove the highups to send the soldiers to the frontlines for being killed, yet it is not so. It is a war between brilliance and incompetence, a war between 'Man of Intellect' and no intellect and a war between gross misconduct and 'exemplary conduct'. It is due to this that Tietjens had refused to get killed and it ultimately resulted in the failure of the design of the General.

When the General discovers that he is not able to beat down Captain Tietjens, he makes a volteface and takes back his words very handsomely.

He had even said that Tietjens had deserved a decoration, but there were only a certain number of decorations now to be given and that he imagined that Tietjens would prefer it to be given to a man to whom it would be of more advantage. And he did not like to recommend for
The General is made to eat the humble pie, and yet refuses to acknowledge the make of captain Tietjens. His plans having misfired, General Edward Campion retaliates, misuses his authority and position, asks Captain Tietjens to take over the P.O.W.'s for that was certainly going to torture him mentally, for Captain Christopher Tietjens had never been able to identify himself with anything German, because of his German wife. Tietjens wants to react against this highhandedness of the General, firstly, for being unfair to him and secondly, for having tried to commit adultery with his wife Sylvia. So he broods, "...he would kill him: call him out and kill him... That of course was absurd...You do not kill a General Officer Commanding in chief...And a good General too." (p.667) He would not kill a General officer Commanding (G.O.C) because of his respect for authority. Moreover, military discipline, too, demanded this of him. Therefore, he acts in a perfect soldierly manner and refuses to be overtaken by any fit of anger and revenge. To me, it seems that war and military discipline, not only coarsened him, but also had made a man of him. War for him was a purgatory. It only purified him mentally, spiritually and physically.

The war had made a man of him! It had coarsened him and hardened him... It had made him reach a point at which he could no longer stand unbearable things. At any rate from his equals:
He counted Campion as his equal; ... (p.668).

But, the war surely devastates Christopher Tietjens. He loses everything that is old and valuable, not in terms of materialism, but in terms of morality. He is a completely broken man with no hope of redemption, but then this is what his creator wanted him to be. Bernard Bergonzi says:

Tietjens is constantly shown as the honourable man harried by the low, unworthy forces that manifest themselves when the opulent Edwardian upper class...becomes corrupt in the atmosphere of war. Macmaster, the energetic social climber whom Tietjens had befriended and helped, picks his friend's brains and rises to a pinnacle of bureaucratic eminence, whilst Tietjens remains an obscure infantry officer.

The subject matter of all war fiction, is, therefore, the social as well as the cultural decay following the Great War. War is not to be viewed strictly in the militaristic sense a battle being fought in the battlefield, but with a socio-political cultural implication.

The battlefield...becomes...part of a larger experience, as a place always intruded by 'money, women, testamentary brother: hence the social war and the sex war move to the lives, with Tietjens' bitch-wife Sylvia and the
This brings up to another very important theme, that of human relationships. War affected everything and all beings. Consequently, all familial bonds were broken and the idea of a well-knit family was a distant cry. Women were liberated both financially and otherwise and they came to exercise their own rights.

All this is portrayed by Ford Madox Ford, in the relationship between Christopher Tietjens and Sylvia—who are legally married, but are out to destroy each other so that only he or she may live. The two are always at war with each other. Malcolm Bradbury comments on this fate of Christopher Tietjens: "His war thus starts long before the outbreak of hostilities, in the strange chivalric marriage he makes to a deceitful wife, pregnant by another man..."

The question that comes to my mind is why did this "chivalric marriage" turn out to be the most unchivalrous one? Why couldn't Christopher Tietjens handle his wife properly. It shouldn't have been difficult for a man—the perfect Gentleman officer—"who mothered lot of us as if he was a hen sitting on addled eggs", (p.399). Had he been able to do so he would have certainly avoided the absolute destruction of the family. Married to a Catholic
woman of a very domineering nature, whose game is "Hell and Hounds" and who refuses to be beaten down, he finds the going a bit tough for him. She is a perfect foil to him and is very hostile and violent. Unfaithful, deceitful, "The beautiful sexual terrorist", "One of the most frightening immoralists in all literature" are the various adjectives used by different critics to define Sylvia Tietjens - the legitimate wife of Captain Christopher Tietjens "pregnant by another man", before marriage.

Right from the moment the story unfolds itself in Some Do Not Part-I, of Parade's End, we learn that all is not well with husband and wife. Christopher Tietjens and Macmaster a friend of the husband are shown discussing Sylvia's elopement and subsequent plans of divorce. But Tietjens "had not spoken more than twenty words at most about the event" (p.6). He prefers to remain silent over the issue, but when Macmaster confronts him with the issue of divorcing her, he projects himself to be quite kind and considerate to his wife. "No : No one but a black guard would ever submit a woman to the ordeal of divorce." (p.6). An honourable man, who would rather suffer at the hands of his wife than soil the dignity of a woman, is what Christopher Tietjens trying to be. To Macmaster's query "You will permit her to divorce you ?" Christopher's reply is, "If she wishes it. There's the child to be considered". (P.E., p.6). It seems that Christopher is
prepared to suffer endless privations at the hands of his wife and not let the family disintegrate. The child appears to be the unifying force of the otherwise separate individuals. When Sylvia, through a letter, asks him to take her back, Christopher readily gives his consent whereas Macmaster reacts most violently to the proposition: "I wish you would drag the woman through the mud. By God I do! Why should she mangle you for the rest of your life? She's done enough!" (p.10).

But, Tietjens would not do anything of the kind. His reactions seem to be unnatural and one can easily infer that he has already reconciled himself to his fate as far as the relationship with his wife is concerned. He knows that "A man oght to be able to keep his wife", yet he is not able to do so. He appears to be indecisive about exercising his control and authority over the behaviour of his wife in future and does not know how to stop her from her misdeeds. "I don't know", Tietjens said "How am I to stop it? Mind you I think...Such calamities are the will of God." (p.11).

Sylvia plays hell and hounds with her husband and in the process performs immoral deeds publicly with the sole aim of humiliating her husband in the shape of elopements, sexual encounters with others. The wife makes these regular flings, even at people close to her husband, knowing pretty well that this would lead to her absolute annihilation in life. She goes on unchecked and unabashedly with her pursuits, but Christopher Tietjens on
his part, remains totally unmoved and is never nonplussed. Malcolm Bradbury comments that "Tietjens world has indeed, already disappeared before the war starts: he had already become absurd in his chivalry, his code of honour, monogamy and chastity". Therefore, it is futile to think that he would be able to extract himself from this abyss of mental torture and acquit himself honourably.

In fact, Sylvia has been wilfully murdered by her husband at the altar of marriage. She has not been able to reconcile with this. Her endeavours throughout the novel, are directed at avenging her fate, for which she holds Tietjens responsible. The real tragedy of Sylvia is that she is not socially acceptable to the Tietjens of Groby as a daughter-in-law. Except for some financial security, all other securities are denied to her. This leaves her homeless and without the protective shield of the husband. She feels cheated. This maddens her and she goes astray. She is treated as an outsider and not a member of the family. This is evinced at the time of the death of Christopher’s mother. Sylvia alleges:

Did you...get out of taking me to your mother funeral because you thought I should defile your mother's corpse by my presence? Or because you were afraid that in the presence of your mother's body you wouldn't be able to conceal from me that you thought I killed her?...

(p.172).
It shows that Sylvia was treated as an alien by the members of the family—who could have easily let her identify herself with them, in the absence of which, she goes back to her old game of having "men at her feet". No doubt, on the face of it, it appears that she is not at all repentant about her misdeeds and seems to bear things stoically, yet it is not so. Being the weaker sex she confesses to her husband.

If...you had once in our lives said to me: 'You whore! You bitch! You killed my mother. May you rot in hell for it.... If you'd only once said something like it...about the child! About Perowne! ...You might have done something to bring us together...(p.172).

But the husband does not do anything of the kind. Nowhere in the novel do we ever come to know of the attempts made by him to exercise control and hold over his wife. Infact, he lets her have her own way. Sylvia laments this indifferent attitude of her husband, who could have easily saved her. She very ruefully asks: "But, oh Christopher Tietjens, have you ever considered how foully you've used me!" (p.172).

This brings us to another important problem in man woman relationship: the problem of using others for personal benefit. Whereas, in doing so, an individual may achieve his aim, but it certainly reduces the other person to the level of a thing, a commodity. This is exactly what happens to Sylvia in Parades End and there is nothing wrong
when she decides "to adopt much more formidable methods", to bring Christopher Tietjens to his heels. She resolves with finality, "He shall...he shall... he shall come to heel". (p.384).

If we study the novel in the light of the above allegations, we shall certainly find that Sylvia has been more sinned against than sinning. In fact, her husband is responsible for this condition of hers. And all her escapades and sexual encounters with other men are a direct offshoot of the utter neglect and dereliction of duty on the part of her husband who miserably fails to preserve the sanctity of marriage.

Here we are faced with another question: why did Christopher Tietjens enter into this matrimonial alliance with Sylvia, if he were not to preserve it? Sylvia, a German by birth, has an unshakable faith in religion and Lord Jesus Christ. She would do anything except let herself and others in her company misuse this faith. During her youth, she had been taken advantage of after champagne, by a married man called Drake. This sexual assault-cum-rape of Sylvia, ultimately resulted in the development of a passion for men. This passion took the shape of a longing and there was the desire in her "to experience that dreadful feeling" again, and this was certainly not to be "with Drake". From desire, it became a wish and finally a sport with her - exploiting, torturing and hunting men. "She had to have men at her feet; that
was, as it were, the price of her—purely social—daily bread
as it was the price of the daily bread of her intimates.'
(p.150).

It is against this background that Christopher
Tietjens, an Englishman of respectable Edwardian class "a
perfect encyclopaedia of knowledge", marries Sylvia, who
is already pregnant by another man. Any other woman, in
Sylvia's place, would have been thankful to Christopher
Tietjens for having saved her from further degradation, but
Sylvia finds the going quite difficult. Instead she
devises means and ways of inflicting deeper and quiet
pains on her husband. The husband suffers passively at
the hands of his thankless wife, remains inert, and does
nothing to straighten out things. His agony is that
Sylvia Tietjens had been excruciatingly unfaithful, in the
most painful manner. He could not be certain that the
child he adored was his own. Still he refuses to divorce
her, fails to exercise his authority over her, is not able
to bring her to book, remains cool, calm and quiet despite
provocations from his wife. The wife is not prepared to
concede that Christopher is as innocent as a child, where
as Christopher is seen contemplating "Things are said
against me. I don't know why". But the wife holds him
responsible for all her troubles. She resents his having
reduced her to the animal level. She says:

You know what it is to ride a horse for miles
with too tight a curb-chain and its tongue cut
almost in half...Well! Think of this mare's
mouth sometimes! You've ridden me like that for seven years...

Don't you know, Christopher Tietjens, that there is only one man from whom a woman could take...

(p.173).

But the husband remains mute to the pleadings of his wife and does not respond positively to this S.O.S. signal from her. To me, it seems that Sylvia's endeavours are directed at bringing him down to a human scale so that he learns to behave normally instead of trying to be Christ like in his suffering. I feel, by doing so, Christopher Tietjens is trying to deny himself the true nature of a human being. He is trying to negate his own being to be more on the side of sainthood. It makes one infer that he is trying to act as martyr in the eyes of others to win their sympathy and pity for himself. But having denied to himself his true human nature, Christopher is bound to suffer and with him suffers Sylvia too. As V.S. Pritchett puts it,

One has a sneaking sympathy for his wife who at one moment complains that her husband is trying to be Jesus Christ as well as the misunderstood son of a great landowner. Her cruelties are an attempt to turn a martyr into a man.

Christopher Tietjens had married Sylvia with the purpose of having a Catholic offspring, whose birth would lessen the shadow of doom on the estate of Groby — that was
taken over by the Tietjens after "the Lord Justice cheated the papist Loundeses out of Groby!" Recalls Christopher Tietjens:

There's not been a Tietjens...but died of a broken neck or of a broken heart; for all the fifteen thousand acres of good farming land and iron Land... And mind you none of the Tietjens were ever soft... They had reason for their broken hearts... Take my poor father... Both my brothers were killed in Indian Regiments on the same day and not a mile apart. And my sister in the same week, out at sea, not far from them... My father got the three notifications on the same day. It was enough to break his heart. He only lived a month. (p.177).

In the light of this it seems that Christopher Tietjens, by marrying a Catholic Lady "pregnant by another man," was atoning for the sins of his forefathers. If this is so, then isn't there a design in his marriage to Sylvia? The latent feeling in him being lest the sins of his forefathers should revisit Groby and cast a shadow of further gloom. It has some sort of semblance with the ancient Indian ritual of human sacrifice made only to propitiate the deities, to have the prayers answered. Likewise, it is Sylvia, who is sacrificed by Christopher with the aim of fulfilling his design. If Christopher Tietjens is really Christ-like in his suffering, let us not
forget that He suffered for the sake of his fellowmen, and
did not 'use' anybody else for the same, as Christopher
does. 'He' suffered all alone for mankind because He
always felt and said that "Forgive them Father; for they
know not, what they do".

The tragedy is that Christopher fails to accomplish
his mission of saving Great Groby from annihilation and
eventually takes refuge in the lap of Miss Valentine Wannop
rather than that of his wife Sylvia Tietjens. It is not to
be construed that Christopher Tietjens is a victim of the
societal changes and social pressures, and therefore, is
not able to hold on to the great old values of an effete
Edwardian aristocracy, but the reality lies elsewhere.
Highly incompetent, hollow from within, basically a
hypocrite, Christopher Tietjens, seems to be a disjointed
whole. A bundle of contradictions, we often find him
practising the opposite of what he says. Christopher
Tietjens had physical contact with this woman (Sylvia)
before he married her, in a railway carriage coming down
from the Dukeries, and yet has the audacity to proclaim
himself morally virtuous, having preserved his
virginity/chastity for his would be wife, of his being
respectful to the woman in general. He refuses to accept
his shortcomings and fails to improve himself, Instead he
proclaims with vanity:

When I say 'Woman' I'm using the word in the
ordinary sense. Of course I've given women of
our own class tea or lunch and paid for their
Perhaps I'd better put it, that I've never—either before or after marriage—had connection with any woman... (p. 204).

How sincerely one would have wished that Christopher Tietjens were really so. But it is not so. The novel demonstrates that Christopher Tietjens inspite of his tall proclamations, is a wolf in lamb's clothings.

Last of all, if Christopher Tietjens refuses to divorce his wife Sylvia at the end of the novel, it is not without a purpose. Not that this gentleman officer holds the institution of marriage in reverence, but because a divorce would devastatingly affect not only his old furniture business but also the design to save Great Groby from perishing. If he were to do a successful business it would require exploiting of the social contacts of Sylvia.

In the end, Sylvia Tietjens refuses to become heartless and ruthless as Gudrun does in *Women in Love*. Instead, she realises that God had so ordained that she could never have her husband, grows wiser, resigns herself to fate and accepts this hard reality. With equanimity she bows to the will of the Almighty, for "probably God desired that Christopher should be freed as early as possible", (p. 807) gives Christopher Tietjens, to the other woman—Valentine Wannop. In doing so, she fulfills her promise made to Father Consett, of mending herself and sparing Christopher Tietjens the agony.

In the process, Christopher Tietjens loses his old
values, his old world and his fears. His perseverance gives way and he deserts his own self. He takes off the Hamletian mask, accepts reality and finally, like Gudrun, lapses into a lesser world where the old values and the old code of conduct seem to hold no longer. Malcolm Bradbury states that at the end of the ordeal, Christopher Tietjens: ...loses his old values, his old heaven, his world of parades and moral prohibitions and the gains are his new woman and a new wife becoming ironically an antique dealer: in the new, paradeless world.

Christopher Tietjens is able to adjust himself with his new woman and lives happily thereafter with her because he finds Valentine more helpful, kind and constructive than Sylvia. Therefore, Christopher Tietjens recalls "that girl down there is the only intelligent living soul I've met for years" and hopefully looks upto her in adversity.

But, positively, she and Sylvia were the only two human beings he had met for years whom he could respect: the one for sheer efficiency in killing; the other for having the constructive desire and knowing how to set about it. Kill or cure! The two functions of man. If you wanted something killed you'd go to Sylvia Tietjens in the sure faith that she would kill it: emotion, hope, ideal; kill it quick and sure. If you wanted something kept alive you'd go to Valentine: She'd find some thing to do for it.
The two types of mind: remorseless enemy, sure screen, dagger... sheath! (p.128).

But Valentine Wannop is unlike Miriam of Sons and Lovers; not always ready to sacrifice herself for the sake of others. Infact, she is more enlightened than any other creature in the novel and is as violent and aggressive as Sylvia. But her aggression and violence are directed at liberating, the "Old fashioned Woman" of the day. Hershelf a "suffragette", who had "inherited the Wannop Luck", Valentine Wannop is doubly sure of herself. Her confidence in herself, her optimism, are the offshoots of her pragmatism which enables her to "harangue the whole crowd, when I got them together". Simultaneously, she does not lose the womanliness, the comeliness of her character and admits that "to speak to one man in cold blood, I couldn't" (p.83). This tenderness of heart reflects her true feminine character and endears her to the people around. She exhibits an inborn confidence that always guides her to work for the liberation of all women. She says

A nice, considerate person I am. And you with this ordeal hanging over you! Do you suppose I don't appreciate all your silent heroism of the home, while we're marching about with flags and shouting? But it's just to stop women like you being tortured, body and soul, week in, week out... (p.85).

Miss Valentine Wannop is, therefore, socially
conscious of the role that women were bound to play, both at home and outside in a changing society because of the Great War.

Symbolically, Valentine voices two movements in history. It is "Male hegemony" being challenged by the "New Women". No doubt, these movements lead in opposite directions, yet they highlight the inner urge of women, to break open the manacles of man dictated slavery. Therefore, the two are trying desperately to outdo each other. It was obvious that the male domineering society should do its utmost to beat down the weaker sex to submission or else lose its power and hold over them. That Miss Valentine refuses to be beaten down and practises enlightened promiscuity at the end of the novel with Christopher Tietjens, shows that women had become independent of men and the two could live together, only if they recognised and respected each other's identity and individuality.

Her strong convictions not only make Valentine stoic, but also help in making her humane. Instead of perpetrating vengeance violently, as is done by Sylvia, she is kind and humane, surrenders herself wilfully to Christopher Tietjens, so that this broken man is able to become an organic whole. Consequently "she surrendered... she was finished, chastity: nappo finny : like everything else :" (p. 266).

This is unlike Gudrun in *Women in Love*, who lets
Gerald Crich have a bath of life in her after his father's death and then feels that she had been wilfully slain by him in this act, reacts violently thereafter, and taunts him finally to death. Miss Valentine Wannop acts in an entirely different manner. Being sure of herself, her lover and her deed, she has no cause to repent later on.

In spite of all this, she is not able to suppress her tender nature at the time of separation from her lover. The agony is writ large on her face and she is always worried about the future. Whether Christopher would return safely from the warfront? If not, then what? If he got killed, what would become of her? She tries to contemplate with equanimity, "but her hard conditions" hold her back from suggesting to Christopher that "...that a decent fellow didn't get his girl into trouble before going to be killed...." (p.273).

But, once in the battlefield, Christopher Tietjens forgets about things at home, about people who had wilfully surrendered to him, because soon he was in trouble against everything - "with his superiors: with so unnecessarily Hun projectiles, wire, mud, over Money: politics", etc. He is seen struggling desperately to straighten out things for himself. But he fails, while Miss Valentine Wannop keeps on waiting to hear from him. Her long wait is in vain and she is frustrated. She feels cheated at the hands of her lover and the love ultimately turns into hate. She detests him for having used her and feels that he was only monkeying with her.
For two long years, she didn't hear from him. The long wait for him didn't prove rewarding. If he suffered troubles in the battlefield, she too, suffered, back at home because of him. And when finally, he reappears, she feels that "he was calling to her again to enter into the suffocating web of his imbroglios". She is in a dilemma whether to heed his call and is in mood of anguish and indecisiveness that "she clenched her nails into her palms; she stamped her thin soled shoes into the coke-brise floor" and finally.

She marched straight at the telephone that was by now uttering long, tiny, night-jar's calls and, with one snap, pulled the receiver right off the twisted green-blue card...Broke it: with incidental satisfaction. (p.528).

and said "Who cares". (p.529).

With Sylvia Tietjens finally giving up her husband to Miss Valentine Wannop, the two lovers reach perfect understanding as "there was nothing now between them" (p.652). They realise the importance of each other in their lives and happily acknowledge that it has been a long, but fruitful wait, and Christopher acknowledges: "Her mind so marches with mine that she will understand". (p.651).

The marching of the minds symbolises that this couple has learnt through its experiences the importance of being together, Togetheress was bound to give them an emotional fulfilment. Living together becomes compossible
for them because they are ready to sacrifice anything and every thing for each other. In the process of doing so, they surrender Great Groby without a whimper, thereby, realising the futility of material pursuits. Not only this, the two feel that they would not be able to turn the tide of valuelessness to its golden past, therefore, they too, drift into a lesser world where the institution of marriage loses all its sanctity. Valentine Wannop goes a step further to "live with a man without being married to him".

Corruption, therefore, does not remain a relative term in Parade's End. Infact it becomes a metaphor. It soils all things and every being portrayed in the novel. Old values, old morality, old codes of conduct and anything humane have to make way for a new, corrupt and perverted society. Human relationships are not based anymore on emotions or mutual respect for each other, but on unquenchable lust for money and power.

Macmaster is a typical representative of the moneyed civilization and his relationship with Christopher Tietjens is based on how best to use and exploit his friend's knowledge and social position, to gain a quick rise in life. The inherent trait of Macmaster's personality is to see himself well entrenched in office, in an enviable position, that was bound to give him a new social status and acceptance. The essential difference between the two men is that whereas Christopher Tietjens
seems to be a contented and relaxed fellow in public, Macmaster is a symbol of discontentment. Of the two Christopher is exceptionally brilliant and knowledgeable, whereas Macmaster is of average intelligence and highly incapable. Hence, he is always in for cheap publicity, uses his friend's thesis, data etc. to make himself appear encyclopaedic and original in thought and action, whereas Christopher Tietjens would always say, "I don't want my name fixed up in the unspeakable affair. When I give him the papers on Monday, I shall tell him, you (Macmaster) did most of the work". (p.47).

Perhaps, Tietjens was not cut out for this, or he had his eyes set somewhere else. Therefore, "Tietjens went on, with both hands as it were, throwing away opportunity..." and Macmaster kept on grabbing it at his friend's cost because,

Macmaster had early made up his mind that life for him would be safest if he could go about, not very much observed but still an authority, in the midst of men all labelled. He wanted to walk down Pall Mall on the arm, precisely, of a large-lettered Senior Wrangler; to return eastward on the arm of the Youngest Lord Chancellor England had ever seen; to stroll down Whitehall in familiar converse with a world famous novelist, saluting on the way a majority of My Lords Commissioners of the Treasury. (p.48).
This not only reveals the real and ambitious Macmaster, but also demonstrates the latent desire of people of his class to move up the ladder i.e. from lower middleclass to higher middle class and eventually to aristocracy. It was necessary if one was to wield power and hold over others. Therefore, the Macmasters are easily impressed by the romantic settings and tastes of the higher classes, as they themselves have been denied access to them.

Henceforth the greedy Macmaster very tacitly and shrewdly exploits his friend's brilliance and is finally able to gain entry into the social circles that mattered most, of the day. He gains a Kin g i thood, becomes rich and pros pers. He is wedded to Edith Ethel Duchemin, and Christopher Tietjens, thereafter, is of no more use to him. He has the audacity to kick down his ladder and there the relationship terminates. The narrator says:

Before this war, and, of course, before he had lent all his money to Vincent Macmaster that — that grey grizzly had been perfectly fit for the country parsonage drawing-room of Edith Ethel Duchemin: he had been welcomed there with effusion !....After the War, then, and when his money was — presumably — exhausted, and his mind exhausted...he was not fit for the Salon of Lady Macmaster — the only Lady to have a Salon in London. (p.521).
Infact, *Parade's End* is replete with such war/is references, and how fatal these could be is shown in the relationship between the two brothers Mark Tietjens and Christopher Tietjens. Both having reconciled to their fate, they fail to save Great Groby from final destruction as the two brothers kept on moving in parallels, the former failing to adapt himself to the changed circumstances of a new postwar world, and the latter refusing to be of help to the former, as the two are temperamentally different. Hence the clash of their personalities is inevitable. The impact of war has essentially been a negative one on these two brothers. If Christopher is "coarsened" because of the war, then Mark Tietjens is seen withdrawing into his shell silently, waiting for the ultimate disaster. In the words of Malcolm Bradbury, war, therefore,

...is Tietjens purgatory, a version of the great pressing machine of modern life. And through it Tietjens is pressed into adaptation. He suffers, is buried, wounded, persecuted, forced into action and heroism, split away from the past.

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We find the narrator using war as a big metaphor for battlefield cries and domestic turmoils. War extends itself from the battlefield in Europe and plays a very destructive role in the lives of the people at home. War,
therefore, "manifested in different forms as violation, intrusion, wound, the source of psychic anxiety, generational instability, mechanistic inhumanity".

Structurally, we have a double movement in the novel. The outside movement of the war has impact on the human psyche from where a struggle emanates in the minds of the human beings who start questioning the utility of progress. Writing to his friend Gerald Duckworth, in a letter dated 18th May, 1926 from Paris, Ford Madox Ford elicits the purpose and admits certain public aims in writing this voluminous book:

This is what the late war was like: this is how modern fighting of the organised, scientific type affects the mind. If, for reasons of gain, or, as is still more likely, out of dislike for collective types other than your own you choose to permit your rulers to embark on another war, this - or something very accentuated along similar lines - is what you will have to put up with.

Stung by their traumatic experience in the war, people had become psychotic. War had brought about a sea change in the thinking of the people. They had come to understand its bitter realities and were not prepared to face it again. They became allergic to anything that depicted the horrors of war realistically. Consequently, the anti-epics of 1920 were unwelcome and any first person
narrations of the cruelties of war, such as Richard Aldington's *Death of a Hero* were not received kindly by the public of the day. Realism had to be dislocated if any writer wanted his work to be received favourably by the people. Therefore, experimental structures started appearing. Commenting upon the constituents of *Parade's End*, Ford Madox Ford, says in the same letter. "As for as I am privately concerned these books, like my others, constitute an attempt simply to reflect—not in the least to reflect on—our own times."

In *Parade's End*, Ford catches history at a point just before the breakout of the Great War and ends even long after the war ended. The subject matter of the novel was to be the public events of the day and the world as it culminated in the war. *Parade's End*, was not to be a war history, but a history of changed times because of the war.

As Ford Madox Ford desired to reflect his times in his monumental work, he was aware of the dual role that he was to play: that of a historian and of a novelist. He recalls this in a letter dated 31st Oct. 1924, addressed to his friend William Bird: "All novels are historical, but all novels do not deal with such events as get on to the pages of history."

The whole novel sequence is, thus, directed at one individual Christopher Tietjens, who enacts all history through his experiences in the battlefield, his sufferings at the hands of his immediate superiors as well as his lawful wife – Sylvia, and his close friend Macmaster.
Samuel Hynes observes: "...it is this that made Parade's End a special problem, for in it Ford was writing the history of his own time on an immense and public scale."

Time, no more, remains a historical time with Ford Madox Ford. It becomes psychological, oscillating backwards and forwards, at times fluctuating, with the inherent desire to probe the consciousness and injured psyche of the people. This time-shift technique gives the novelist an opportunity to dramatise rather than describe by juxtaposing the two worlds at play in the novel — prewar solid world of 1912 and the disordered postwar world, represented here in, by Mark Tietjens and Christopher respectively.

There were in the tide of Fleet Street, pushed apart by foot passengers and separated by traffic. With some of the imperiousness of the officer of those days Christopher barged across through motor buses and paper lorries. With the imperiousness of the head of a department Mark said: "Here, policeman, stop these damn things and let me get over" (p.216).

The complex realism of Parade's End, demanded a coherent structure. This Ford could achieve by blending the historical fable with his impressionism, as he was basically preoccupied with studying the effects of history on human psyche. Therefore, the chronicled history is not strength, as it would make the narration all subjective and
full of interpolations, as in Death of a Hero. Hence historical inaccuracies, such as "misquotations, his errors of titles and dates and his many inaccurate biographical details", show his inherent and most profound contempt for facts and give way to impressionism. Ford very adroitly makes use of this technique extensively in Parade's End, not only for public or private purpose, but also for recording the consciousness of the main character — Christopher Tietjens, suggesting the movement of mind amid historical chaos and crude reality of life.

The point is that any piece of impressionism whether it be prose, verse, or painting, or sculpture, is the record of the impression of a moment, it is not a sort of rounded, annotated record of a set of circumstances that happened ten years ago — or ten minutes. It might even be the impression of the moment but it is the impression, not the corrected chronicle.

This enabled him to pick the thread at time when history seemed disordered and depict the "world as it culminated in the war", in the process covering a long span of historical events — from "Feudalism to modern class war to materialist democracy".

To be able to present this great panorama of change of muddled history, and to bring an awareness among the people of how the war was likely to be, Ford would have required a number of characters to portray these different
aspects of historical as well as social change. This would have meant amassing a large society—a large gathering of characters, each of whom would have vied with the other to destroy the other. The result would have been another big chaos and the very purpose of the novel would have been lost. Therefore, Ford thought of creating a central character, who would have a place both in peace and war, was not only capable of suffering the traumas of the change, but also of observing the events leading to the historical and the social change accompanying it. Malcolm Bradbury says:

His central character, then would be a man torn both in public and private life by the pressures of the time, "a poor fellow whose body is tied in one place, but whose mind and personality brood eternally over another distant locality."

Therefore, the central character in Parade's End, was not to be the typical towering, martial man of the Renaissance, but a man who could stand above and beyond the rest of the people, not in bravery, but in suffering. He was supposed to be a historical figure in this historical allegory "who carries the forces of time with him", who is the man of history. Bernard Bergonzi comments in the context:

...he (Tietjens) is the last true Tory, the final anachronistic embodiment of the virtues of the eighteenth-century English gentleman, an
Anglican Saint, even something of a Christ-
figure, turning the other cheek to his
persecutors. And yet Tietjens is always
recognisable as a living human being; fair, red-
faced, large, slow moving."

It is through this central character that Ford is
able to fictionalise his personal experience in the war. In
a letter from New York, dated Oct. 13th 1927, addressed to
Isabel Paterson, Ford categorically states:

...that for me Tietjens is the recreation of a
friend I had - a friend so vivid to me that
though he died many years ago... in these
volumes I was trying to project how this world
would have appeared to that friend today and
how, in it, he would acted - or you, I believe,
would say reacted. 

The friend referred to above is Arthur Marwood
whose family was, like Tietjens', an old Yorkshire one,
descended from a baronet created by Charles II William
Marwood, the elder brother of Arthur, was more brilliant
and provided Ford the model for Mark Tietjens. Samuel
Hynes says: "...the Marwood brothers were turned into the
Tietjens brothers, with only a change of the
detail...making Christopher rather more impressive and Mark
rather less so."

In addition to this, Ford wanted the hero of
Parade's End to be devoid of any glory. The hero was not to be a replica of the ancient heroes. We see a shift in the concept of the hero who now becomes more passive and inert as he happens to be a common man. The narrator says: "My character would be deprived of any glory. He was to be just enough of a man of action to get into the trenches and do what he was told."

It is paradoxical that the central character in the novel should finally become totally inert, "a passive sufferer". On the face of it, it may seem that he is a victim of changed circumstances, but, I feel, that if the whole thing is viewed in the light of his private 'design' of saving Groby from ultimate doom, then we find that he is a sucker of life, eating the very roots he was to thrive on - giving his lawful and legal wife mental agony by refusing to play his role properly.

As the action in the novel advances to its culmination, we find that the "Great Groby Tree" has been cut down. Christopher Tietjens, inspite of all his "design" fails to save Great Groby from doom. His perserevence in the context and his fears give way to absolute chaos, and we see him finally lapsing into a lesser and lower world, like Gudrun in Women in Love, where the old values and the old code of conduct could hold good no longer.

This brings us to the ending of the novel and raises two basic questions: one, whether Ford Madox Ford by permitting Christopher Tietjens and Valentine Wannop 'to
live together in sin' without marriage, provides a happy ending, and two, whether this ultimate union of the two lovers in the The Last Post, the fourth novel of the tetralogy results in the "consequent loss of all the valuable ambiguities of the preceding novels".

It is difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion in the context mentioned above. But I feel that by letting Christopher Tietjens live 'in sin' with Valentine Wannop, Ford is not trying to provide the readers with a happy ending. The whole issue has to be studied in the light of the implicit design of Christopher to save Great Groby from disaster.

Unable to accomplish his design, we find him retreating from his lawful wife Sylvia - leaving her to suffer. To me, it is more of a punishment than reward or happiness. The central character in the novel, who was supposed to stand above and beyond the rest of the characters, is now seen below and beneath the others. He becomes unhistorical and this does result in the consequent loss of all the valuable ambiguities of the preceding novels. In the words of Samuel Hynes:

The first three novels are all concerned, as Ford put it, with "observed events", the events that go on to the pages of history. Last Post is not that sort of book at all; it is rather, a pastoral romance, focussed on private lives and the dateless occasions of birth and death.
Certainly the novelist does not emerge from its pages as historian of his own time: the book has no time of its own. And the Tietjens that Ford imagined... hunting for furniture in Avignon and sweating through his tweed, is not an historical character - not even an impression of one - but a romantically eternal figure...."

Even with all these defects, Last Post, has to be treated as an integral and indispensable part of the tetralogy, because it traces the final evolution of its hero. It is different matter if this evolution is portrayed negatively. But it does provide the essential ending to the novel and silences the curiosity of all avowed followers of the Tietjens. Malcolm Bradbury rightly sums up the change that had come in the world, once it had finished with the Great War. Parade's End, according to him is

...very explicitly a fable of the historical irony, a story of change which is inevitably a disaster, for Tietjen's evolution is also a moment of historical lapse into a lesser world. The age of the Aristocrat gives way to that of bureaucrat, the chivalric to the mechanical, the age of values and convictions gives way to the world of valuelessness...

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NOTES AND REFERENCES


3. Ford Madox Ford, Parade's End (New York : Vintage Book, 1977) All subsequent references are from this edition of the novel and are incorporated parenthetically in the text.


15. Hynes, Modern Fiction p.525.
24. Hynes, Modern Fiction Studies p.519.
25. Hynes, Modern Fiction Studies p.520.