



Resilience and Struggle of Life: *Karnali Blues* by Buddhi Sagar  
Lekhnath Marg, Kathmandu

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English,  
for the Approval of the Research Committee in the Partial Fulfillment of the  
Degree of Master of Arts in English

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is entitled “Resilience and Struggle of Life in Buddhisagar’s *Karnali Blues*.” I have conducted research on Buddhisagar’s novel *Karnali Blues*. I have submitted this paper to the Research Committee of Saraswati Multiple Campus, Thamel, Kathmandu. It is my original work and has not been submitted previously to any other institution or university for any degree or diploma.

All sources of information, data, and references used in this thesis have been properly acknowledged and cited. I am the only one who will be responsible once evidence mounts against me.

  
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## Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that *Tanka Bahadur Rai* has completed his research paper entitled "Resilience and Struggle of Life, under my supervision. I hereby recommend that his thesis be submitted for a viva voce examination.



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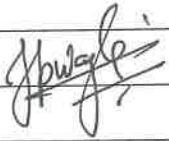
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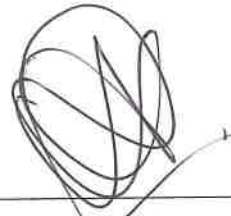
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**Letter of Approval**

This thesis, entitled “Resilience and Struggle of Life”, submitted to the Department of English, Saraswati Multiple Campus, Tribhuvan University, by Tanka Bahadur Rai, has been approved by the undersigned of the research committee.

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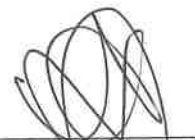
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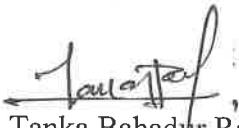
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## **Abstract**

The current study examines the themes of economic hardship, poverty, and class struggle in Buddhisagar's *Karnali Blues* against the socio-economic backdrop of rural Nepal. The novel reveals the socio-economic condition of rural areas, especially in the Karnali backdrop.

It is a great tragedy to tell a story in which the narrator and the proletariat struggle for survival, as this reflects marginalisation, neglect, and deprivation in terms of infrastructure development. The book captures not just the shortage of resources and the weight of social inequalities but also human resilience and that of groups in responding to adversity.

Drawing from case studies such as endless queues waiting for basic commodities, disrupted livelihoods, and the impact of civil war, this study isolates how *Karnali Blues* functions both as the author's memoir and a socio-political critique. This novel takes for granted the hierarchy of how rural people survive in the Karnali region. The writer argues through Nepali literature. To sum up, the research aims to unwrap the story to the public that the novelist Buddhisagar not only exposes the structural injustices but also upholds human survival and family ties in hard times.

### **Keywords:**

Class conflict, economic deprivation, Karnali Blues, Nepali literature, poverty, resilience, rural marginalization, socio-political critique, Buddhisagar.

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## **I. Economic Hardship of Poverty and Class Struggle, Resilience and Struggle of Life in Buddhi Sagar *Karnali Blues***

This novel revolves around the representation of the people in the Karnali region. Buddi Sagar's *Karnali Blues* (2011) portrayed a heart-touching story of the Karnali region that showed socioeconomic inequalities. Buddhi Sagar's *Karnali Blues*, of the socio-economic exploitation in rural Nepal exploitatively replayed through Marxist theory shows how poverty, casteism and class-struggle combine to alienate and economically immobilise a generation of rural people. The experiences of people like Brish Bahadur put into full view how class struggle, ideological subjugation, and uneven development have made it virtually impossible for the peasantry to ever get a leg up on life. The novel discusses casteism, poverty, and migration, all connected to uneven development and class conflicts, leading to the discovery of the restricted chances for the rural population. Nepal's landlocked topology has a significant impact on the economy of the Karnali region and the lack of basic services, such as healthcare and education, which are greatly needed to interrupt the poverty cycle in the area, as illustrated in the novel *Karnali Blues*. Buddh Sagar tries to illustrate the present condition of the people of Karnali, how they have suffered and tolerated themselves in a state of compulsion; Deprivation and obstacles to economic structures prevent progress in the region. A closer examination reveals that poverty, migration, and economic exploitation in Karnali are directly linked to the lack of development in remote areas, with discrimination in access to resources between rural and urban areas exacerbating the divide. *Karnali Blues* reveals that vague conditions in the Maoist conflict, along with migration for better trade, education, and facilities, contribute to movements in cities like Kathmandu. The writer is in a sophisticated place now. Although he is in the town now, he tells a story about Karnali, where he spent his

childhood. There are so many disparities, like unequal education, unfair development, superior dominance, and lower-class and caste disparity.

The Maoist war in Karnali Blues embodies Marx's class struggle theory, where the working class is trapped between state repression and Maoist victimization. The terror of Brish Bahadur along his concurrent alienation from both the sides are illustrative demonstrations. Despite the Maoist insurgency's claim to have its roots in Marxist ideology, it reflects a failure to liberate the rural communities' working class from exploitation.

The Maoists in the impoverished village witnessed the government's implementation of coercion, fear, and class oppression. Instead of dismantling class oppression, the Maoist movement imposes fear, coercion, and economic burdens on villagers. This contradiction supports Marx's argument that genuine class emancipation cannot be achieved through authoritarian practices, as such methods merely reproduce new forms of domination rather than eliminating exploitation. The Maoists used violent methods to torture the common people living in the villages, causing them to experience trauma and fear: "The Maoist blockade of rural areas restricts people's freedom of movement, illustrating the control and oppression that comes with political conflict" (Buddhi Sagar 358). The quote illustrates the power of the Maoists over the rural population, who were forced to live without freedom and without the possibility of having better economic conditions, thus being directly pushed into the shadows in the socio-political scenario.

Villagers are compelled to silence due to war. It no longer had that option at the time. Too many people's lives and properties were lost in the name of revolution, but the result was zero.

Marx argues that class conflict and alienation result from the proletariat's incapacity to express their views on issues of justice and injustice. The authorities have the power to physically punish the working class and declare someone dead if they speak and cross the line in Karnali. People are instructed to keep quiet in any event because the Maoists cannot tolerate anyone who rebels against them.

The Maoist was walking bent over, with his head hanging low. His I felt bolder, and I came out from behind the signboard. I couldn't see the Maoist's face, but then he looked over at our shop and I thought Oh Lord, it was Jarilal! My lips and mouth went dry. Jarilal's face had turned blue and there was a wound on the back of his neck. When he left us this morning, he was carrying a basket, but now he is empty-handed. Other onlookers were also confounded they could not say anything. The crowd slowly made its way to the Chautara. I felt sick in my stomach, and I sat right down. (327)

The public punishment of Jarilal was a symbol of the rural proletariat's repression during the period of revolutionary authoritarianism. Jarilal's suffering body, misused neck, and being made to walk through the village as a punishment all signify the metamorphosis of revolutionary justice into terror aimed at the political sphere. The intensive working-class character and such actions reveal violence as a tool of disciplining dissent and enforcing submission.

The Marxian notion of alienation comes to the fore here, as the villagers are forcibly deprived of their power and rendered mute. The lack of any action from the side of the crowd indicates the presence of a common fear that, in turn, inhibits resistance and proves that revolutionary movements are the only way to change the structural economic scenario; they are just to reproduce the same type of domination.

The moment depicted in *Karnali Blues* reveals the nature of Maoist insurgency as it fails to provide the oppressed with liberation and continues to rule through fear.

The Maoist insurgency depicted in *Karnali Blues* illustrates a paradox within revolutionary politics, where a movement that claims to advocate for Marxist liberation still results in authoritarian imposition. Rather, the Maoists have become oppressors in the sense that they currently use force and fear to control the rural population.

This system is more or less similar to the *Repressive State Apparatus* that Louis Althusser has written about. This *Repressive State Apparatus* uses force rather than consent. Punishments of the villagers in public, movement restrictions, and contributions made under duress expose the reality that the revolutionary power is more like a disciplinary one than an emancipatory one. Marx argues that genuine class liberation cannot result from authoritarian control, for such methods merely change the ruling power but do not get rid of it at all. Thus, the Maoist movement in *Karnali Blues* brings to light the failure of revolutionary violence to alter the material conditions of the rural proletariat, which it then reinforces rather than eliminates. The practices are still mostly performative and labeled as ‘revolutionary change,’ while in reality, class oppression continues, indicating that power relations persist even under revolutionary governments. The Maoists have taken over all power, but their agendas and promises have failed miserably in Nepal due to their own dictatorship, false claims, and poor implementation.

Althusser wrote his book, in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (1971), *Repressive State Apparatus*, about the exploitation of the working class and the dominance of hegemony from various sectors; however, the apparatus of repressive ultimately prevails;

Political parties exist not as a contradiction to the class struggle, but are based upon it. And if the bourgeoisie seeks constantly to realize the ideological-political hegemony over the parties of the working class, this too is a struggle of the classes; the bourgeoisie succeeds insofar as the parties of the working class are led into the trap either through intimidation of their leaders (Union Sarcee 1914) or simply bought off, or through the displacement of the foundation of the parties of the working class from the revolutionary aim towards the advantages of the world of reality (worker aristocracy), or finally through the attraction of the ideology of the bourgeoisie (22).

It is clear to understand in these texts how political parties regulate power in the periphery of society. Althusser shows that they are dominant and stuck in the political periphery, even if they try to escape. Similarly, in *Karnali Blues*, Buddhi Sagar keeps in mind the effects of political unrest on society and how socioeconomic structures are shaped. Here, we clearly understand that high-level individuals will always underestimate the voiceless. Pettigrew, Judith. “*Living between the Maoists and the Army in Rural Nepal.*” *Journal of Himalayan Studies*, 2004.

He explains how rural communities in Nepal lived under constant entrapment, trauma, and fear during the Maoist insurgency. The villagers experienced insecurity and emotional exhaustion, perceiving the insurgency not as liberation but as a burden that was marginalized in their rural lives.

This real story takes place in the Karnali area during the Maoist conflict and the state's rebellion against Nepal. It ends with Buddhi Sagar's father's death. The way the economy is set up makes it hard for the Maoists in Nepal to get the most out of the villages. Businessmen and civil servants have to pay taxes on their income. The village communities are voicing their sorrows in the following manner,

“Officials, businessmen, police, and teachers were all talking about the Maoists.”

“They've demanded 30 percent of our wages,’ said the teachers, who came to the headquarters from distant villages”. (353) it is a significant, huge problem faced in the financial structure leaks. It is exploiting and snatching forcefully as a commission of the working class. It must compel payment of the commission; if it does not, the death penalty will be automatically imposed. They have struggled physically and mentally; one part of them is mentally tortured. They cannot manage their daily lives adequately on their salary. In the Karnali region, the situation is rather ironic. Although a portion of the salary has to be paid as a commission to the Maoists under the pretext of revolutionary insurgency, Nepal's low pay system makes it impossible for the sidewalk dwellers to realize their goals in the future.

A weak financial state, even if there is no pay for staff, creates a sizeable hurdle against earning one's daily bread. People must stay in the village, feeling traumatised and anxious about their future. It is a failure of modern capitalism and a neglect of Nepal's Karnali region. This area is mostly taken over and used by cities and high-end places. Buddhi Sagar's story shows that in rural areas, chronic underdevelopment, a lack of basic infrastructure, and a lack of government are all normal parts of life. “Three months of the current fiscal year have already passed, but Karnali Province has not spent a single rupee from the budget set aside for development projects.” (The Himalayan Times, 10 Oct. 2018) This shows that the

state doesn't care about the Karnali region or its people. This bureaucratic inertia is like how the novel shows the absence of the state, where rural communities are left out of development, which keeps poverty, migration, and social stagnation going.

The political turbulence has left a profound psychological impact. Marx also argues that the state plays a crucial role in maintaining the capitalist system of exploitation. There is still a significant barrier separating wages from the system of exploitation in society; the state's role in private property and coercive payment is not entirely theirs. The state imposes certain limitations. For example, in Nepal, we still have to pay a certain percentage of labor taxes in every sector of the economy.

During the Maoist insurgency period, many properties and lives were lost in the name of the emancipation of revolution in Karnali. The working class is still on the path when we discuss the Civil War. In society, their voice is quiet and muted. The Maoists' main agendas and promises are to raise the equality of castes, secularism, racism, and communism to expand in the society. However, rather than progress, it has resulted in worse outcomes. The situation is dire, with lives lost and state property destroyed; similarly, nature also devastated Brish Bahadur's family, despite their suffering from the Maoists' revolution. The family becomes exhausted; the father reflects;

‘We've lost so much.’ Father could barely speak.

‘Don't think about it too much.’ Mother felt his forehead. ‘What had to happen has happened.’ After a long while, Father fell asleep. I lay on my side, looking at him. He was lying on his back, and his chest rose and fell. His mouth hung slightly open. A rumour had spread through the village that afternoon. People were saying that the doctor was a pauper now, that all of his

Property had been destroyed by the fire that Rs 80,000 of his cash had been burned right up. (111)

A house fire befalls a person, crushed by the fear and terror of the Maoists, and once again challenged by nature. To some extent, it looks like individuals are indifferent towards their difficulties. Though the economy is a major factor in livelihood, there are certain measures that households can take to secure their future and to feel better after their losses due to natural disasters. The challenge is how they progress incrementally towards an improved future in this context. From a Marxist perspective, the “exploitation of nature” argues that disregard and degradation affect the working class. In this case, it indicates how the working class divides its resources for profit within the financial structure. It has a big effect on the working class when it happens in the context of pollution, deforestation, environmental degradation, and resource depletion. We can connect the family’s exploitation and the damage to the environment here.

The significant hardships that the family went through, nevertheless, pointed to a process of gradual economic growth through which the family might eventually migrate to a better class. This means that the working class is still able, even if only gradually, to find a way to better prospects after a big loss. The main issue still stands as to how these families can go through the intricate political, economic, and environmental problems that are hurdles for them to re-establish their lives and raise their living standards. In this instance, the family’s persistence brings hope that, in spite of the overpowering nature’s forces and societal turmoil, they still can make their way to a better future. Das, Veena. *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. University of California Press, 2007. The concept of Veena Das regarding the operation of political conflict is evident in *Karnali Blues*. It is clear to

understand. Karnali experiences fear, trauma, and insecurity daily due to the Maoist insurgency and government neglect. The villagers, by going on with their public and private lives, are actually debating the extent to which suffering can be incorporated into the normal life of the community. This situation corresponds to Das's point that violence "*descends into the ordinary*," thereby controlling emotional life and social practices. As a result, the novel also highlights the fact that one of the most detrimental effects of political violence is the transformation of rural daily life into a place of constant, silent suffering.

Moreover, the family will improve its economic status and provide better chances for fulfilling their desires without facing hardships internally. Despite the family's resilience, giving facilities, and better hope for upward mobility, it is still suffering in agony, with challenges obstructing progress in society for the proletariat. The next issue will explore the broader systemic factor that is regenerated and not supported by the working class; it will focus on the political instability and economic factors in Karnali.

The movement was situated within class-based societies, particularly when viewed through a Marxist lens. He argues that oppression and exploitation start with the capitalists' activities and lead to revolutionary change in society. Here, it is clear how capitalist society dominates the population; the Maoists have seized the physical and mental power of the proletariat to compel their agreement. After the revolution, everything remained unchanged, and no one believed in the slogan or the promise of emancipation that the revolution had offered. Still, Nepal's people's lifestyle and class struggle are the same.

In *Karnali Blues*, the Maoist insurgency explores a revolutionary conflict for people, the emancipation of the oppressed, and exploitation by the capitalist society,

especially the proletariat in Nepal. At the time of the Maoist insurgency in Nepal, the proletariat had high expectations for the new system, which might bring justice, equality, emancipation from poverty, and a joyful Nepal. It is just contradictory to them. They hadn't realized the extent of the expectations and hopes within the society. However, after the conflict ended, people sought liberation. The Maoists' theory of operating from the city or while mobilizing onto the mountain earned them the moniker of devolutionist power center. Capitalist society consistently undervalues the proletariat. The book discusses how the Maoist movement, thought to be a revolutionary liberation movement, ultimately failed to deliver tangible change to the oppressed. Instead, it illustrates the continuity of exploitation of the rural poor by the capitalist system and the state's failure to act, revealing the gap between political rhetoric and everyday life. The dominant political reality in the Karnali region is exploitation driven by the capitalist economy. The structure of class struggle, as envisioned in Karl Marx's ideology, remains unfulfilled for the proletariat.

Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* (1867). *A Critique of Political Economy*.

Marx's theory of surplus value and exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeois system explains how they are exploited physically and mentally. Here, the Karnali region's people have lofty expectations to change the class struggle. People have enormous hope for the future, which is the nearest equivalent in Nepali society. There are no boundaries in education; the health sector and economic status will be better after the Maoist movement. They have a golden dream, but it has become just opposition, not surplus value for the proletariat.

...the labouring class is not in a position to realise its economic and social potential under the capitalist system. The surplus value produced

by labour is appropriated by the bourgeoisie, leaving workers in a constant state of economic deprivation. (6)

It makes clear that understanding the proletariat people remains down in the surplus value, where disparities and domination dominate in the capitalist labour system. Marx's concept of surplus value demonstrates how the working class experiences exploitation in Karnali Blues. Brish Bahadur's father, who is both doctor and tailor, still doesn't earn anything with his work since capitalism steals his added value. And it is then the wealth so created by him is snatched away from him, not by his fellow men or his neighbours but by his government or its masters and he finds himself poor though he works hard. This further follows Marx's idea that the bourgeoisie takes value from the proletariat hiring them, which only results in their constant economic oppression. Development. Capitalism alienates workers and breaks down social connections. People naturally engage in social interactions within society, but political activities automatically dominate the proletariat. Similarly, the Maoists created a sense of community and suffering, which gave a misleading impression of their revolutionary activities. Underserved and vulnerable, people in Nepal are unable to realize their potential for new revolutionary systems, with only one broken promise of equality and justice.

ii. **Rural areas are experiencing modernization and market transformation.**

The development of Katase Bazaar flourished, symbolizing economic transformation and a day-by-day growing marketplace. The traditional way of living in rural areas engages people in selling and buying accommodations there due to expanding roads and vehicles. It is a symbol of development. The family also had to move to Katase because there were better business opportunities there. As a result, people from all over the countryside came to Katase Bazar, and many of the area's owners are very happy. Katase introduces the source.

Katase Bazaar: a bazaar filled with folk tales. A bazaar built by clearing away cutch trees and thickets of jujube trees. The bazaar came into existence by chance. A bazaar into which people poured at festive times from Khairiphanta, Matera, Pahadipur and Jagatpur. A bazaar frightened like a forest squirrel by the harsh-sounding horns of buses and trucks. Crowds of people came to Katasé from the distant hill districts of Acham, Kalikot, Jumla and Gutu to buy their supplies and sell their ghee. Everyone called them the haterus. Some of them used to declare, 'I spent seven night sleeping in caves on my journey to this place. (289)

The Katase Bazar is a unique representation of the ever-changing economic state of rural communities, as well as the extension of the market to those communities. Improvements in the transportation systems and roads will increase the likelihood of the purchase and sale transactions of rural people. This will result in an increase in market opportunities for rural people living in the Pahadi region, as well as other rural communities. The increased activity has also benefited the landowners of

Katase Bazar. The modern economic structure highlights that the capitalist region is isolated in the marketplace. Contradictions within society, specifically regarding the mode of production, highlight the main issues. The capitalist strives for ideological and physical honesty through production. Capital structure influences Katase Bazar's flourishing, and uneven development leads to its decline. According to David Harvey and Henri Lefebvre's concept, accumulation of wealth is mobilization and creation through the transformation of space. Katase is same influencing events Seen. David Harvey coined the term "*production of space*" (2001). He suggests that capitalism's spatial dynamics and need for continuous expansion drive the transformation of rural economies into capitalist markets" (45). The evident concept symbolises the connection between Katase Bazaar and the expansion of market forces in rural Nepal. So Katase is interested in business in the area. This event shows how important it is for the local bazaar to support development, change, and dynamic mobility.

The dynamic process of development in Katase, rebuilding, and reconstruction is rapidly expanding the marketplace. Lefebvre proposed his theory of "the production of space" in 1991. He contends that "the spaces are not merely physical locations but are shaped by social relations, power dynamics, and the ideologies embedded within them" (112). It is clear to understand that Katase is gradually stepping into development. Gauli Sau's house is a representation of spatial practice. Here Gauli Sau's sophistication is related to his newly constructed house, which is more fangled than the in Katase Bazar. Many small entrepreneurs and businessmen have to earn only one thing through Katase Bazar and start a business, but one of the men who has a great dream and relies on Katase Bazar has not given up on it. It will be green whenever he thinks that, and he made a big RCC home by spending wealth, but it became unstable in Katase, and he got financially traumatized and cried.

“Gauli Sau smiled as he observed the construction of his house’s deep foundation. I had heard that Gauli Sau was building the biggest house in Katase. Gauli might have begun to build a house, but Father was not far behind” (215).

The significance of ongoing development is that many rural people are taking advantage of Katase Bazar, and Gauli Sau is pleased with the foundation of his house being built. According to Lefebvre, building a house represents the materialization of social relations, and building a house is more than a person’s endeavor; it is an attempt to reconfigure the changing social environment.

It is to represent the growing importance of wealth and materialism. The condition of Katase. Lefebvre argues that it is a part of the changing capitalist space and is becoming an economic power in society. In *Karnali Blues*, building a large house is not only a private matter but also a socially beneficial endeavor that benefits the rural population. Without a market, people would have to travel to Surkhet, which takes time and money.

Modernisation has become ingrained in the physical surroundings. The spaces they create are not just about physical structures but are deeply intertwined with the social relations and ideologies that are transforming rural society. Some happiness is found in completing projects in Katase, which have transformed and declined due to the expansion of roads and the development of more facilities in Chisapani and rural areas. Gauli Sau sobbed, “This bazaar closure is a direct attack on me.” “What will I do with my house?” (242) The state of Katase's presentation reflects a deteriorating infrastructure, which ultimately leads to decline and unrest in one marketplace and bazaar, as well as in other areas. Due to the complete decline in business and markets, people are not staying in Katase. According to a Marxist perspective, the entire

situation is a sign of the concentration of economic power and the destruction of small, local economies in favor of larger, more centralized capitalist economies.

The centralization of the economy, the expansion of facilities, and the potential for development in the rural areas of Chisapani are the main causes of this important modern infrastructure, which is probably motivated by capitalist interests and state-led development initiatives. However, it is a symbolic result of the displacement of smaller traditional economies.

For instance, the closure of the Katase, Gauli Sau marketplace is completely exploited by the construction of new roads and facilities because he is unable to profit from them. People may decide not to visit Chisapani for business, leading to a significant change in the community. Trade not to visit for business. For instance, people are relocating banks, offices, and government offices to other locations. *Karnali Blues* hints to the push factor of the village towards the cities, banks and businessmen have shifted to other locations, people migrate to other resourceful cities and to pursue happiness:

Most people went to Tikapur to open new accounts; Father was among them. This was when I discovered that we had Rs 4,75,000.

Gradually, the hateru shoes stopped piling up in the alleys of Katase, the haterus themselves stopped coming down from the hills. A rumour spread that the haterus were all going to travel no further than Chisapani. Sometimes a few would come, as if they had lost their way. But they had merely come to settle old accounts.

‘How can I say that I will come next year, Sauji?’ the Meth would say, pressing his palms together in farewell as he departed. (240)

This quote provides the example of how economic changes affect the lives of small producers and traders. Banks and businessmen had shifted to another location; it reflects a broader economic shift and displacement in the market. The place flourished due to the roads and ways of the developing effect in Katase. Later on, it totally changed and declined. Nothing is over there, because production depends on exploitation; if there is nothing in production, it remains valueless, so that we can link with Marx's theories of primitive "accumulation and the impact of capitalism on small-scale economies" (873). It can undergo massive transformations that are clear to understand. In this context, the establishment of basic infrastructure occurs in response to high demand, which reflects broader capitalist exploitation. Through Marx's concept of primitive accumulation, the displacement of small and local traders occurs in the big capitalist systems in society. There is a case of a bank moving to another place, which signifies the formalisation of economic control. This is the disintegration of a place's social territory brought about by the advancement of capitalism in society.

The primary cause of the market's transformation is not isolated incidents; rather, it is an expression of the capitalist process's centralization of economic power and relocation of the banks in Chisapani. According to Marx, the economy is unaffected by these processes, Marx argues that these processes are not a mere economic issue, but they also cut off individuals from their work, their neighbourhoods, and their interpersonal connections. The move to Chisapani shows how capitalism pushes people to the fringes of society, where they must deal with the past while being cut off from the new economy. In *Marxism and Literature* (1977), Raymond Williams introduced the idea of feeling structure. It indicates that the emotions in *Karnali Blues* are not a result of character flaws but rather a consequence

of the capitalist system. The novel's illustrations of the disintegration of family ties, emotional misunderstandings, and loneliness that are not seen by others reflect the social conditions that have been created by a lack of concern for the people and a poor economy, thus proving the point that inequality is a cultural phenomenon that is deeply rooted in people's daily lives.

Similarly, the Brish Bahadur family moves and migrates to Matera, Katase, and Kalikote, and until he moves for study, he is exploited in economic structures from Kathmandu. The story of Brish Bahadur's coming to Kathmandu typifies Marx's theory of class conflict, one among the monstrous chasms that the worker in Karnali and the capitalist city represent is alienation. In Kathmandu, Brish Bahadur perceptively sees for himself the gulf that separates the proletariat from their economic muscle, underscoring for us all the alienation that Marx insists is a characteristic feature of capitalist societies. His recognition of rural-urban economic disparity is an expression of alienation from labour and the struggle for class mobility that Marx would describe as a permanent feature of capitalist economies, inequality being suffered through to create a welfare society. He used to be able to borrow money in Karnali because the neighbourhood is nice, but in Kathmandu, the neighbourhood is less helpful; many people need money even for a brief visit to the city. Cities are dishonest and unbeatable in terms of belief. No one in the city cares or believes in it, but everyone understands it in some way.

The cities symbolize not only prosperity but comfort and a sense of security. Treatment also becomes a cardinal issue in villages so moving to cities is the only option to get it. The novel suggests; "Father and Mother had gone down to Surkhet, seizing the opportunity when a helicopter arrived in Kalikot, and had returned to Kalikot the same way. They called me from Surkhet, but I in my room. The landlord

told me about it later. It was early in the month of Phagun” (355). In terms of business and profitability, cities are based on themselves, so Brish Bahadur’s father is sick, and he is getting messages to reach him in Surkhet. It indicates that the alienation caused by capitalism affects cities more than villages. This connection involves emotional aspects related to Brish Bahadur, whose father is hospitalized in various cities due to his illness, rather than just in the village. The journey of Brish Bahadur from rural areas to cities symbolises economic relations based on profit.

People in Karnali experience migration, alienation and emotional disparities due to the capital structure because people want better opportunities, even though in difficult situations and want to leave. Linking with his theory, how people differ from society due to capitalism. He makes that clarify in his book.

Marx stated facts in “*Das Kapital*” (1967). He argues that “in societies, workers are alienated from their labour, which leads to social isolation and estrangement” (10). This alienation is more strongly felt in urban areas where people are nothing but commodities in the larger economic system, as opposed to rural areas, where life is more interconnected and community-oriented. Having the experience of Brish Bahadur shifting places between rural and urban spaces provides an understanding of alienation and grasps how individuals differ from economic structures. Brish Bahadur experienced different places, shifting from Matera to Kalikot near Kathmandu for study. Here, migration is from villages to cities and areas in search of better opportunities. His memories also connect him with his friends, various places, and diverse aspects of nature.

Chandre and I had no great taste for studying. But although we were dull in our studies, we were skilled at swimming, which we had learned by swallowing river water three or four times a day. The river

shrank so much in the winter that you could see the stones beneath the water. Chandre had learned to dive like a frog. I tried to dive once too, but my chest hit the water with a loud slap and was red and very sore for a long time afterwards, so I gave up diving (31).

In various locations, friends' memories were intertwined with Brish Bahadur's moment of disconnection due to the capitalist system. People are in search of better opportunities; they have to go to different places. Buddhi Sagar believes that the people of Karnali should move to cities to access education, healthcare, and job opportunities. The capitalist system in Nepal fully exploits this.

According to Harvey's theory, spatial justice reveals that rural areas are unequal and exploited by cities where power and resource-based structure is centralised. Lefebvre's concept of production of space supports how urban areas are shaped by capitalism and alienation. Ultimately, the family journey illustrates agony between rural and urban economic disparities in the capitalist society.

iii. ***Karnali Blues* explores the agony, inequality, state power, and alienation of rural communities.**

Many people don't have their own land, only in the Karnali region. Nepal faces significant challenges. In most of Nepal, the farmer's name is not registered on the land, while land elsewhere is registered. Farmers cultivate unregistered land, which is the primary cause of land insecurity. They live in a state of insecurity; whenever the land is handed over to state control, they fear displacement and the loss of their property due to legal processes, political factors, or social issues. The rural communities of Nepal are geographically diverse.

Mahesh Chandra Regmi, in his seminal work *Landownership in Nepal 1976*, provides a detailed history of Nepal's land tenure system and its role in shaping social inequality, rural people's life survival, and state power. Regmi argues that land ownership in Nepal was not merely an economic arrangement. It focuses on the political tool the government uses to keep society in check. "Unequal land distribution institutionalised poverty and dependency among peasants by denying them ownership and control over the land they cultivated. (54)Regmi's examination of the unfair and exploitative landholding system gives a structural reason for poverty, migration, and social marginalization, which coincide in the novel, where the rural area is depicted as suffering due to the uneven agrarian setup of the past instead of the individual shortcomings. Despite the political movement reflecting a shift in democracy, Father holds out hope that his house will not face demolition. The father still had hopes. "The democracy movement is getting stronger over there in Kathmandu.' Father said calmly. 'Who's going to come and demolish my house at such a time?'"(75). The father maintains optimism and faith in the democratic system that is based in

Kathmandu. Marx's history of class struggle says the bourgeoisie may dominate the working class in society, the state, and the government, which are all products of capitalism. The presence of the bourgeoisie's control over the proletariat is fully revealed in the novel *Karnali Blues*. Brish Bahadur and his family, in spite of their labor and dreams, are still stuck in a poverty cycle caused by systematic inequality. The state's inadequacy in helping them to move up the economic ladder illustrates the rural populations' complete surrender to capitalistic structures.

This phenomenon includes land grabs by elites and corporations, as well as state policies that favour property institutions and individuals. The mother feels aggressive about buying unregistered land, and she expresses that ordinary people in Katase must buy unregistered land because they have no other options; there is insufficient land available for a sustainable economic structure. People had bought that low-rate land instead of high-rate land. They hadn't bought the property, so they felt compelled to purchase it and were worried about the economic trauma affecting Katase.

On which inauspicious day did we come here?' Mother looked at Father. 'I told you we shouldn't buy unregistered land, but you didn't agree.' 'So, what's happened?' Didn't you hear? The government's going to demolish houses built on unregistered land.' 'Who's she been listening to now?' Father was irritated, but his eyes stayed shut.

'But there's talk of it all over the village. (76)

Class inequality refers to the unequal division of resources in properties, power, and better opportunities based on economic class. They are in severe tension due to low economic structures. The unregistered land was purchased by them. Legal land is not within their budget, thus they have no choice but to go for the low-rate

type of land. David Harvey's theory of *accumulation by dispossession* illustrates the mechanics of capitalistic systems that, on one hand, take away the land and resources from needy people. In *Karnali Blues*, Brish Bahadur's family acts on their economic condition and buys unregistered land, thus becoming vulnerable to dispossession aided by the state. This situation justifies Marx's perspective that capitalism is the cause of the relationship between private property and the ruling class, which eventually leads to the rural proletariat living in constant insecurity and poverty.

According to Louis Althusser's book, in *On the Reproduction of Capitalism, 'Ideological State Apparatus,'* he contends that "institutions and practices that sustain and perpetuate the ideology of the ruling class in society" (95). Here, we can relate unregistered land to dispossession snatched by the state. Despite having limited capital, Brish Bahadur's family also purchased unregistered land, unaware that the state would control it. The state apparatus, which includes the police, military, and other government institutions, operates and controls through force and physical means. Althusser's theory focuses on how the state would utilize his constructs related to class inequality and land dispossession, as mentioned in your paragraph. Althusser's theory is concerned with the role that the state and ideological apparatuses, for example, legal systems, media, and schools, play in creating and allowing social order through control of people's minds.

Through the many projects that the Father's farmer participated in, the medical sector, in addition to the tolling shops, got to learn through experience the dreams for a better future; they weren't just changing places and relocating. His difficult life passages did not stop him from being proud and smiling at his work. His works exemplify a disconnection from the products of the labour system within a capitalist society. Brish Bahadur's father felt exhausted in silence, feeling not satisfied with his

work; “All day, Father worked at the sewing machine... Once he even made a shirt from blue cloth and went smiling to other tailors’ shops... but it was badly made” (256). It is a reflection of being joyful even if they have agony and hardship in their heart. He is aware of how to solve every issue in life and achieve happiness in the future. Marx’s idea of alienation implies that happiness is the supreme aim of existence.

In *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844, Karl Marx reveals the alienation and separation condition in which workers lose control over the labor system. They produce their own product, but it is not enough to purchase additional items. In *Karnali Blues*, Brish Bahadur’s father continues to work as a machine despite receiving zero meaningful economic return from his work. It is reflected in a captured system exploited under capitalism. This illustrates Marx’s argument that alienation is not created through awareness, but it is an economic structural condition that compels workers to accept exploitation in the capitalist system.

Here, Father is working low-quality jobs and feeling alienated in his future. Alienation and illness are part of the emotional and psychological journey. This family represents the emotional part in *Karnali Blues*. Buddhi Sagar deeply clarified how people in Karnali, a rural area, endure agony and hardship through family love and social support, which makes a significant difference. The father, showing love and being pretty, “Are you well?” “Father?” I asked myself breathily. Before I left for Kathmandu, Father’s voice had been clear. ‘Study well,’ he had told me” (11). It creates both love and pressure in a relationship with family. The father’s dream for his son will remain joyful for the bright future that all parents have expectations for.

According to Karl Marx, the concept expresses alienation, emotional suffering, and illness. Family love comes from “*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of

1844,” where Marx argues alienation goes beyond labour into human relations in their lives; “The alienation of man, and every relationship in which man exists with himself, is initially manifested and articulated in the relationship that a man has with other men” (76). This conceptual ideology touches on the family expression of loving and caring by parents. Some part of deep emotions extends from this novel; the narrator discusses everyday life, the survival system, inequalities, and oppressive structures in rural areas. Looking at the Marxist theory on alienation and exploitation, how people become trapped in a cycle of poverty and insecurity, extended by social value and wealth, within human beings. It is a profound sense of insecurity and loss of identity. In *Karnali Blues*, the alienation experienced by the family is not only emotional; it is deeply tied to their economic status, which has turned into poverty.

A physician in the countryside, the father of the main character, is one of the most evident examples of alienation caused by capitalism. He keeps his professionalism, but rather his disillusionment with the system that surrounds him illustrates the alienation of the capitalist world. The father says:

Father looked sad and hopeless for several months. Thereafter, Father, who was always seen in the Medikal, began to disappear to an unknown location. He would place a thermometer under the patient’s arm would then disappear before it was time to take it out. (182)

In this respect, “medical” means rural, arguing from cocooning; most people’s opinions are denominated in favor of “strict harsh medical.” He is an expert and experienced in the medical sector, and people are even totally sick of Harsh Medical's treatment. As the marketplace and bazaar decline, Harsh Bahadur struggles with scientific socialism. Karl Marx book (1867) on “*Das Kapital*” (1867), Karl Marx

wrote, “The value of a commodity is determined by the amount of socially necessary labor time required to produce it” (50).

The father’s emotional withdrawal and his disinterested acts in the medical practice, like putting a thermometer in a patient and walking away before finishing the job, are examples of how labor can be looked at as a thing and cut off from its real purpose of being human. The activity that, by its nature, should be filled with love, care, and human interaction is now diminished to a simple mechanical action, as his work no longer has a human purpose but is transformed into a part of the economic system that is purely driven by transaction and necessity.

Marx argues that workers lose control over the goods they produce due to capitalism’s estrangement from their own human nature.

**iv. The issues of early child marriage, casteism, and marginalisation are highlighted in *Karnali Blues*.**

Child marriage and child labour are indeed major problems in rural Nepal, which the local culture has deeply absorbed, and the prevalence of these problems is not limited to the last few years. Our government has different policies and agendas at various levels and continues to provide more experimental programs, but these programs are completely based on theory. The opinions of philosophers and critics have taken the form of books with differing views. They have published a wonderful book on raising awareness of these criminal activities, but it is ironic that issues are rapidly observed in rural areas. In *Karnali Blues*, Buddhi Sagar depicts the struggles and resilience of rural people. Due to socioeconomic factors, the Karnali people have been dealing with child labor and marriage systems. The economy's design is fundamentally rooted in the conflict and angst that characterised the young girl's personality after the death of her parents: Baatu is not supposed to marry. She is stubborn about marrying, but her motivation is solely to survive; she feels she has no options because of the oppressive capitalist society.

Baatu understood what was going on. Her face turned as dark as a Monsoon sky, and her lip trembled. "I will not get married," she said, stamping her foot as she looked at Bhaggu with teary eyes. Bhaggu looked at the ground. She flew up the ladder. After finishing his tea, Bhaggu placed the glass on the ground. He stared at Father and Mother for a moment, unsure of what to do. Then he pressed his palms together. Right, I'm leaving now. I'll come tomorrow morning.' 'She's your sister, after all. You will have thought carefully about this!' Father stood up. (253)

In this case, marriage is forced to happen regardless of age or maturity, but she wouldn't have a place to stay if she hadn't gotten married. It is compelled to marriage. “*The Enigma of Capital*” by David Harvey, published in 2010, discusses the theory of accumulation by dispossession. “.....capitalism has created a society of mass dispossession, whereby the working class and the poorest are dispossessed of the land, their labor, and their right to self-determination” (2). The forced marriage of Baatu, it shows that poverty drives child marriage and other practices that are destructive to society. The main character of the movie, Baatu, does not oppose her culture but rather struggles for survival, as marriage is the only way left for her to be secure. Marxism views forced marriage as a form of structural violence, where poverty drives the poor into slavery. Harvey's theory of accumulation by dispossession accurately describes the situation where capitalism takes away the poor people's choices, thus allowing them only to surrender power for their basic needs. Hence, Baatu's case signifies the convergence of economic oppression, female discrimination, and social exclusion in the rural areas of Nepal. Ironically, the situation is characterised by a highly visible class division. Baatu's fight for existence represents a double exploitation. Buddhi Sagar explores the themes of caste and class struggle, how people's rite and rituals are flourishing in society, and how they are influencing the economic structure. People in Karnali are of different castes and follow different religions; they have their own languages and cultures to identify with.

The main problems also expanded in our society due to caste. It is a division of a class-based society. It is alienation, separation, and discrimination in society due to their work. For example, higher- and upper-class individuals possess more power and wealth, allowing them to create their own systems; those in the upper class often feel the need to maintain superiority in society. In the novel, the Brahmin castes are

depicted as superior, serving as priests who worship in the temple and perform purifications for the people. It is a kind of disillusionment and exploitation of the aesthetic in society. Brish Bahadur and his friends try to take advantage of the naming ceremony of the Brahmin's festival, Nag Panchami. They know this festival of Nag, if Nag posters are dispatched in the homes of Tharu communities, they will give money at this time, and they started.

I was idly pushing holes through a leaf with my forefinger. 'What for?' I asked, pausing. 'Let's print some Nagas, na?' he whispered. 'If you post them on people's houses, they give you money.' The next day was the festival of Nag Panchami. Chandré persuaded me that we should go to see the old astrologer and get him to print some Nagas for us. If we went from one Tharu house to another, sticking the posters on their doors, the Tharu people would give us money. Then, when we'd go to Katasé, we would get to eat rice and cold ice (34).

It may be expected, after all, that such discrimination exists due to the reasons explained. Brahmins, as a superior caste, are expected to perform worship and receive money from lower-caste individuals instead of contributing to societal purity. On every occasion of Nag Panchami, Brahmins print posters of Nag and deliver them to every house and collect money from them. This novel replicates the conditions experienced by Brish Bahadur and his friend; the upper-class caste exploits this method of earning money indirectly. In *Karnali Blues*, caste-based practices act as *Ideological State Apparatuses*, thus making the disparity legitimate through religion. Brahmins' superiority during the Nag Panchami ritual, for example, permits them to extract money from lower classes using the tradition as a cover. According to Althusser, ideology is the imaginary relationship that people keep with their real-life

situations. The Tharu people's obedience is an example of how ideological systems do not 'silence' but rather 'keep quiet' the resistance by 'enslaving' them in the illusion that exploitation is natural and thus, inevitable. Hence, caste is not merely perceived as a cultural hierarchy but as a united economic and ideological structure that keeps class domination alive in the countryside of Nepal. Now we link with Bista's idea of fatalism and social hierarchy, which provides a profound understanding of persistent poverty and social stagnation. In *Fatalism and Development* in 1991, he argues that deeply ingrained beliefs in destiny, hierarchy, and submission discourage oppressed communities from resisting structural injustice. This cultural fatalism contributes to caste discrimination, state neglect, persistent poverty, and political violence within the capitalist framework. "The acceptance of fate and the belief in a hierarchical social order dishearten the disadvantaged, thereby perpetuating poverty and dependency" (43). Here, we understand how Karnali's people suffered agony from the hierarchical system, making them accept poverty and dependence as unavoidable conditions rather than results of structural exploitation.

People accept real social and economic conditions and are being manipulated ideologically. In terms of novels, in *Karnali Blues*, the character's activities in the Nag poster are associated with ideological manipulations. In the *Karnali Blues*, superior castes exploit and dominate low-caste people, who acquiesce to their treatment in society. The caste system is the root of power, influencing how various methods of maintaining castes affect the people. The "grandfather" term denotes a person who is within the hierarchical system no matter what kind of behavior he has. They all go through the same social processes. It is a fear trap that society is caught in. The clear depiction of Khusiram's authority renders him symbolic and unquestionable. Upper-class people always dominate working-class people in society.

In Karnali communities, where individuals are deprived of their fundamental rights, Khusiram experiences fear and agony due to the Brahmin caste. The rules and regulations established by Brahmins leave the Khusiram and Tharus communities unable to speak, resulting in their muteness and alienation. Khusiram is scared of Brahmins “The Tharus were so scared they nearly lost control of their bladders whenever he came near; they clasped their hands together and bent their backs” (82). Low-caste men and women performing acts of submission signal the seriousness of their fear and terror, which is deeply rooted in the capitalist system. The ruling class has everything: power, wealth, and various means of oppression along with the ideological apparatus.

According to Althusser’s notion of the repressive apparatus, it operates as a well-directed power, since the top social class holds more power and can use its tools against those who are considered to be out of order. This process expresses exploitation and dominance in the Tharus’ communities, which are dominated by the capitalist system. The oppression of caste leads to inequality among the lower-class people. The economic structure depends on the survival of life struggles and how it plays a vital role in regulating society. In *Karnali Blues*, it is seen that powerfully marginalized economies create dependency on fragile and insecure financial practices within economic systems. Financial instability and struggles to afford medical care plague Brish Bahadur’s family. His father is hospitalised and is not receiving proper treatment because of financial constraints. In the hospital, an emotional scene unfolds: “Mother untied the sash around her waist... Wrapped up tightly inside the bag, there was some money. She pulled a 500-rupee note out of the bundle” (189). The family ran out of money to pay the hospital’s fee, although they are out of the hospital and treatment again. Money is essential for regulating life and ensuring survival.

According to David Harvey's theory of *accumulation by dispossession*, He argues that inequality in the economic system leads to people being marginalised and separated in the institutions. Being poor means people are compelled to sacrifice in Brish Bahadur's family because they are empty of money and kicked out of the hospital. Althusser's theory explains how institutions like hospitals and other public places participate in the ideological state apparatus. As a component of the superstructure, it serves both direct and indirect purposes in society. As a result, the hospital's superstructure may discharge patients without providing them with the necessary care. The conditions show that poverty isn't just a temporary problem. They show how economic exploitation keeps going in rural Nepal.

**V. In *Karnali Blues*, rural communities never see their dreams come true.**

There is a milestone of love between father and son in *Karnali Blues*; the father always loves the son, and he has a golden dream to make him a big man in society. It does not align with the father's dream; most fathers have a strong vision for society.

The father accepts all kinds of mistakes made by the son because our society and hierarchical system believe that the son will be supported in old age. Hierarchical systems govern our society and communities, making it impossible to disagree. Buddhi Sagar also belongs to such types of social practices in the Karnali region, and he tries to illustrate the story of the Karnali periphery through different characters in the novel. Father is appreciative of education. If it flourishes in human beings, it will be the fruit of knowledge in a society that cultivates positive messages. He wants to educate his son. The father is impressed with the study;

We will educate them. Education is the shelter of a big tree. Whether it  
Whether it rains or the sun shines, the umbrella provides shelter. What  
would we do with fields? I can't even plough anymore.' Father looked  
at me. 'If we keep the land, this one simply won't study. He'll plough  
the fields, he'll be a farmhand. When he grows up, he'll say his parents  
didn't keep anything for him; he'll just look after himself. We have to  
teach him how to walk. He'll fall over, he'll get up, and he'll walk on.  
(139)

In this context, education aims to provide a better life and serves as a powerful tool for creating a bright future. Education is a source of economic structure that makes society flourish.

David Harvey's concept of accumulation by dispossession posits that individuals are both ideologically and materially dispossessed from the land of progress. The father's willingness to strive for a better life through education is particularly noteworthy, given their challenging upbringing. Therefore, education is a top priority for creating better solutions to survive hardships in life.

Characters are expected to show regard and condescension in their worship of the proletariat, as they are repeatedly subjected to oppression by the bourgeoisie. Failure is just one of the stages of Brish Bahadur's journey; his father still keeps the faith that the next time will be better, that's why it is called hope, an idea that is over and above the material effort. The goal is to transition to a more advantageous opportunity. And the father inspires the coming days to be better. The father's persistence is evident. He has a dream, and he will pass the next exam, gaining better marks. According to his dream, he will pass the upcoming test and receive higher grades. It congratulates the son on improving once more and expresses hope for a better exam in the future. "Go and sit down to study right now. If you fail this time, I will know all about it" (140). It reveals love and care toward the son's future because he has to do something new in society. Brish Bahadur has all the dreams of the family; he will do something. The family attempts to dismantle the capitalist system as part of their internal struggle.

In the novel *Karnali Blues*, although education is depicted as a means of accessing higher social classes, the material conditions are limiting factors to its effectiveness. The father of Brish Bahadur has high expectations for education, thinking it can free his son from the clutches of poverty. Nevertheless, the economist Marx, through his theory of 'historical materialism,' showed how it is the economic base that determines access to education. Thus, the absence of school and educational

facilities in Karnali made students flee from their homes and leave for more approachable places, thereby creating and maintaining inequalities rather than a solution. The evident paradox demonstrates that education can only eliminate class oppression through economic transformation. Brish Bahadur's insistence on going to Kathmandu. Although he intends to pursue his high demand education in urban areas, his father is willing to let him stay in Kalikot with his family because he believes that his son's future will be better in cities than in Kalikot's educational institutions. The father tries to convince the son that studying is equal everywhere; if we study well in Kalikot, we will do better like Surkhet and Kathmandu. The father said, "Don't do a stubborn study in Kathmandu," because the capital structure depends on it. "You're old enough to understand." Father uncrossed his legs and spread them wide.

'Understand this: what would you do in Kathmandu? Students can study anywhere, so study in Surkhet" (340). Here, the guardian suggests that students' studies should be delivered equally and everywhere; In *Karnali Blues*, the economic structure of the Karnali, with its poverty and underdevelopment, determines a potential for social mobility. His father's romantic proposal of education anywhere is profoundly ironic, given that the rural absence of educational prospects means students must leave home to study in cities like Kathmandu. And so materialism meets idealism head on lack of the material conditions, such as educational facilities, will inform the superstructure, leaving rural children without education that could otherwise release them from a life in poverty.

The 1967 book *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx, the historical state of the material world, and the dearth of educational facilities in rural areas, It demonstrates the condition of Karnali's students' willingness to study in urban areas. The historical materialist theory of Karl Marx: "The mode of production of

material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness” (21) indicates that social activities govern both the base and the superstructure. Go to study for educational purposes in the cities is relevant in this situation. Children and rural residents stand in for the inherently oppressive system that is produced in economic structure themes.

In actuality, there is only one boundary of economic structure due to the aspirations of parents and children. Due to disseminated urban availability, rural residents are subjected to oppression and exploitation.

Overall, in this novel, Buddhi Sagar depicts a touching story of the Karnali region related to poverty, casteism, and class struggle in the society's activities. It is enclosed in Marxist theory, covering the Marxist concept of a poor lifestyle where there is neglect and exploitation in society. All effects of political and economic structure are leading to inequality, alienation, and class struggle in the rural area. The Marxist theory of in-class struggle is pivotal to represent the agony and hardship of rural life. This means the working class and ruling class powerfully impact the lives of characters such as Brish Bahadur. Marx asserts that societal structures underpin this struggle under capitalism. The exploitation of the proletariat in the struggle of rural people, as depicted in Karnali Blues, highlights the stark difference between the upper class and the lower class. Li Onesto's Dispatches from the People's War in Nepal provides a framework for understanding the Maoist conflict depicted in Karnali Blues. According to Onesto, the Maoists in rural Nepal often used fear, intimidation, and economic extortion to keep the villagers quiet and poor.

This occurred during the Maoist insurgency, which aimed to liberate the oppressed in the name of revolution and emancipation. In fact, this event serves as a juxtaposition. Marx shows how revolutionaries those who would liberate people from an oppressive system can become so enamored of their own arguments of labour, alienation, and everything else that they wind up burdening the smallest part of society with oppositional declarations. They are simply crunching some different bones this time.

Ideological State Apparatus (ISA): Althusser's ISA theory explains how the ruling class uses various institutions, such as religion, the church, media, and schools, to maintain their grip on power. Similarly, Brahim's behaviour is done in society. The Maoists play the part of the hegemonic ideological force that orchestrates traditional culture in *Karnali Blues*, by which the rural population's consent is secured for their own political rule. But in practice the Maoists offer only a revolution of terror, driving society from one capitalist dead end to another, changing as it does so from one form of blind capitalism to another.

Althusser's theorization of the concept helps us understand how cultural practices like caste-based rituals and Maoist appropriation of local ideologies work to reproduce the capitalist system by distracting the working class from their economic oppression. The Maoists, then, although they claim a revolutionary cause, employ these ideologies as weapons to impose control and exploitation over the rural people, suggesting Althusser's theory that ideology exists to reproduce and sustain the reign of the ruling class.

David Harvey's theory of accumulation by dispossession probes how capitalism grows rich by depriving the dispossessed of their resources, land and labor. This is reflected in the case of *Karnali Blues*, to land insecurity and dispossession

experienced by the rural poor. In families like Brish Bahadur's, members are forced by a lack of money to purchase unregistered lands, which are at risk of dispossession as the state moves in for a land grab. The state-sponsored dispossession reflects the unequal power relations between the ruling class and the working poor, whose existence is perpetually precarious as capitalist expansion continues to encroach. The economic basis that is partially determined by that dispossession also provokes the estrangement of the proletariat as it emasculates them from the same resources with which they could effectively improve their lives and wages, land, labor and education.

The caste and class oppression in the society, discrimination, and the practices in rural areas. Marx recognized that society is divided into both economic and ideological forms. In *Karnali Blues*, this undercurrent of domination proceeds in the same manner, and it is mainly the Brahmans who rule through religion and economy, almost at the expense of lower castes. The higher castes' worship and diet are part of an economic system that exploits the lower castes.

Migration and the urban-rural divide: rural people in search of better opportunities to move to urban areas like Kathmandu and Surkhet. It represents the alienation and economic gap between the rural working-class people's agony.

A key concern of Marxists in theory, the move of such characters from the rural periphery to urban centres like Kathmandu represents the alienation and economic gap between the rural proletariat and the metropolis, a key concern of

The urban-rural divide is not just geographic; it's also economic: people from rural areas often have no option but to leave in pursuit of a better education, job, and path to upward mobility.

This migration is a manifestation of Marx's spatial theories in that capitalism has "produced... a physical as well as a financial space which, while enriching certain groups of people [rural elites and state workers in the hinterlands], also contributes to the growth of social isolation and alienation suffered by populations living in rural hinter lands." The experience of alienation from work that Brish Bahadur undergoes when he enters the city comes as torture because it brings to the fore the stark division between rural and urban economies and, in turn, reinforces class distinctions.

The Failure of Revolutionary Movements, *Karnali Blues*' Maoist insurgency is an example of a failed revolutionary transformation a transformation that Marx anticipated would emerge within the capital system. The Maoists, at first, promise the oppressed that they will get freedom from them but in practice remain subdued, thus demonstrating how revolutionary movements fail to be transformative to dismantle capitalism. This disillusionment is foundational to the experience of the working class in the novel, for it follows Marx's understanding that class struggle is a repetitive and recurrent process that all too frequently delivers broken dreams and unmet expectations.

Educational Disparities and Social Mobility, Finally, the novel highlights education as a means of social ascension, while also emphasizing its dependence on capitalism. The father of Brish Bahadur has big aspirations for his son to go far in life through education, yet it is impossible due to the lack of educational infrastructure in isolated rural communities. This deprivation of education can be understood in terms of Marx's historical materialism, according to which the base determines the superstructure; that is, poverty and underdevelopment in rural Nepal determine the level of access to education, social upward mobility, and class struggle.

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