

Tribhuvan University

Ethics of Memory and Politics of Trauma in Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*

Front

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Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that Hukum Oli has completed his thesis entitled "Ethics of Memory and Politics of Trauma in Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*" under my guidance. I recommend this thesis to be submitted to the Research Committee for final examination of viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Hukum Oli entitled "Ethics of Memory and Politics of Trauma in Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*" has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee:

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Abstract

The research analyses Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* focusing on isolation, alienation of the German soldiers by using the trauma theories of Cathy Caruth, Sigmund Freud, Kali Tal etc. The army men Paul, Albert, Muller, Peter etc. have extreme mental stress during the war. They feel detachment from civilian life while returning home from the trench. They are isolated and alienated. Paul feels like an outsider in his own home as he cannot express his experiences about war. The war appears to have snuffed out his hopes and dreams which he can never regain. Similarly, his friend Albert has made his mentality to commit suicide with his own revolver which he used in fighting because his leg has been amputated. War has caused the devastation in society.

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I. Erich Maria Remarque and the Issue of Trauma

This project focuses on Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* which is story of World War I. In particular, it explores the German soldier's extreme physical and mental stress during the war, and the detachment from civilian life felt by many of these soldiers upon returning home from the front. It gives a view of the conditions in which the soldiers find themselves. The monotony between battles, the constant threat of artillery fire and bombardments, the struggle to find food, the lack of training of young recruits and the overarching role of random chance in the lives and deaths of the soldiers are described in detail.

The battles fought here have no names and seem to have little overall significance, except for the impending possibility of injury or death for Baumer and his comrades. Only pitifully small pieces of land are gained, about the size of a football field, which are often lost again later. Paul's visit on leave to his home highlights the cost of the war on his psyche. Town has not changed since he went off to war; however, he finds that he does not belong there anymore, it has become a foreign world for him. He feels disconnected from most of the town's people. His father asks him stupid and distressing questions about his war experiences.

The project claims that war is meaningless. *All Quiet on the Western Front*, symbolizing the insignificance of one individual's death during the war. Paul kills a man for the first time in hand-to-hand combat. He watches the man die, in pain for hours. He feels remorse and asks forgiveness from the man's corpse. He is devastated and later confesses to Kat and Albert, who try to comfort him and reassure him that it is only part of war. They are then sent on what Paul calls a "good job." So, they study basically explores the role of Paul and soldiers through the eyes of traumatic angle.

Remarque was born into a lower middle class Catholic family in Osnabrück. He was in the midst of training to become a teacher when he was drafted into the army in November, 1916. He was put through boot camp near Osnabrück and in Saxony and then sent to Flanders. There he served as a sapper, building trenches, until he was wounded by shrapnel in July of 1917. Remarque spent the next fifteen months in a hospital in Duisberg. He was released in October of 1918, but was never actually sent back to the front, because the war ended on November 11. He wrote *All Quiet on the Western Front* in 1928, mainly as an attempt to combat his post-war depression.

All Quiet on the Western Front by Erich Maria Remarque was first published in German as *Im Westen Nichts Neues* in 1928. It is one of the most widely read and well known novels to emerge from the First World War and has elicited both strong support and strong criticism for its portrayal of the experiences of that war's common soldier. To this day, the novel continues to be part of curriculums at all levels in both Germany and the United States.

All Quiet on the Western Front is a novel by Erich Maria Remarque, a German veteran of World War I. The book describes the German soldiers' extreme physical and mental stress during the war, and the detachment from civilian life felt by many of these soldiers upon returning home from the front. The novel was first published in November and December 1928 in the German newspaper *Vossische Zeitung* and in book form in late January 1929. The book and its sequel, *The Road Back* (1930), were among the books banned and burned in Nazi Germany. *All Quiet on the Western Front* sold 2.5 million copies in 22 languages in its first 18 months in print. In 1930, the book was adapted as an Academy-Award winning film of the same name, directed by Lewis Milestone. The 1929 English translation by Arthur Wesley When gives the title as *All Quiet on the Western Front*. The literal translation of "Im Westen nichts

Neues" is "In the West Nothing New," with "West" being the Western Front; the phrase refers to the content of an official communiqué at the end of the novel. Brian Murdoch's 1993 translation would render the phrase as "there was nothing new to report on the Western Front" within the narrative. Explaining his retention of the original book-title, he says: "Although it does not match the German exactly, When's title has justly become part of the English language and is retained here with gratitude.

The phrase "all quiet on the Western Front" has become a colloquial expression meaning stagnation, or lack of visible change, in any context" this research assumes that it is difficult for soldiers to revert to civilian life after having experienced extreme combat situations. Soldiers' lives are thrown away by their commanding officers who are stationed comfortably away from the front, ignorant of the daily terrors of the front line. The novel emphasizes on the massive loss of life and negligible gains from the fighting. In despair, Paul watches as his friends fall one by one. It is the death of Kat that eventually makes Paul careless about living. He comments that peace is coming soon, but he does not see the future as bright and shining with hope. Paul feels that he has not aims or goals left in life and that their generation will be different and misunderstood. He dies at the end of the novel. So, theory of trauma by Shoshana Felman, Cathy Caruth, Sigmund Freud etc. have been accepted as the methodology.

Trauma refers to person's emotional response to an overwhelming event that disrupts previous ideas of an individual's sense of self and the standards by which one evaluates society. A defining feature of trauma is the transformation of the self ignited by an external, often terrifying experience, which illuminates the process of coming to terms with the dynamics of memory that inform the new perceptions of the

self and world. The external event that elicits an extreme response from the protagonist is not necessarily bound to a collective human or natural disaster such as war or tsunamis. The event may include, for example, the intimately personal experience of female sexual violence, war experience, domestic violence, cultural legacy and family betrayal.

The word trauma is used to describe experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing and that overwhelm people's ability to cope, leaving them powerless. Trauma has sometimes been defined in references to circumstances that are outside the realm of normal human experiences, unfortunately, this definition does not always hold true. For some groups of people, trauma can occur frequently and become part of the common human experiences.

Trauma theory is a relatively recent concept that emerged in the health care environment during the 1970s, mostly in connection with studies of Vietnam Veteran and other survivor groups, 'post traumatic stress disorder' was added as a new category in the American psychiatric association official manual of mental disorder in 1980.

Trauma theory represents a fundamental shift in thinking from the idea that those who have experienced psychological trauma are either 'sick' or deficient in moral character to the reframe that they are 'injured' and in need of healing.

Trauma has sometimes been defined in reference to circumstances outside the normal human experience. Unfortunately, this definition does not always hold true. For some groups of people, trauma can occur frequently and become part of the common human experience. Moreover, in this research paper traumatic experiences are shown which have been giving unbearable pain in the life of characters. In this regard, traumatic events are those which are thought to involve victimization or the threat of victimization. Events such as witnessing violence, unprovoked physical attack, rape, physical, mental, emotional and

sexual abuse, war accidents are those generally considered to be traumatic. So 'Trauma' is used to describe experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing and that overwhelm people's ability to cope, leaving them powerless. Gender plays a significant role in mental health issues. For example, over 70 per cent of people diagnosed with borderline personality disorder (BPD) are women. Those diagnosed as "borderlines" have been stigmatized as being difficult to work with and treatment-resistant.

The concept of trauma started generating interest in scholarly discourse in the early 1980's when psychologists first began referring to the illness that they were witnessing in Vietnam veterans as post-traumatic stress disorder. By the 1990's, trauma had started to cross disciplinary lines, entering the work of literary and cultural theorists (e.g. Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman, Kali Tal, Dominick LaCapra, Geoffrey Hartman, Ruth Leys). Blending knowledge from the psychological sciences with the psychoanalytic theory of Jacques Lacan, these scholars started excavating narratives of war, torture, rape, genocide, natural disaster, death, love, addiction, and abandonment, and presenting them as cultural evidence (and constant re-enactments) of both individual and collective trauma.

In recent years, trauma has become a national obsession. War, terrorism, and natural disaster has brought pain and suffering into the media limelight, fueling cultural expressions that engage in public outpourings of hyper-emotionality. This trend is lending a certain vogue to the post-Lacanian crowd and effectively dusting off psychoanalytic criticism, one of the oldest forms of literary critique that is still in use. Thus we see numerous graduate/undergraduate courses and MLA panel talks on topics such as: trauma and memory, collective trauma and national identity, post-colonial trauma, rape, holocaust literature, etc. Ultimately, trauma is a very

interdisciplinary and engaging topic that won't be losing interest any time soon (Caruth, 110).

Trauma studies constitute a huge field today, keeping whole armies of theorists—philosophers, literary scholars, and historians as well as clinicians—very busy. There are many reasons for this, starting with the enormous and still growing interest in the Holocaust and other collective historical traumas, and extending to the increased clinical awareness of sexual abuse as a phenomenon of “everyday life” for both adults and children.

There exists today both a wide consensus among theorists on a certain definition of trauma, and a strong and sometimes violent debate about specific aspects of trauma, notably as regards its relation to memory. The importance of Judith Herman's work is that she is one of the pioneering clinicians in the field as well as a major player in the theoretical debate.

Everyone seems to agree that a traumatic event “overwhelm[s] the ordinary human adaptations to life,” as Herman puts it. “Unlike commonplace misfortunes,” she writes, “traumatic events generally involve threats to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death” (33). A more neurologically based definition would be that a traumatic event—or “traumatic stressor”—produces an excess of external stimuli and a corresponding excess of excitation in the brain. When attacked in this way, the brain is not able to fully assimilate or “process” the event, and responds through various mechanisms such as psychological numbing, or shutting down of normal emotional responses. Some theorists also claim that in situations of extreme stress, a dissociation takes place: the subject “splits” off part of itself from the experience, producing “multiple personalities” in the process. The diagnosis of MPD (multiple personality disorder) was once very rare, but became

quite common for a while in 1980s and 1990s. Symptoms of MPD, according to clinicians who diagnose it, always indicate earlier trauma, even if—or especially if—the trauma is not remembered by the patient.

The most important subject of debate concerns the relation of trauma to memory and came about as a result of a number of legal cases in the 1980s involving recovered memory of sexual abuse. There are two very hostile camps and both of them are linked in interesting ways to Freud. Members of the first camp, which includes clinicians such as Judith Herman as well as researchers, among them Bessel van der Kolk, believe firmly in the theory of dissociation, which is related to the concept of repressed memory, or traumatic amnesia. According to this view, the more horrific and prolonged the trauma, the more the subject has a tendency to dissociate and therefore have no conscious memory of the traumatic event. Thus, a child or even an adolescent who is subjected to repeated sexual abuse by a family member may very well not remember it until he or she enters into therapy as an adult; at that point, the patient may recover memories in a gradual process, sometimes with the help of hypnosis. Only by finally remembering the repressed trauma can the patient move on to recovery, that is, to “mastery” and healing. Judith Herman writes:

The patient may not have full recall of the traumatic history and may initially deny such a history, even with careful, direct questioning. . . .

If the therapist believes the patient is suffering from a traumatic syndrome, she should share this information fully with the patient.

Knowledge is power. The traumatized person is often relieved simply to learn the true name of her condition. (23)

The leading theorist of Trauma Jenny Edkins, in her *Trauma And Politics Of Memory*, explores how remembrance of traumatic events such as wars, famines, genocides and

terrorism, and questions the assumed role of commemorations as simply reinforcing state and nationhood. Taking examples from the World Wars, Vietnam, the Holocaust, Kosovo and September 11, Edkins offers a thorough discussion of practices of memory such as memorials, museums, remembrance ceremonies, the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress and the act of bearing witness. She examines the implications of these commemorations in terms of language, political power, sovereignty and nationalism. She argues that some forms of remembering do not ignore the horror of what happened but rather use memory to promote change and to challenge the political systems that produced the violence of wars and genocides in the first place. This wide-ranging study embraces literature, history, politics and international relations, and makes a significant contribution to the study of memory.

Edkins has written a provocative book on how traumatic memory is mobilized through various strategies of recall, particularly memorial emplacement in national narratives of heroism, sacrifice, and redemption. Intense remembering too easily turns to intentional forgetting, however, when such toxic memories cannot be contained in traditional memorial forms. Too often, Edkins observes, these narratives "seem unable to get away from rhetorics of state or nation, and they fail to escape the racialisation upon which the genocides, enslavements and famines were themselves based" (171). She worries as well that trauma stories, the moral testimony of witnesses (survivors, for example), are virtually incommunicable, though they must be communicated. This communication requires memorial forms and audiences willing to find, in her words, "ways of encircling the real," ways of introducing the jarring reality of, in her words, "trauma time" (15).

Similarly Kirby Farrell too defines trauma as psychocultural because the injury entails interpretation of the injury. Sigmund Freud's history of the Jews entitled

Moses and Monotheism also raises the work of trauma projecting the Jews' persecution to the liberation, the return from the captivity to freedom. Veena Das in *Trauma and testimony* reflects the role of anthropology to contextualize sectarian violence in India which she contrasts along with Achille Mbembe's discourse of what he calls the failure of the collective *imaginaire* of Africa. Jenny Edkins in *Trauma Time and Politics* examines memories of traumatic events as relationality in the face of death's 'gift of unhinged release'. Tony Kushner brings Holocaust Testimony to justify the complexity and the richness in understanding ordinary people's constructions of their histories, with their silence and mythologies. With "First World War and de-civilizing process" with violence, Larry Ray highlights the relationship between commemorations of the dead in war within the framework that draws on Freud's distinction between mourning and melancholia. Geoffery Heartman focuses "a remarkable degree of precision remains, because the memory of evil is first and the last memory of an offence, independent of the justice suffered" (114).

These critics argues the various facets of trauma with different notions, build logics tending towards traumatic figure. They try to evolve the fact that the injury of unspeakable pain is to make speakable through transmitting the event and stories of the witnesses'.

The novel emphasizes on the massive loss of life and negligible gains from fighting. To expose the novel as a traumatic text and apply the discourse of trauma is the main effort of this project work.

Since the publication of Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, It has been responded in various ways. Friedlander claims:

Remarque is not simply relating his own experiences to anyone who will listen. He is trying to create a broader picture of the experience of

the typical soldier. This is achieved not only through Paul, the main character, but through the other characters as well, who together represent the patchwork of people that made up the rank and file of the German army during World War I. Remarque publicly stated that he wrote *All Quiet on the Western Front* for personal reasons, not for profit. (41)

The novelist has tried to paint the big picture of the experiences of the soldiers. The main character Paul and other characters represent the armies of First World War. In an interview, he expressed that he wrote the novel for personal reasons not for his profit. He narrates the experiences of a common soldier. Robert Wagner says:

All Quiet on the Western Front mainly is an attempt to combat his post-war depression. While exposed to various war experiences, Remarque never actually engaged in combat himself; he was only shot at. Paul's personal experiences are a composite of Remarque's own experiences and those of other soldiers that he witnessed second hand or heard while recovering in hospital. (12)

The novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* describes post war depression period. The novelist Remarque did not involve himself in the war but he was shot at. He presents the second hand experience of soldiers through this novel using Paul as his narrator. Similarly, Murdoch reveals:

All Quiet on the Western Front is often ascribed to "new objectivity," which was popular in the post-war era which fits with realistic style of the narration. This style attempts to replicate the thoughts and experiences of a soldier during the First World War within the context of that time. The text removes explicit references to later events or

foresight towards post-war realizations about the war. The book is explicitly graphic in language and detail. It is meant to shock the audience with the horror of war. This fits with Remarque's intention of accurately replicating the soldier's experience at the most objective level. (37)

The novelist has used the unique style of writing which is known as "new objectivity" it was popular during post-war era. It presents the story in a realistic manner. It uses the contemporary language. It tries to shock the audience with the horror of war. This technique is suitable to describe the experiences of war. It was popular in post war era to use this style. Likewise Barker tells:

Experiences of the war and the personal reactions of individual soldiers to their experiences may be more diverse than Remarque portrays them. Remarque gives voice to a side of the war and its experience that was overlooked or suppressed at the time. This perspective is crucial to understanding the true effects of World War I. The evidence can be seen in the lingering depression that Remarque and many of his friends and acquaintances were suffering a decade later. *All Quiet on the Western Front* was trumpeted by pacifists as an anti-war book. The novel does not advocate any political position, but is merely an attempt to describe the experiences of the soldier. (11)

The novelist Remarque has narrated the war experiences of soldiers. In other words, he denounces the war. He has underestimated the war experiences. So the novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* is regarded as anti-war book. It does not contain any political agenda. It narrates the experiences of soldiers. Bad experiences of war were suppressed at that time. Deepanjana Pal tells:

Besides using highly descriptive language, Paul uses the first person plural, “we,” throughout much of the novel. This further emphasizes that Paul is supposed to be more than just an individual soldier, but is representative of each and every individual soldier, whose experiences would be similar. (35)

The novelist has used highly descriptive language in the novel. The narrator Paul has used “We” which is regarded as the plural form of first person I. It suggests that he is supposed to be the representative of every soldier. He is more than just an individual soldier whose experiences are similar to him. Dr. Kroner reveals:

He offered the following clarification: “People abroad will draw the following conclusions: if German doctors deal patient of Remarque’s in the military hospital in Duisburg objected to the negative depictions of the nuns and patients, and of the general portrayal of soldiers: “There were soldiers to whom the protection of homeland, protection of house and homestead, protection of family were the highest objective, and to whom this will to protect their homeland gave the strength to endure any extremities. (15)

Remarque’s portrayal of the German army personnel during World War I were not limited to the Nazis. Dr. Karl Kroner (de) objected to Remarque’s depiction of the medical personnel as being inattentive, uncaring, or absent from frontline action. Dr. Kroner was specifically worried that the book would perpetuate German stereotypes abroad that had subsided since the First World War.

All the critic praise for his attempt to depict the true picture of the First World War. Thus, different critics have interpreted the novel from different perspectives as mentioned above but the issue of trauma has not been explored in the text. Moreover,

not a single research has been done in this department on Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Thus, the topic is new one and remains unfulfilled by the previous critics and researchers.

The thesis has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter is introduction in nature which deals with the novelist and the issues of trauma. Similarly, the second chapter deals with theoretical methodology of trauma and textual analysis. Finally, the third chapter presents a brief conclusion of the whole thesis.

II. Representation of Traumatic Characters in *All Quiet on the Western Front*

The project claims that the soldiers are traumatized because of the war. It describes the German soldiers' extreme physical and mental stress during the war, and the detachment from civilian life felt by many of these soldiers upon returning home from the front. In other words, it gives a view of the conditions in which the soldiers find themselves. The monotony between battles, the constant threat of artillery fire and bombardments, the struggle to find food, the lack of training of young recruits and the overarching role of random chance in the lives and deaths of the soldiers are described in detail.

The battles fought here have no names and seem to have little overall significance, except for the impending possibility of injury or death for Paul and his comrades. Only pitifully small pieces of land are gained, about the size of a football field, which are often lost again later. Paul's visit on leave to his home highlights the cost of the war on his psyche. The town has not changed since he went off to war; however, he finds that he does "not belong here anymore, it is a foreign world. He feels disconnected from most of the townspeople. His father asks him stupid and distressing questions about his war experiences.

Albert eventually has his leg amputated, while Paul is deemed fit for service and returned to the front. In despair, Paul watches as his friends fall one by one. It is the death of Kat that eventually makes Paul careless about living. In the final chapter, he comments that peace is coming soon, but he does not see the future as bright and shining with hope. Paul feels that he has no aims or goals left in life and that their generation will be different and misunderstood. When he dies at the end of the novel, the situation report from the frontline states, "All is Quiet on the Western Front," symbolizing the insignificance of one individual's death during the war. Paul

comments that, although all the boys are young, their youth has left them. In addition, the massive loss of life and negligible gains from the fighting are constantly emphasized. Soldiers' lives are thrown away by their commanding officers who are stationed comfortably away from the front, ignorant of the daily terrors of the front line. The novelist Remarque comments about the novel; "This book is to be neither an accusation nor a confession, and least of all an adventure, for death is not an adventure to those who stand face to face with it. It will try simply to tell of a generation of men who, even though they may have escaped its shells, were destroyed by the war" (1).

The novelist reveals that the novel is neither an accusation nor a confession. It is about an adventure but death is not an adventure for a soldier. So, it tries to express the experiences of a soldier. It narrates about the destruction of war. LaCapra opines trauma as:

There are two very broad ways of coming to terms with transference, or with one's transferenceal implication in the object of study: acting-out; and working-through. Acting-out is related to repetition, and even the repetition -compulsion- the tendency to repeat something compulsively. This is very clear in the case of people who undergo a trauma. They have a tendency to relive the past, to exist in the present as if they were still fully in the past, with no distance from it. They tend to relive occurrences, or at least find that those occurrences intrude on their present existence, for example, in flashbacks; or in nightmares; or in words that are compulsively repeated. (2)

Psychological trauma is a type of damage to the psyche that occurs as a result of a severely distressing event. When that trauma leads to post-traumatic stress disorder,

damage may involve physical changes inside the brain and to brain chemistry, which changes the person's response to future stress. About Kemmerich's boots, the novel reads:

Though Müller would be delighted to have Kemmerich's boots, he is really Quiete as sympathetic as another who could not bear to think of such a thing for grief. He merely sees things clearly. Müller can make good use of them. Kemmerich will die; it is immaterial who gets them. Why, then, should Müller not succeed to them? When Kemmerich is dead it will be too late. Therefore Müller is already on the watch. And good boots are scarce. (10)

Müller became interested in Kemmerich's boots. His boots have become important symbols in the novel. They repeatedly outlive their owners and each time the man wearing them dies. The question of who inherits the boots overshadows the death. Müller inherits them when Kemmerich passes away. They can be useful for him. He is about to become inheritor of the boots. The good boots are generally not found. Kali Tal's notion of trauma is wholly applicable in the text. Defining psychological trauma, he opines:

Psychological trauma is direct personal experience of an event that involves actual or threatened death or serious injury, or other threat to one's physical integrity; or witnessing an event that involves death, injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of another person; or learning about unexpected or violent death, serious harm, or threat of death or injury experienced by a family member or other close associate. The person's response to the event must involve intense fear, helplessness, or horror. (87)

The factors such as assault, domestic abuse, sexual encounter, riot, terrorism, unprecedented happening, loss of loved one etc. cause psychological trauma. The sudden occurrences and happenings in an individual's life shock him or her. In the novel, most of the characters are bearing psychological trauma reluctantly. The narrator says:

Kropp on the other hand is a thinker. He proposes that a declaration of war should be a kind of popular festival with entrance-tickets and bands, like a bull fight. Then in the arena the ministers and generals of the two countries, dressed in bathing-drawers and armed with clubs, can have it out among themselves. Whoever survives, his country wins. That would be much simpler and more just than this arrangement, where the wrong people do the fighting. (20)

Kropp is a thinker. He makes a satire on war saying that declaration of war should be like a popular festival with entrance tickets and bands. It should be like bull fight. The Ministers and Generals of two countries should fight the battle and the person who survives, his country wins. It will be easy to conduct such type of program where wrong people fights.

It can be seen in Cathy Caruth perception as explained by Jeffery C. Alexander; "Caruth focuses on the complex permutations that unconscious emotion impose on traumatic reactions." (6) Here the substitution of traumas can be changeable, unbearable and often painful. They may turn to psychoactive substances including alcohol to try to escape the feelings. Re-experiencing symptoms are a sign that the body and mind are actively struggling to cope with the traumatic experience. Triggers and cues act as reminders of the trauma, and can cause anxiety and other associated emotions. Often the person can be completely unaware of what these

triggers are. In many cases this may lead a person suffering from traumatic disorders to engage in disruptive or self-destructive coping mechanisms, often without being fully aware of the nature or causes of their own actions. Panic attacks are an example of a psychosomatic response to such emotional triggers. Paul says:

Suddenly it occurs to me that my own comrades may fire on me as I creep up; they do not know I am coming. I will call out as soon as I can so that they will recognise me. I will stay lying in front of the trench until they answer me. I breath deeply and talk to myself. (106)

Paul Baumer arrives to his camp by slithering like a snake due to the fear of enemy. He suspects that his own comrades can shoot on him as they are unknown about his situation. He wants to call them by name so that they can recognize. He wants to stay lying before the trench until they answer him. He breathes deeply and talk to himself.

Here, emotional trauma is also associated with psychological trauma, they correspond each other in many aspects. At this juncture, Billie J. Sahley, a medical psychotherapist and psycho diagnostician, in her book “Post Trauma and Chronic Emotional Fatigue” writes:

Emotional trauma occurs when a traumatic experience leaves indelible memories in the brain to which a person continually returns. The memories, nightmares, fears, and flashbacks all remain the hallmark symptoms of emotional trauma. Individuals who have experienced emotional trauma will go to great lengths to avoid places, people or any activity that reminds them of the traumatic event. (27)

As per Sahley, when a traumatic event occurs, the sympathetic nervous system is activated and memories are tagged or encoded. Those who experience post-traumatic stress disorder develop short circuit in the information processing system. When

incoming information is deemed unsafe or fearful, the short circuit causes repeated and intense stimulation of the *fight-or-flight* system. Behavior studies have shown that the logical part of the cortex shuts down when a person becomes hyper aroused leaving them feeling very vulnerable, fearful, anxious and almost out of control. Thus, emotional trauma and psychological trauma go side by side leading to serious long-term negative consequences. The protagonist reveals:

We count the weeks no more. It was winter when I came up, and when the shells exploded the frozen clods of earth were just as dangerous as the fragments. Now the trees are green again. Our life alternates between billets and the front. We have almost grown accustomed to it; war is a cause of death like cancer and tuberculosis, like influenza and dysentery. The deaths are merely more frequent, more varied and terrible. (128)

The German army becomes weaker but the war rages on. The army men stop to count the weeks they have spent fighting. It was winter when the war started. When the bomb exploded, it became dangerous to walk on the road. They have become accustomed to the prevailing environment now. Paul compares the war to a deadly disease like cancer, flu, tuberculosis etc. The death of soldiers are more frequent, varied and terrible. The narrator tells:

We are at rest five miles behind the front. Yesterday we were relieved, and now our bellies are full of beef and haricot beans. We are satisfied and at peace. Each man has another mess-tin full for the evening; and, what is more, there is a double ration of sausage and bread. That puts a man in fine trim. We have not had such luck as this for a long time. (1)

The army men are five miles far from the battle field. When they came for fighting, they were happy. They were satisfied and living in peace. They have sufficient stock of food sausage, bread now. They are longing for peace. It is their destiny to fight in the battlefield. But they are afraid of about their death. Van der Kolk and Van der Hart assert that:

When the person is (partially) aware of his traumatic memories, then the meaning schemes with which current experiences are integrated correspond to traumatic experience. They often can tell the story of traumatization with a mixture of past and present, but their current life is characterized by doubt and humiliation, by feelings of guilt and shame: past meaning schemes determine the interpretation of the present. (178)

As posited by Van der Kolk and Van Der Hart, present life of a person is guided by traumatic experiences whatever he/she faced in the past. Consequently, acute mental and physical pang is accumulated which aggravates the present life of a person. The novelist says about wounded soldiers:

While they continued to write and talk, we saw the wounded and dying. While they taught that duty to one's country is the greatest thing, we already knew that death-throes are stronger. But for all that we were no mutineers, no deserters, no cowards--they were very free with all these expressions. We loved our country as much as they; we went courageously into every action; but also we distinguished the false from true, we had suddenly learned to see. And we saw that there was nothing of their world left. We were all at once terribly alone; and alone we must see it through. (6)

There are many wounded soldiers and some were about to die. Patriotism is important for a soldier. Soldiers are not cowards. They are not mute. They love their country. They are courageous to fight. Now they are alienated and isolated. They are wounded. They are about to die. They have the ability to differentiate between truth and false. About relationship between earth and a soldier, the novelist reveals:

Earth with thy folds, and hollows, and holes, into which a man may fling himself and crouch down. In the spasm of terror, under the hailing of annihilation, in the bellowing death of the explosions, O Earth, thou grantest us the great resisting surge of new-won life. Our being, almost utterly carried away by the fury of the storm, streams back through our hands from thee, and we, thy redeemed ones, bury ourselves in thee, and through the long minutes in a mute agony of hope bite into thee with our lips! (26)

Paul's description of the soldier's relationship with the earth is full of sexual relationship. It emphasizes on the relationship between mother and son. The sexual imagery of folds, hollows, holes and men thrusting iron rods into the earth combine with the idea of Oedipal relationship between the soldier and the earth. In other words, soldiers have suppressed the sexual desire in themselves. However, the mother is respected in mythologies. So, the relationship between mother and son can be compared to the relationship of earth and the soldiers. The narrator says:

We have become wild beasts. We do not fight, we defend ourselves against annihilation. It is not against men that we fling our bombs, what do we know of men in this moment when Death is hunting us down--now, for the first time in three days we can see his face, now for

the first time in three days we can oppose him; we feel a mad anger.

No longer do we lie helpless, waiting on the scaffold, we can destroy and kill, to save ourselves, to save ourselves and to be revenged. (53)

Army men have become wild due to war. They do not want to fight but defend themselves from annihilation. They throw bombs to defend themselves from enemies. They have become mad to revenge. It is their duty to fight with enemy. They know how to take revenge from the enemies. They can kill them and die for their country. In this regard, Kathleen Miriam insists about the traumatic disaster:

A traumatic event is an event which threatens injury, death, or the physical body of a child or adolescent which also causing shock, terror or helplessness. Trauma refers to both the experience of being harmed by an external agent as well as response to that experience. Youth who experience trauma may also experience emotional harm or psychic trauma which, if left untreated, can have significant impact. Trauma typically exists along a spectrum which ranges from global, when an event may affect many individuals, to individuals, when the trauma impacts only that individual. (13)

Trauma is physical as well as psychological injury. These injuries are caused by different sorts of events. Traumatic experience damages the healthy and normal psychological framework of the victim. The victim of trauma, especially of psychological trauma, is prone to anxiety, social isolation, anger or emotional numbing, sudden mood shifts, irritability and grief.

In the same line, Sigmund Freud describes that trauma as the life threatening of victim with severe death and suffering. So, he states:

The double feeling tenderness and hostility against the deceased which we consider well founded, endeavor to assert itself at the time of bereavement and mourning and satisfaction .The process usually adjusts itself through a special psychic mechanism, which is designated in psychoanalysis as the project. The unknown hostility, of which we are ignorant and of which we do not wish to know is projected from our inner perception. (42)

In this regard, one of the leading scholars of trauma theory, Cathy Caruth, in her *Unclaimed Experience* further argues: “Trauma is not located in the simple violence or original event in an individual’s past, but rather in the way that it’s very unassimilated nature the way it was precisely not known in the first instance returns to haunt the survivor later on” (4). As envisioned by Caruth, trauma does not necessarily mean the minor or petty violence rather it does have disruptive effects in the long run which is characterized by unrest, disorder and full of agony. About his mother, the narrator says:

I sit by her bed, and through the window the chestnut trees in the beer garden opposite glow in brown and gold. I breathe deeply and say over to myself:—"You are at home, you are at home." But a sense of strangeness will not leave me, I cannot feel at home amongst these things. There is my mother, there is my sister, there my case of butterflies, and there the mahogany piano--but I am not myself there. There is a distance, a veil between us. (74)

While sitting beside his mother, the narrator Paul feels strange. Although he is in home with his parents and sister, he is isolated and alienated. Though he is physically present in home, he finds himself mentally absent. There is a distance

between him and his family. He does not want to talk about butterflies and the piano. He has become strange for his home. The trees and garden of his house does not have any meaning for him. Paul comments about his leave:

I explain to him that I arrived on leave only an hour or two since, thinking that he would then trot along. But not at all. He gets even more furious: "You think you can bring your front-line manners here, what? Well, we don't stand for that sort of thing. Thank God, we have discipline here!" (76)

When Paul was on leave in home, he met his senior officer in the street but he forgot to salute him. As a result he became furious towards him. So, he ordered him to maintain discipline. He did not want to arrest him but ordered him to march six paces beyond him. In other words, discipline is maintained in military department. Indiscipline recruit are punished by the army men. The protagonist says:

I look at myself in the glass. It is a strange sight. A sunburnt, overgrown candidate for confirmation gazes at me in astonishment My mother is pleased to see me wearing civilian clothes; it makes me less strange to her. But my father would rather I kept my uniform on so that he could take me to visit his acquaintances. (76)

While sending his leave in he wore civilian clothes. He, were glasses. His mother was happy to see him civilian clothes. It made him less strange to her. But his father told him to wear his army uniform so that people could recognize him in the village. About the leave of Paul, the novelist says:

I imagined leave would be different from this. It was different a year ago. There lies a gulf between that time and to-day. At that time I still

knew nothing about the war, we had only been in quiet sectors. But now I see that I have been crushed without knowing it. I find I do not belong here any more, it is a foreign world. Some of these people ask questions, some ask no questions, but one can see that the latter are proud of themselves for their silence; they often say with a wise air that these things cannot be talked about. (78)

He was is home to spend his holiday but he found it difficult to enjoy his holiday. His own village has become a foreign land for Paul. He finds himself an outsider in his own home. All the people ask him about the bad experiences of war. He feels himself isolated and alienated. Earlier, the holidays would be useful for him. It would be better for him to enjoy in home in holidays.

Paul is alienated because of war. All the people ask him nonsense questions about war. He wants to be alone so that no one can trouble him. He does not want to contact anyone. Thus, the domestic roles of mother, wife and homemaker become key constructions of women's identity. LaCapra further asserts:

Victims of trauma tend to relive occurrences or at least intrude on their present existences, for example nightmares or in flashbacks on in words that are compulsively repeated and that does not seem to have their ordinary meaning because they are taking on different connotations from another belief....I also believe that people who have been severely traumatized, it may be impossible to fully transcend acting out the past. (143)

Obviously, trauma does have long lasting effect where the victims experience it in their present condition after it is psychologically revisited in the form of nightmares, dreams and memories. Nonetheless, trauma cannot be overcome permanently but it

can be managed to the great extent. Hence, psychological trauma can lead to serious long-term negative consequences that are often overlooked by mental health professional applying therapeutic method to lessen its intensity. The novel comments:

It is all right. The surgeon pokes around in the wound and a blackness comes before my eyes. "Don't carry on so," he says gruffly, and hacks away. The instruments gleam in the bright light like marvellous animals. The pain is insufferable. Two orderlies hold my arms fast, but I break loose with one of them and try to crash into the surgeon's spectacles just as he notices and springs back. "Chloroform the scoundrel," he roars madly. (114)

The behavior of a surgeon is also different towards the army men. He pokes around the wound. As a result, he felt insufferable pain. He showed his medical instruments to frighten him. He asks for chloroform to make him unconscious to amputate his leg. They treated with the army men like animals. Their instruments shine in the bright light. They try to hold him arm. About behaviour of hospital inspector, the novel expresses:

At noon the hospital inspector arrives and abuses us. He threatens us with clink and all the rest of it. But a hospital inspector is just the same as a commissariat inspector, or any one else who wears a long sword and shoulder straps, but is really a clerk, and is never considered even by a recruit as a real officer. So we let him talk. What can they do to us, anyway-- "Who threw the bottle?" he asks. (119)

The hospital inspector is like a commissariat inspector. He regards himself as a person who has a long sword and shoulder straps. He is a clerk and does not give more

importance to army men. He always abuses the patients by saying who threw the bottle. The novel reads:

It is going badly with Albert. They have taken him and amputated his leg. The whole leg has been taken off from the thigh. Now he will hardly speak any more. Once he says he will shoot himself the first time he can get hold of his revolver again. I do not find any alternative. (123)

Paul's friend Albert is feeling bad due to war. He has been hospitalized. His leg has been amputated because he became wounded in fight. He has been traumatized by war. He has made his mentality to commit suicide by his own revolver which he used for fighting. He does not find any option for his further life. His life has become useless. He does not find any meaning for his life. The novel reads:

Above such shattered bodies there are still human faces in which life goes its daily round. And this is only one hospital, one single station; there are hundreds of thousands in Germany, hundreds of thousands in France, hundreds of thousands in Russia. It must be all lies and of no account when the culture of a thousand years could not prevent this stream of blood being poured out, these torture-chambers in their hundreds of thousands. A hospital alone shows what war is. (124)

In a hospital, the bodies of soldiers have been scattered. Hundreds of thousands of wounded soldiers have been hospitalized in the hospitals of France, Russia and Germany. Everything seems to be senseless. There should be any provision which can stop war. A hospital shows what war is. The war should be stopped. Torture chambers should not be established. Paul says about war:

I am young, I am twenty years old; yet I know nothing of life but despair, death, fear, and fatuous superficiality cast over an abyss of sorrow. I see that the keenest brains of the world invent weapons. And all men of my age, here and over there, throughout the whole world see these things; all my generation is experiencing these things with me. What do they expect of us if a time ever comes when the war is over? Through the years our business has been killing;--it was our first calling in life. Our knowledge of life is limited to death. What will happen afterwards? (124)

Paul says that he is only twenty years old. He does not know anything of life. In war, people kill each other foolishly and innocently. More refined and recently invented weapons are used in the war. The young army men of his age take part in war. The people have limited their knowledge of life to death. Their business is to fight with enemies in the battlefield. They do not know about their future. They are on afraid of death.

Trauma is characterized by repeated traumatic events occurring over a period of time. Simply, trauma usually refers to a single event, like rape. But gender trauma is caused by other forces which are quite noticeable in society. Simple trauma is more likely to lead to posttraumatic stress disorder. Post-traumatic stress disorder refers to the sporadic outburst of hidden traumatic trace. Complex trauma leads to a deeper and more pervasive set of changes. Those changes involve emotional deregulation, distorted thinking, and behavioral dysfunction. It also consists of patterns of dysfunctional interpersonal relationships. The novelist says:

The months pass by. The summer of 1918 is the most bloody and the most terrible. The days stand like angels in blue and gold,

incomprehensible, above the ring of annihilation. Every man here knows that we are losing the war. Not much is said about it, we are falling back, we will not be able to attack again after this big offensive, we have no more men and no more ammunition. (131)

The time is passing rapidly. The war started in the summer of 1918. In the beginning, it was most bloody and terrible. All the people know that Germany is losing the war. German army does not have more ammunition. They are very few in number. There is not any chance to win the war for Germany. So, it is better to accept the loss of battle for them. The novel reveals about the feeling of Paul:

A terrible feeling of foreignness suddenly rises up in me. I cannot find my way back, I am shut out though I entreat earnestly and put forth all my strength. Nothing stirs; listless and wretched, like a condemned man, I sit there and the past withdraws itself. And at the same time I fear to importune it too much, because I do not know what might happen then. I am a soldier, I must cling to that. (80)

Although he is living in his own country, he feels himself as an alien. He has become a condemned and wretched man. He is frequently hunted by his past memories. He is unknown about his future. Since he is a soldier, it is his responsibility to fight against the enemy. He knows that he can get death anytime. He does not know what might happen to him. He cannot return from the battlefield. Paul Says:

When I see them here, in their rooms, in their offices, about their occupations, I feel an irresistible attraction in it, I would like to be here too and forget the war; while out at the front the splinters are whining over the shell-holes and the star-shells go up, the wounded are carried back on waterproof sheets and comrades crouch in the trenches.--They

are different men here, men I cannot properly understand, whom I envy and despise. I must think of Kat and Albert and Müller and Tjaden, what will they be doing? No doubt they are sitting in the canteen, or perhaps swimming--soon they will have to go up to the front-line again. (78)

He says that Kat, Albert, Muller, and Tjaden have been killed in war. They can not come to the trench again. He likes to sit in office and does not like to got to the battlefield. He remembers his friends with whom he sad together, had breakfast in canteen, swam and fought in the battlefield.

La Capra, points out that acting out is intimately related to working through, and working through does not mean that victims will be to heal or change completely.

He argues:

Since, working through it itself an articulatory practice that counteracts the compulsive effects of post-traumatic symptoms without pretending to achieve full mastery or total conscious dissolution of past trauma, it is virtually bound up with social and political action in the present, including the attempt to create institutional of conditions and norms that further desirable forms of social bonding, the viable binding of anxiety, and the integration of effect and knowledge, including empathic or compassionate relation to others.(15)

La Capra is trying to emphasize that working through is an articulatory practice or traumatic situation. It halts for the resolution of the past trauma. If the victims is traumatic by the incident s/he through the working through tries to heals the past event. In working through, the person or victims tries to gain critical distance on a problem to be able to distinguish between past, present and future. In this sense,

working through is an effective manner or practice that is used in order to reduce psychological condition. The narrator Paul says:

I am frightened: I dare think this way no more. This way lies the abyss. It is not now the time but I will not lose these thoughts, I will keep them, shut them away until the war is ended. My heart beats fast: this is the aim, the great, the sole aim, that I have thought of in the trenches; that I have looked for as the only possibility of existence after this annihilation of all human feeling; this is a task that will make life afterward worthy of these hideous years. (90)

He has become frightened from the war. The experiences of war have made his life the hell. He would not get freedom until the war ends. The war has become as an existential vision for humankind. His heart beats faster. People fight like animals in the battlefield. He wishes to make the environment favourable. He has lost his thought that German would win the war. The narrator reveals:

Now we develop an immense industry. This is an opportunity not only to stretch one's legs, but to stretch one's soul also. We make the best use of such opportunities. The war is too desperate to allow us to be sentimental for long. That is only possible so long as things are not going too badly. After all, we cannot afford to be anything but matter-of-fact. So matter-of-fact, indeed, that I often shudder when a thought from the days before the war comes momentarily into my head. But it does not stay long. (109)

While fighting in a battlefield, the people should stretch their souls. The war has made them desperate and sentimental. He feels isolated and alienated when the matter of war comes in mind. The memory of war comes in his mind frequently. He has not got

from his memories. Things are going badly for him. He wants to improve the situation. Kathleen Miriam pointed about traumatic catastrophe:

A traumatic event is an event threatens injury shock, terror or helplessness. Trauma refers to both the experience of being harmed by an external agent as well as the response to that experience. Youth who experience trauma also experience emotional harm or physical trauma which, if left untreated, can have a significant impact. Trauma typically exists along a spectrum which ranges from global to individual. (13)

Simply, trauma involves repeated traumatic incidents occurring over a period of times. It generally refers to a single events and leads to posttraumatic distress.

Usually, PTSD refers to the sporadic outburst of hidden trauma trace. Where complex trauma leads to a deeper and determined situate of change. Such changes involve emotional deregulation, dysfunctional as well as physical harm. Early researchers noted that spotlight to trauma leads to faction feelings of helpless, disorder and change in behavior. Such types of symptoms exist personally and additionally risk occurs globally. The protagonist says about peace:

It is autumn. There are not many of the old hands left. I am the last of the seven fellows from our class. Everyone talks of peace and armistice. All wait. If it again proves an illusion, then they will break up; hope is high, it cannot be taken away again without an upheaval.

If there is not peace, then there will be revolution. (138)

Six classmates of Paul have been killed in the battle field. He is the last of the seven classmates who has been fighting in the war. All the people talk about peace and armistice. They hope that war is about to end. He is of the opinion that the

revolution is essential when there is no peace. Autumn symbolizes death. So, there is no hope for life in him. People hope for peace but there is not symbol of peace.

The narrator says about Behm:

Behm was one of the first to fall. He got hit in the eye during an attack, and we left him lying for dead. We couldn't bring him with us. In the afternoon suddenly we heard him call, and saw him crawling about in No Man's Land. He had only been knocked unconscious. Because he could not see, and was mad with pain, he failed to keep under cover, and so was shot down before anyone could go and fetch him in. (5)

Paul felt strange to say that Behm was his first colleague who was killed in the battle field. His friend could not bring him with them. They heard him crying with pain and saw him crawling about in the border. The enemies made him blind and shut down before anyone could fetch him. These lines express the negative aspects of battlefield. The army men only fight in the battlefield. The narrator says:

I tremble with rage as I go along with the orderly. The man looks at me and says: One operation after another since five o'clock this morning. You know, to-day alone there have been sixteen deaths--yours is the seventeenth. There will probably be twenty altogether. (15)

Kemmerich was wounded in war. He had been hospitalized. When they went to meet him they found that he was dead. The doctor expressed that sixteen people died in this hospital today and it theirs was seventeenth. There were probably the twenty altogether deaths.

III. Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* as a Traumatic Novel

This research probes the psychologically traumatized condition of German soldiers during the World War I. It digs out how the army men were subjugated and psychologically dehumanized during the war and how the common impoverished people were victimized by the war. Consequently, more than twenty classmates of Paul were brutally killed. So, this research excavates psychologically distorted mentality of the characters in Remarque's novel, *All Quiet on the Western Front* from the point of view of past memory, nationalism and so forth. In an interview, the novelist expressed that the novel does not advocate any political position but is merely an attempt to describe the experiences of the soldier. The protagonist of the novel, Paul represents the entire voice of soldiers which is loaded with pain, isolation, alienation and pang.

Paul's visit on leave to his home highlights the cost of the war on his psyche. The town has not changed since he went off to war. However, he finds that he does not belong to his home. It has become a foreign land for him. He feels disconnected from most of the townspeople. His father asks him "stupid and distressing" questions about his war experiences, not understanding that a man cannot talk of such things. An old schoolmaster lectures him about strategy and advancing to Paris, while insisting that Paul and his friends know only their "own little sector" of the war but nothing of the big picture.

By now, the war is nearing its end and the German Army is retreating. In despair, Paul watches as his friends fall one by one. It is the death of Kat that eventually makes Paul careless about living. In the final chapter, he comments that peace is coming soon, but he does not see the future as bright and shining with hope. Paul feels that he has no aims or goals left in life and that their generation will be

different and misunderstood. When he dies at the end of the novel, the situation report from the frontline states, "All is Quiet on the Western Front," symbolizing the insignificance of one individual's death during the war.

One of the major themes of the novel is the difficulty of soldiers to revert to civilian life after having experienced extreme combat situations. Remarque comments in the preface that the novel tries simply to tell of a generation of men who, even though they may have escaped its shells, were destroyed by the war. This internal destruction can be found as early as the first chapter as Paul comments that, although all the boys are young, their youth has left them. In addition, the massive loss of life and negligible gains from the fighting are constantly emphasized. Soldiers' lives are thrown away by their commanding officers who are stationed comfortably away from the front, ignorant of the daily terrors of the front line.

Before the war, Paul was a creative, sensitive and passionate person, writing poems and having a clear love for his family. But the war changed his attitude and personality. Poems and other aspects of his past life become nothing for him. Paul was no longer linked to life since the horrors of war trained him to disconnect himself from his feelings. He feels he cannot tell anyone about his experiences of war and feels like an outsider where his family is concerned.

To wrap up, Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* is advocating on the behalf of psychologically traumatized German soldiers pointing out the effects of First World War. The novel is based on actual incident whose repercussions are still felt today. People are suffering from the long lasting wounding shock created by First World War. The novel is also the criticism of the war mongering tendency. Consequently, people are psychologically traumatized for a long period. At the meantime, it imparts a moral lesson that war obviously leads to devastation, which is

applicable in the life of common people. In other words, war causes economic and political ruin to a country. Notwithstanding, being an American writer, Remarque has tried his best to unearth the bitter reality bringing the cruelty of politicians about waging war.

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