

Chapter 1

Wagle's *Palpasa Café*: Issues and Context

This study analyzes the effects of the contemporary situation of the Maoist insurgency and the psychological performance of the characters, blending through the ups and downs situations of the characters in the novel, *Palpasa Café*. Especially, it analyzes the impact of social psychology in the characters. All the characters namely Drishya, Palpasa, Siddhartha, Palpasa's grandmother, Sanu, and so on display their characters, behaviours, thoughts and activities shaped by social circumstances. The main focus of the study is to explore how these characters are influenced by the then social situation.

Narayan Wagle is a Nepali journalist and novelist. Until 2008, he was the editor of *the Kantipur Daily*, one of the famous newspapers of Nepal, and the editor of *the Nagarik*, another newspaper. He works in *Setopati*, which is a popular digital newspaper in Nepal. Published in 2005, *Palpasa Café* is his first novel. The same year, it won Mandan Puraskar, a prestigious literary award in Nepal.

Palpasa Cafe has been loaded in semi-fictionalized form with the contemporary issues, social realities, the 10-year long Maoist insurgency, and the situations of the people living under uncertainty. In a way, this novel is the extended version of his fictionalized fact based 'Coffee Guff'. The characters presented in the novel cannot remain untouched from socio-political trauma and behavior. The performance of the characters is guided by the situation. The novel portrays the psychological trauma and uncertainty of lives.

This novel is a clear depiction of the real panoramic situation of contemporary society during the civil war. The representative characters of the novel anticipate the thoughts, feelings and behavior that are influenced by the actual, imagined or implied

presence of others. The role and representation of the characters is fully guided by socio-psychology, and perform their role accordingly.

Drishya's dream is a dream of an artist; it is also a dream of all the Nepalese to be free, equal, and get peace. In memory of his beloved Palpasa, a daring woman who comes back to Nepal from America to make a significant career in documentary film making, Drishya dreams of Palpasa Cafe, a resort to be built in the local architectural style. Siddhartha's dream of social reformation and Sanu's involvement in Maoist insurgency are the obvious result of the contemporary social situation. The cafe would have a library and gallery, blending art and coffee house on the canvas of the western hills. Drishya along with other characters has the dream of freedom created by the contemporary situation of the society.

The thoughts, feelings and behaviors include all psychological variables that are measurable in a human being. Palpasa and her grandmother are also influenced by the social phenomena that no other people are presented. Social psychology explains human behavior as a result of the interaction of the mental states and immediate social situation. The activities of Palpasa, which represent the activities of the modern characters, are guided by the West. The scenario of drinking alcohol and the straight explanation of the things can be said that she had the effects of reactions brought by the background of the USA.

The situation of Nepal is different from America. The real generalization of Siddhartha's attraction towards the Maoist alliance and the strong vision to change the condition of Nepal is taken as the demand of the contemporary society. The feelings developed between Drishya and Siddhartha are different according to the way they have perceived. Drishya travels his countryside to materialize his dream. But his dream could not be succeeded. It is a representation of all Nepalese dreams during the

civil war in Nepal.

This novel is an exemplary of the situation during the civil war that was full of bloodsheds and clashes. Everyone has a dream project but, like the protagonist of the novel, they are the victims of the tragic aftermath of crossfire, bombardment, and hatred by the borders. It depicts a youthful living along with the suffering Maoist insurgency and government policy. This novel depicts the life of Drisya, the protagonist, his journey to his birthplace and his dream of the Café named after his beloved Palpasa, a daring lady who comes back to Nepal from America to be with her grandmother and for documentary film making. Collecting the sprinkled events of contemporary society, Wagle has woven a book with simplicity. In this semi-autobiographical novel, facts are more dramatic than fictional drawn from the societies wracked by Maoist conflict. That is why the novel is the product of the socio-psychology and behavior emerged from contemporary upheaval.

Wagle shows the bad effects of civil war in Nepal which is the clear Xerox of the contemporary situation of the nation. He is guided by the contemporary society. His feelings, thoughts and actions are affected by the situation around him. He gains experiences of the dreadful lives of the blameless sufferers of ongoing war, especially their uncertain life and dream. The central characters of the novel are the representatives of the real victims of both Maoist insurgency and government policy. In particular, a tragic love story of Drishya with Palpasa, anti-war feeling, Drishya's dream project to build Palpasa cafe, and his journey to his village from Kathmandu have been highlighted in the novel.

Wagle is, undoubtedly, an anti-war novelist and social psychologist. However, his novel stands in need to find how it moves forward in quest for the peace and freedom in the country through the representation of characters to erase the war and

conflict.

This study aims to explore the impact of mental state and social situation reflected on the characters. It discusses the anti-war feelings of the protagonist, Drishya, his dream to build Palpasa cafe in western hills, and his journey from Kathmandu to his own village. Furthermore, it attempts to reveal the protagonist's journey that is full of unexpected twists and co-incidences and how his dream does not get success despite his overcoming of hardships and difficulties. It shows that the feelings, thoughts, behaviors and action of the central characters are guided by their mental state and the social situation during their journey.

This study attempts to portray the effects of social psychology on the characters. It also tries to depict the dream and psychological trauma of Drishya to build a cafe in the western hills, Palpasa's dream to make a documentary film and Siddhartha's aim to reform the society. It is only specified to the concept of social psychology. Lack of authentic materials is a constraint that will be tackled in terms of writing critical works. This work is also not out of this exception.

It will be significant for exploring the real situation of Nepal during the civil war as it mirrors the pain, struggle, sufferings and hardships of the Nepalese people during Maoist insurgency. The importance of this research is portraying the unexplored journey in the *Palpasa Café* with social psychological tools. This research will also pave the way for the future researchers.

Review of Literature

Palpasa Café was written during Maoist insurgency in Nepal. It is an example of the situations during the upheaval which was full of bloodshed and clashes for ten years. Regarding its tone Gevald Murne describes, "The story is overall melancholic, sad, sorrowful just as the 10-years of civil conflict" (3). Every character has his/her

dream being the victim of the cross fire and bombardment. The dream of the protagonist is to establish a well-furnished and merry cafe named Palpasa Café, after his beloved, in his lovely hill of his birthplace.

Regarding the context of the novel, Dipika Shrestha, a member of the Wave Book Club, states that Wagle has presented the real situations of the contemporary society:

The writer creates the images of schools and hospitals after series of bombarding and gunfire as we turn the pages. Loss of loved ones in the violence and the pain it causes is shown differently like the death of Mummy's children, death of husband of a newly married woman and the tragedy of losing a best friend experienced by a child. (11)

Shrestha depicts the painful situation created by the upheaval. It is a story of an individual and family who have lost their loved ones, their hope for life, its value, and meaning due to the armed conflict between the state and the Maoists.

Dinesh Wagle projects his views about plot, presentation, and style of the novel. He views why the author has chosen artist or painter for his novel:

The plots, presentation, style are simply great. Looking one's country in civil war from the eye of an artist, who are creative in themselves. He could have chosen others but why artist/painter? Because story runs well with them through their hidden and creative arts depicting many things from the brush dipped in colors rubbed in canvas. (1)

The novel is almost experimental in Nepali literature from the eyes of an artist. Wagle has used simple and colloquial language, and his voice is genuine and sincere.

James Sharrock finds the contemporary problem of the country and its attitude in the social milieu.

Wagle's best features are in the boarder canvas he paints firstly into the disappearance and general description of the post Royal Massacre in Kathmandu and then of the conflict into the hills. Wagle's description of school being blown up, emptying villages, bomb blasting, Maoist's attack on district Headquarters, and mourning Nepali families are extremely hard hitting and powerful. Wagle uses the novel to protest both warring sides. (930)

Sharrok analyzes that the novel describes the devastating situation of the country during Maoist insurgency. During this time, common people were compelled to spend their days and nights under the control of handful people. The situation is full of horror and terror.

Heeding the reason of writing this novel, Dominique Francon opines, "When no one had an idea how the war was going to end and intellectuals were too staid to assess the consequences of civil war, Narayan Wagle, therefore wrote a novel neglecting alchemy of violence" (27). Francon takes this as a war novel. As in ancient time, people are inundated with war news in the name of development and change. He adds that the war has become a part of human life.

Regarding the plot and setting of the novel, C.K. Lal comments,

The book deals with the first few years of 21st century. It is the story of the mountains of Nepal. Drishya, the protagonist, has tried to understand himself. He has tried to understand other people's feelings. He has tried to understand the inner mind of the one who has gone for the revolution. He has tried to understand the city, where he lives, the village where he was born, the country and the horrors of the time. (25)

Socio-political upheaval has been portrayed through the thematic aspects of the novel.

The individual situation has been taken in an experimental way. It is not only the portrayal of war, but also the emotional aspect of the characters reflected in the novel.

Bishnu Sapkota finds the novel as a post-modern war narrative:

Palpasa Café needs to be read on two levels, Post-modern work of fiction and a narrative of war. Post-modern novels are avant-garde, and experimental in their form. Now, *Palpasa Café* as a war narrative has a silent preamble that it is important to look at an individual life revised by a pang of war. (4)

Sapkota comments that Wagle has a unique intelligence of exploring the subject matter in an experimental way. Facts are more dramatic than fiction in society worked by messy conflict. The novel is often claimed to be the mirror and true representation of history of Nepal during Maoist insurgency and an exemplary of a great anti-war novel.

Deepak Adhikari opines that Wagle elaborates his views regarding the meaning of life through alter ego:

Like the protagonist's shattered dream of *Palpasa Café* in the idyllic hills, the novel seems promising in the outset while ends up in the maze of its own making. Conflict is only the backdrop where an artist searches meaning of his love life. But despite having encyclopedic knowledge of nature and painting, Wagle fails to portray Drishya as an artist. Like Wagle himself, he sounds more like a journalist; so, he is an alter ego of his creation. (5)

Adhikari talks about some weaknesses of the novel. He opines that Wagle has failed to present Drishya as an artist. Despite being a painter, he seems more like a journalist. One finds the dominant voice of Drishya as a journalist rather than the

voice of an artist, in the novel.

Ujjal Acharya focuses on the unfortunate experience and asserts,

But the smiles on my face faded out as soon as the novel progressed. With the short tales of people's lives under the Maoist and the state's threats it's all about tears. It's all the reality of the country under the insurgency. I couldn't help thinking about the country for a few minutes and how life feels like in the villages and consider myself unfortunate to experience all these. (3)

Acharya views that the Maoist insurgency and the real situation of the country of the contemporary period can be realized by reading the text. The novel reflects the war and its bad effects on the contemporary situation of the society. War itself is a bad experience. It is depressing in fact.

Kunda Dixit reviews the novel on the outcome of the ongoing war between old structure of the state and the Maoist insurgency which has affected not only the Nepali Society but also foreigners in the world:

So, when the Maoist insurgency turned incredibly violent in 2000, it seemed as though editor in news rooms in London, Hongkong and New York could not quite believe that there was trouble in Sangri-La. And even if there were, they believe it would be over soon enough. It was only after Nepali crown prince murdered his entire family as well as himself in a massacre of the royal palace on the night of June 1, 2001, that parachute journalists who came to cover the story and realized that something was seriously wrong in the mountainous kingdom. (39)

Dixit analyzes the history of the mountainous country Nepal and the Nepalese people

as peace loving. The beginning of Maoist insurgency did not attract many foreigners, but it was after the royal massacre that many foreign journalists took interest on the conflicting situation of Nepal that has affected the people both within and out of the country.

Various criticisms from several perspectives have been already done on this novel. Researchers have already gone through its plot situations, contents, characters, and the different theories over it. But, no one has reviewed it from the perspective of social psychology. Therefore, this study analyzes that the situation and the psychology of the characters are shaped by the social circumstances.

Outline of the Study

This thesis has been divided into four chapters. The introduction commences with a brief background regarding the book and the writer. This chapter holds the introduction parts, hypothesis, problems and the limitations. The sub-chapter deals with the review of literature. It consists of comments, ideas and perspectives written earlier about this novel. The introduction traces some of the problems related to the novel and relations of the characters to social psychology.

The second chapter defines social psychology and illustrates the diverse features of this theory. This deeply concerns on the behavior, feelings and emotions created and developed by social situations.

The third chapter is an analytical part which deals with the performance of the characters based on the contemporary conditions. This section analyzes the whole novel from the spectacle of social psychology.

The fourth chapter offers certain observations pertaining to the characters' response to social psychology. This is the overall synopsis of the whole thesis. It projects the behaviour of the characters according to their nurture environment.

Chapter 2

Social Psychology: Its History and Concept

Social psychology is the scientific study of how people's thoughts, feelings and behaviors are influenced by the actual, imagined, or implied presence of others. Human behavior is the result of the interaction of mental states and immediate social situations. In one sense, social psychology is a discipline that works as a bridge to connect the gap between psychology and sociology. In social psychology, attitudes are defined as learned, global evaluation of a person, object, place, or issue that influence thought and action. Social psychology is an empirical science that attempts to answer questions about human behavior by testing hypothesis, both in the laboratory and in the field.

To connect the theme, Robert A. Baron speculates, "Social psychology is scientific in nature because it focuses on the behavior of others or individuals. It adopts the values and methods used in other fields of science. Social psychologists adopt the scientific method because it provides a reliable guide to social behavior" (41). On the basis of his definition, it can be said that social psychology affects nearly every aspects of everyday lives, such as, the way in which we form, develop and maintain our relationship with people ranging from our parents to our friends, family and co-workers.

Social psychology studies how people act, think and feel in the context of society. That is how people's behavior thoughts and feelings change because of the other people. Social psychology covers many fields, such as, sociology, anthropology, psychology, etc.

Applied social psychology can be defined as using social psychological theories, principles, research findings and experimental methods to understand social

issues and after real-world solution for a variety of social problems. As a discipline, applied sociology functions on the premise that social problems are, at their heart, caused by human behavior.

To understand and change the problem behaviors, applied social psychology conducts a scientific examination of individual's thoughts, feelings, and behavior as they pertain to a variety of social influence. Historically, the work of Kurt Lewin marks the beginning of modern applied social psychology. Lewin, best known for his field theory suggesting the behavior of an individual's personality and his or her environment, proposed that social psychologists should engage in what he called action research. A social activist himself, Lewin believed that social issues should inspire social psychological research. This research could then be used to provide solutions for social problems.

In this way, one can say that Lewin's theory of social psychology sought to define a social problem, recommend countermeasures, and list the effectiveness of those countermeasures through community involvement, surveys, case studies and controlled experiments. As social psychology sought greater acceptance as a science in the 1950s and 1960s, action research in the field became less popular and was replaced by basic academic social psychology.

History and Ethics of Social Psychology

People began thinking about the concept of social psychology as early as the first philosophers, Aristotle and Plato. Aristotle had a more individual centered approach and thought that humans were naturally made to be sociable, in order to be able to live together. Plato instead based his theory on a socio centered approach and felt that the environment controlled the individual simulating social responsibility through social context. Apart from these two well-known philosophers, another

contemporary philosophical mind Hegel introduced the concept of that society has links to the developing social brain. This then led to a focus on the collective mind in the 1960s which emphasized the view that an individual's personality develops because of cultural and community influences, especially language. Wilhelm Wundt is seen as the father of psychology and Volker psychology, in which he studied language, cultural myths, and social customs. He saw language as both a product cultures, as well as individual cognitive process.

Some of the first experiments conducted in the vein of social psychology occurred in the late 1800s and early 1900 by Norman Triplett and Max Ringelmann. Triplett conducted a study on if people would perform better or worse when there were other people present. He was supposed to be the first to find evidence of social facilitation, which is when people are able to perform tasks better when there are other around them observing. Ringelmann's study looked at how much effort a person is willing to input a task or project when working alone versus working with others. History found the basis for social loafing which is when an individual puts in less effort when working with other people.

In this way social psychology was able to branch off from other areas of psychology because of the belief that people's behavior changes depending on the cognitive process with which they perceive and interpret the social situation they are in. Since social psychology has become one of the fundamental studies of social behavior and the people, a number of well recognized theorists and authors have perfected their concern on it. The list of fundamental social psychologists who made astonishing and still influential discoveries today is quite extensive. They have contributed a lot on social psychology. Their contribution has assisted a lot the theory to be advanced now-a-days in one way or the other.

The goal of social psychology is to understand cognition and behavior as they naturally occur in a social context, but the very act of observing people can influence and alter their behavior. For this reason, many social psychology experiments utilize deception to conceal or desert certain aspects of the study. Deception may include false cover stories, false participants, and false feedback given to the participants, and so on.

The practice of deception has been challenged by some psychologists who maintain that deception under any circumstances is unethical and that other research strategies should be used instead. Unfortunately, research has shown that role playing studies do not produce the same results as deception studies and this has cast doubt on their validity. In addition to deception, experimenters have at times put people into potentially uncomfortable or embarrassing situation and this has also been criticized for ethical reason.

To protect the rights and well-being of research participants and, at the same time, discover meaningful results and insights into human behaviour, virtually all social psychology research must pass an ethical review process. At most colleges and universities, this is conducted by an ethics committee or institutional review board. This group examines the proposed research to make sure that no harm is done to the participants and that the benefits of the study outweigh any possible risks or discomforts to people taking part in the study.

Furthermore, a process of informed consent is often used to make sure that volunteers know what will happen in the experiment and understand that they are allowed to quit the experiment at any time. A debriefing is typically done at the conclusion of the experiment in order to reveal any deceptions used and generally make sure that the participants are unharmed by the procedures. Today most research

in social psychology involves no risk of harm than can be expected from routine psychological testing or normal daily activities.

Social Psychology and other Fields

Social psychology is not an autonomous theory since it shares with other fields of study. It covers a lot of grounds. And because it covers so many different things, social psychology overlaps with many other fields of study.

Anthropology is primarily the study of human culture. Anthropologists study the beliefs and tradition of societies. Their focus is in the society as a whole, whereas social psychologists want to study the way society affects the thought, feelings and behavior of individual. Anthropology can be analyzed in another way that anthropologists might study certain religious tradition, such as the way different Christian churches celebrate Easter. But social psychologists are interested in the individual's interaction with society, so they might study how religious people behave differently from non-religious people in certain situation.

Sociology has a lot in common with social psychology. Sociologists, like anthropologists, study society as a whole. But instead of looking the benefits and tradition of society, their focus is on organizations and their impact on individuals within them. Like social psychologists, sociologists are interested in interaction of society and individuals. But sociologists are more focused on society and social psychologists are more focused on the individual.

Though both the concepts are the study of society and the individual, their approach to look at the problems is different. For example, in the study of why so many marriages end with divorce. To look at this problem sociologists compile all sorts of data on the number of divorces from year to year. They might then compare that information to things going on in society. In the same case social psychologists

approach the problem differently. Instead of looking at society as a whole and the divorce rate, they interview many couples who have divorced and who have stayed together. They compare the difference in the types of couples and, after taking to dozens of couples, come up with a theory as to what causes divorce rate to increase. In this scene, the social psychologists also come up with the same answer as the sociologists but, they have approached in from a different angle.

In addition to anthropology and sociology, social psychology has a lot in common with other branch of psychology called personality psychology. Personality psychology is just what it sounds like the study of individual personality traits. Like social psychologists, personality theorists are interested in the thoughts, behaviors and feelings of individuals. But whereas social psychologists tend to focus on the way the world impacts these aspects of person, personality psychologists focus on the internal properties of a person and the way those affect a person's action and thoughts.

Social psychology is the study of the dynamic relationship between individuals and the people around them. Each of us is different and our individual characteristics, including our personality traits, desires, motivations and emotions, have an important impact on our social behavior. But our behavior is also profoundly influenced by the social situation the people with whom we interact every day. These people include our friends, family, classmates, religious groups, the people we see on TV or read about or interact with online as well as people we think about, remember or even imagine. Social psychologists believe that human behavior is determined by both a person's characteristics and the social situation. They also believe that the social situation is frequently a stronger influence on behavior.

Social psychology is largely the study of the social situation. Our social situations create social influence the process through which other people change our

thoughts, feeling and behaviors and through which we change theirs. Kurt Lewin formalizes, "Social psychology typically explains human behavior as a result of the interaction of the mental state and immediate social situation" (1). Lewin indicates that the behavior of a given person at any given time is a function of both the characteristics of the person and the influence of the social situation.

Chapter 3

Influence of Social Situation in the Novel

Narayan Wagle's novel, *Palpasa Café*, has been woven by abundant uses of behavior, performance, and the state of mind of the different characters according to their socio-political background. It depicts the psychological influence of the social situation in the characters. The reactions and the thoughts of the characters, for instance, Drishya and Palpasa, along with other minor characters, are influenced by the social context and the situation. The thinking of the main character, Palpasa, is different from the other characters who are brought up and developed in the Nepalese context. Palpasa has romantic feelings in her perception as she has recently been graduated from American University and lived in America for some years. Drishya develops modern feelings and thoughts as he is in modern background of the city. He frequently visits advanced restaurants and villas to enjoy the environment and the nature.

Drishya and Palpasa

The behavior of a character is influenced by the presence of social standard and personal characteristics. Actions are determined by the immediate environment and surroundings. The first meeting of Drishya and Palpasa at Anjuna Beach in Goa is the co-incidence. Drishya sees Palpasa in Goa and influences her. He wants to have a relation with her because she is beautiful and has a book, written by him. It is again co-incidence that they meet again in a restaurant in the evening. The arrival of Palpasa to ask a chair in Drishya's table is a situational outcome. Drishya knows her and wants to be introduced to her. That is why he creates the situation to make her understand about him. It is not only the situational outcome, it is the psychology of Drishya who wants to develop the conversation with her and influence her by his

skills of paintings.

The situations between Drishya and Palpasa are quite different before and after the meeting in a restaurant. Before she knows Drishya, she does not behave positively and responds as a stranger. When Drisya discloses the name of the writer of the book whom she likes, she presents herself as an obedient student before the teacher. In describing the appearance and reaction, Drishya narrates, "like an obedient student, she sat on the chair she'd earlier wanted to take? 'Namaste' she said, pressing her palms together" (17). The thoughts and feelings over the situation developed by Palpasa are different from what she addresses unknowingly. It has been changed as an admirer of ages. Her perception towards him has been changed by the socio-situational background.

Similarly, the scene of her reading his book shapes the mental perception of Drishya towards her. He wishes to talk and develop the positive vibes for the meeting. Eventually, it comes true in the evening, they happen to have a dinner in the same restaurant.

Social psychology emphasizes the situational perspectives on the ways in which a person's environment, including culture and other situational influences. It affects the behavior. Situational forces have a strong influence on human behavior including social roles, social norms and scripts. Humans use the social environment as a source of information, or clues on how to behave.

One's behaviors, attitudes and beliefs are affected when one experiences a threat to one's self-esteem or positive self-image. Carol Tavis and Elliot Aronson project, "social psychologists have documented that feeling good about ourselves and maintaining positive self-esteem is a powerful motivator of human behavior" (85). No one wants to be defamed. Everyone wishes to have self-esteem. It helps people to

have a positive attitude toward the environment. As mentioned by them, Palpasa wants to break the assumption of general people that a lady should marry while she is young. Another concept of general people is that they should not leave the opportunity they have got in developed countries where they once get chance to be. But she does.

Palpasa wants to break the prevalent assumption asserting, "Finally, I've found someone who believes in me. No one, and that includes my friends and family, understands me. They just want me to marry and settle down in the states" (21). Palpasa wants to make her own decisions. She does not want to stay further in the USA and wishes to make documentary films in Nepal.

Conformity, social influence, obedience and group possession demonstrate the power of social situation to change one's thoughts, feelings and behaviors. Social psychology demonstrates how susceptible humans are to outside social pressures. A Dutch lady's comment about the portraits of Drishya makes him serious and thoughtful. He is dismayed and starts to think why the paints are cold. He cannot find the real cause. He becomes increasingly depressed and reclusive. Then after that, he does not dare to pick up a paint brush. Drishya is totally changed by the expression of the Dutch lady. "I didn't even meet my friends during that time and they assuming I was busy didn't contact me, either. They stopped sending e-mails. I hadn't heard from Tshering for a long time but I didn't disturb him" (46). Until the letter sent by the Dutch lady, he behaves like the same. He is unable to perform his regular tasks. Ultimately, he finds that the paintings are not cold, but the color of the wall is not matched with the paintings. The letter again brings happiness in his face. The psychology and the behaviors are relative. The sad mood has been bloomed with grace by the time.

Drishya and Palpasa have good relation and become lovers. It is because of the similar background, attitude and interest. They are like-minded to each other. Both are interested in art and paintings. Drishya paints beautifully and Palpasa finds the character similar like her in his paintings. She assimilates herself in the character of the paintings. Similarly she influences it. They share same attitudes. Palpasa has strong passions to meet the writer of the book. Coincidentally, she meets him and has a good chemistry developed in front of him. They have similar insight, judgment and thinking. That is why, they happen to like each other.

Physical, cultural and behavioral characteristics in men and women attract one another. Some look for friends and lovers who are physically attractive. But others look for like-mindedness. People differ in what they consider attractive, and attractiveness is physically or culturally influenced. The first sight of Palpasa at Anjuna Beach has influenced Drishya. That is why, he wants to have her. Along with her physical traits, her interest in paintings makes him have a conversation and a meeting. At the second meeting, Drishya knowingly tells her regarding the author of the book that she has read. He asks even if she does not wish to have a discussion. These scenes clarify that it is not coincidence; it is the attraction that makes him wish for such beautiful lady in his life.

Regular contact is the most influential factor in determining with whom one becomes friend and whom one form romantic relationships. In the novel, Palpasa and Drishya have intimate relationship which is the creation of the regular contact. They are more likely to be friends when they have regular contact with each other. "You are more likely to become friends with people who live in your room, your apartment, building, or your immediate neighborhood than with people who live farther away" (Festinger et al. 19). The situation and affinity bring the people to have intimate

relationship.

One typically loves the people with whom one forms relationships but the type of love one has for the family, friends and lover differs. Robert Sternberg argues, "There are three components of love: intimacy, passion, and commitment. These three components form a triangle that defines multiple types of love" (65). Intimacy is the sharing of details, intimate thoughts and emotions. Passion is the physical attraction. Commitment is the state or quality of being dedicated to a cause and activity. The love between Palpasa and Drishya has connection as a triangular form as mentioned by Sternberg. There are all three traits in their love though they have not disclosed it to each other.

The narrator wants to return to his own village where he was born and passed his childhood. It is his socio-psychological aspect of mind. He tells his Lahure Kaka that he has a dream to make a route and make a beautiful café in the yard of the nature. He wants to develop tourism in his own village. The village has been deserted because of the involvement of youths in Maoist alliances. The social-political and his inner development of psychology leads him to return to his village. Drishya tells his uncle,

We could develop a trekking route. If we could establish a route to the base of Dhanchuli Himal, it would attract people from all over the world. The village would be transformed. It could be the perfect place for me to build the resort of my dreams with a bit of landscaping, my own land, with its gentle slope, could also be transformed. My house was on a hillside little way out of the village. It would be the perfect site for a resort. (150)

Drishya has a dream to make a café. His village is in quite beautiful in scenery. It has

much prospect to develop.

Granny and Siddhartha

Persuasion is the process of changing one's attitude towards something based on some kinds of communication. Much of the persuasion comes from outside forces. A sub-field of social influence, providing with ample information on how human can be persuaded by others. Drishya has a good power of persuasion and makes people persuade him easily. He easily influences grandmother of Palpasa and makes her behave him as her own grandson. He gets her to dance even in old age. Drishya narrates, "The grandmother stood up. She re-wound the cassette tape and played the same song again. Then, putting aside her walking stick, she danced, her body suddenly as light as an alpine flower" (56). She was convinced by the convincing skills of Drishya. She has never danced earlier as she does now.

People have multiple roles in different situations. A matured person can behave as a child if situation compels. Here, the arrival of Palpasa, while grandmother is dancing with Drishya, makes her shy and timid. She stops dancing and hides her eyes and hands as a child." Having been caught dancing her grandmother became as shy and embarrassed as a child. She hid her eyes behind her hands, like a little girl ashamed at being exposed through a tear in her dress" (56). The energy reserved in her body sprouts in request of Drishya. The energy that she has while dancing fades out when she sees her grand-daughter.

Siddhartha's dream of social reformation and attraction towards the Maoist alliance and strong vision to change the present condition of Nepal is determined by the contemporary social situation. His involvement in Maoist alliance, his thoughts, feelings and actions are affected by the situations of the country. When his father asks about his involvement in Maoist insurgency, he replies, "For people like you Ba.

There's no electricity in your house, no telephone, no television, you don't have roads or a market in which to sell your oranges. How long should we look up from the ground at the planes flying overhead carrying the rich?" (88). He shows his dissatisfaction due to improper government policy. People who want to change the set up rules of the nation through underground revolution have the same type of consciousness.

Those Nepalese who are against the state polices have the same opinions like that of Siddhartha. They express that this condition is there due to the exploiters and the bourgeoisie. The limited people who are in power can afford for health treatment education and entertainment as they like. They drive expensive cars and indulge themselves in luxury. Siddhartha, as a cadre of anti-state alliance, says, "We will get anywhere till the power of the state rests in the hands of the people" (89). This is the feeling raised in every cadre of Maoist insurgency.

Though Siddhartha and Drishya are village close friends, they have chosen war and art respectively for the reformation of the country. Siddhartha takes Drishya to his village in such a way that Drishya is kidnapped. Drishya narrates, "Siddhartha had urged me to come here, had challenged me to come, but he had not accompanied me all the way. He'd shown me the way, then left. It was as though he'd abducted me and blindfolded me. When I took off the blindfold, he was gone" (152). Here Siddhartha wants to show the real situation of the village and the people there. This is an outcome of the social situation and the Maoist insurgency. Siddhartha is in the village hiding himself from the eyes of state's force. It is his compulsion to do so in order to get success in his mission. But he is killed by the Nepalese army. His death is the result of his participation in Maoist alliance. He cannot avoid his death which happened due to the contemporary social situation. Finally, Siddhartha and Drishya

are separated; art defeats war, though there was not direct enmity between Siddhartha and Drishya.

The State and the Maoists

Maoist insurgency is supposed to be a revolt against the contemporary society of hierarchy. During the ten years of Maoist insurgency both sides inflict horrendous cases of traumatic experience. Countless people are tortured, raped, abducted, and physically brutalized from both sides- Maoist alliance and the government (security forces). Both sides accuse the other side whereas the common people are victimized. They are prejudiced against their opponent forces. The stereotype feelings and propaganda influence the cadres and military forces. They rush to kill the opponent group blindfoldly. Words fail to describe the impoverished condition of the conflict caused by the two forces, a product of socio-political situation.

The socio-political background of the country is the source for Wagle to write the novel. The context of the upheaval situation enhances the constructive nature of social psychology, social knowledge and literary text. This novel presents characters as creations of their time affected by and with effects on their own environment "individuals use common knowledge system to describe themselves" (Contarello 6). The situation of 10 years long Maoist insurgency and the state of the mind of Wagle developed by this situation triggers his insight to develop a novel. The content of his novel is the Nepalese society where the dream and life of the common people are shattered with uncertainty. He describes, "The district headquarters is still tense there was the sound of gunfire this morning and now students are throwing stones from inside the campus" (4). A reporter recalls Wagle on his mobile about the situations when Maoists have looted and bombed a bus. Wagle is waiting for Drishya, the protagonist, to listen to his story for the completion of this novel.

The situation of the country is critical and there is frustration in the lives of the common people. Everyone is frustrated, alienated, and in trauma due to the upheaval. Every day the events of abduction, murder, bomb blast and conflict are reported in the news. There is fear and uncertainty everywhere. Many couples are compelled to live alone without their sons and daughters. They have to send their children in the jungle for the war. It is quite difficult to perceive the mental state of the people how they can endure such situation. The narrator narrates,

There is another old couple; they are no better than your Miit Baa and Mitini Aama. They have poor eye sight sand can't go anywhere.

They're waiting for their sons to come back. One's in the army and the other's joined the rebels. The one in the army sent them a message saying that if they wanted to see him, they should come to Kathmandu because it's too dangerous for him to come back here. But the old folks can't go to Kathmandu. He sighed. Their grief's going to kill them one day. (143)

The couple is all alone in the village. In the old age they need much help and care but they do not have their sons with them to look after. They have poor eyesight and cannot go anywhere. Instead of help and assistance, they are in a great sorrow and grief.

The common people in the village, especially the young ones, are abducted. Without any reason and without giving their instruction, the common people are being the victims of both forces. If they let food and shelter to Maoist cadres, the security force offends. If they do not, the Maoist cadres compel and torture. The common people are victimized both ways: whether they let the Maoist cadres shelter or not. They become puppet and frustrated on their own homeland. The traumatic thoughts

and feelings lead them to frustration. The parents are unable to protect their children. If there is a young boy or a girl in the house, the Maoist rebels demand him/her or money to support them. The poor family is unable to offer them money and has to send their son/daughters to the jungle by force.

People act on their prejudiced attitudes toward a group of people, and this behavior is known as discrimination. Discrimination is negative action towards an individual or a group. As a result of holding negative beliefs about a particular group, people often treat the target of prejudice very badly. Prejudice gives rise to conflict and the conflict results war. The Maoist rebellion against the government is directed to bring equality among the Nepalese or the marginalized and targeted group. They established their alliances mainly from the rural areas where people are ignorant and being prejudiced by the government in terms of rights.

Drishya's tour to his own village makes him insane. His state of mind is shattered. He cannot think properly. Everything seems strange for him. Even he cannot believe anyone. The scenario of the village shapes his thought and feelings. He feels frustrated and sad. He cannot remain there for a long time and leaves it having burden of mind. He perceives the sight of the village which was shattered by the conflict, uncertainty, identity crisis and *tandav* dance of Maoist cadres as well as the state force.

Drishya crosses a river on a boat while returning to Kathmandu from his village. While rowing the boat, the boatman cannot recognize but suspects him, "I do not have a clue who you are. If I say one thing, you might take out a gun and shoot me. If I say something else, you might still take out a gun" (170). The boatman does not know who Drishya is. The situation is very terrible. There is no faith and belief in each other.

The common people are suppressed and they are unable to express their desires and wants. The state is unable to provide security to the public. They are compelled to do their job in the risk that might occur at any time. The situation has badly affected them. Each and every character has uncertainty. The boatman is worried about his job. Drishya finds his journey difficult and uncertain because anything may happen and he may lose his life. The owner of the restaurant, Palpasa, Sanu, Siddhartha and other characters depict the situational dread about their lives.

Identity and Conflict on Other Characters

Maoist insurgency brings obstacles to the people who travel to different places of Nepal. The travelers cannot enjoy their tour. They are seen through the eyes of suspicion. No one believes the strangers easily. The visitors are unable to have shelter at night. Thoughts are emerged in Drishya's mind as stream of consciousness when he climbs the hills of his birth place. Drishya feels a stranger himself even in his own home district. Siddhartha who encourages Drishya to visit his birthplace is no more with him. He has an unbelievable sight of Siddhartha's death. The situation of the time makes him behave as insane. He narrates, " I was walking uphill but it seems I was sliding downward" (152). He cannot think properly at the time and realizes the self-reflection of his image. He sees another person like him on the way. He performs as he does. He describes, "He looked exactly like me. He was wearing my clothes and carrying my rucksack. He, too, was unshaven. When I stopped, he stopped too" (153). This is not the real person; it is just his imagination developed in his mind. He is terrified by his own imagination. He becomes fragile and stammers time and again.

Human conflict results in crime, war and mass murder. Prejudice and discriminations often are root causes of human conflict, which explains how strangers come to hate one another to the extreme of causing other harm. Prejudice often begins

in the form of stereotype- that is a negative belief about individuals based solely on their membership in a group, regardless of their individual characters stereotypes become over generalized and applied to all members of a group. The government discriminates the people in Nepal on the basis of caste, race, sex and class. The so-called higher people subjugate the majority people. There is monopoly system whereas the poor and marginalized people cannot enjoy the rights. They absorb the sweat and labor of lower groups. The identity of a person is relative. The society and social circumstances shape the psychology of the people. They behave and perform the tasks according to the situation.

Social psychology seeks to understand the psychological possession associated with identification with the nation. It focuses on exactly how people construct 'nation' and 'identity', what these constructions achieve in local contexts. The ideologies are taken for granted which are imported into particular construction and sustained. Situational factors, rather than personality traits and characteristics, are more likely to influence whether or not one will help someone in distress.

The effect of conflict on the psychology of individual and a society are as serious as they are neglected. If the attitudes that lead to conflict are to be decreased, and if it is taken that psychology drives attitudes and behaviors of decrease and if it is taken that psychology drives attitudes and behaviors of individuals and groups, then new emphasis must be placed on understanding the social psychology of conflict and its consequences. The suffering and trauma of war need to be addressed and prioritized in plans for peace. For instance, the Maoist insurgency is taken as the upheaval of the different groups in Nepal. It is because of the inequality and discriminating governmental system. They were not treated equally and excluded in terms of national issues and facilities. They revolted against the one-door government

system where they performed monopoly to rule over the majority. If it had been addressed properly, it would have been stopped earlier and many people would survive.

Social psychology is a frame of analysis for a comprehensive understanding of conflict. It explains the underlying inequalities and injustices that exist in conflicted societies. Furthermore, it contributes to understanding the nature and inadequacies of state, root cause of violence and for offering necessary perspectives on effective conflict management.

In relations between nations and groups, perceptions are formed by interactions over time. Values of time and threats from others, power distribution, and resource control, each contribute to these perceptions. So, conflict is the result of a shift power and the display of relative strength. In social psychological terms, it is the perception of power, which is important. Power is most often perceived in military economic or political terms. If these are perceived as zero- sum, it is likely that conflict will erupt.

Identity can be described as the norms, beliefs, practices, and traditions with which one engages one's environment. Self perception underlines the nation of identity a pivotal component of social psychological analysis. Identity and perceptions of the self provide the lens through which one views others. Identity is not a static concept, rather it forms and changes depending on the particular historical moment. Conceptions of identity influence the process of conflicts.

The protagonist of this novel does not have a certainty in his identity. He is stranger in his own village where he was born. Everything in his village seems different. After observing the whole situation, Drishya almost loses his senses. For him, it is difficult to find a shelter for a night in anyone's house. No one knows him.

Even his friends and villagers do not know him and his profession. He finds his identity crisis and talks to self:

I walked on, feeling weary at the thought of perhaps not being able to sleep well for a second night in a row. No one here believed I was neutral I'd become stranger in my own home district. Who was I? My identity was linked to my profession but who would respect my profession here? What had my paintings done for these hills? No one knew my art. My identity as an artist wouldn't win anyone's trust.

(152)

Drishya questions himself regarding his identity. He imagines having a gun in his hand like a Maoist cadre. But, the situation is different.

C. K. Lal views, "The novel is a product of Wagle's own search for answer about his identity. The protagonist Drishya, is very similar to Narayan I know, through the novel he has tried to understand himself" (9). Lal finds Wagle essentially presenting Nepal's sensibility of contemporary time. He finds many similarities between Wagle and Drishya of the Novel. The different identities living in different and difficult situation during Maoist insurgency are reflected through this Novel. Nobody has been able to assert one's identity.

Female characters seem strong and powerful having their own determination. Yam Kumari, a Maoist girl, says, "I have decided to make my destiny" (130). Palpasa is a documentary film maker. Christina is a journalist for the Netherlands and Nepal in her 'first international war assignment" (30). Phoolan works in a gallery and earns her livelihood. The status of women has been changed in course of time span. Women have started to be in main stream and self-decision. It is the effect of social-political background. The situation shapes the distinct performance of lady characters.

Almost all of the characters suffer from sense of trauma, depression, alienation and fragmentation. It is the state of mind which is affected by the social situations Manmaya, Hajur Aama , Miit Baa, Mitini Aama, Phoolan, Christina, Harilal, Laure Kaka, Palpasa, Siddhartha and Drishya are in traumatic situation. It causes the fragmentation in their lives. They cannot enjoy on what they have, what they do and what they achieve. They are living under uncertainty of their lives.

Miit Baa has the thoughts of alienation having his dark and uncertain future. He loses his son. He has not got any information about his next younger son. It is very difficult for him to live without them. That is why, time and again he performs his action in madness. "His oldest son's dead. The younger one has joined the Maoist and there is no telling where they are. The two old folks never leave their house anymore. They just sit there and listen to all the conflicting stories passersby tell them" (152). They are alone in the house and have no sons to take care of them in their old age.

Chapter 4

Behavioral Reflection through Socio-Political Background

Social political background affects the psychology of the people. The psychology that has been developed in the mind of the people reflects the actions of the people. Situational background influences the happiness, sadness and the mental state, trauma of the people. This study finds that *Palpasa Café* has abundant references in behaviors, actions, thoughts and reactions of the characters according to the socio-political background.

The novel is the creation of the state of the mind of the author which has been shattered by the conflict. The prevalent situations, environment and dismantled infrastructure are the references for Wagle to write the novel. He is a journalist. That is why, he had seen every events, and issues of contemporary society closely. He did not like that conflict wherein brothers were fighting against each other. He presented this novel in quest for peace, creations, and harmony. So, he presented Drishya as his mouthpiece who has the dream of making a café in his own birth place. It is the product of feelings and thought of Wagle provoking anti-war ideas.

Social psychology enhances the nature of social knowledge as creation of the time, affected by and with effects on their own environment. It constitutes the nature of the prevalent society. All the characters like Drishya, Palpasa, Siddhartha, Palpasa's grandmother, Sanu and so on develop their knowledge influenced by the environment. They have distinct knowledge, behavior, and thoughts on the issues, events and conflicts. Some of them have the impoverished conditions because they have lost and missed their offspring. Some of the youngsters directly involve in Maoist alliance despite their parents.

Social psychology categorizes the causes of human behavior as internal

factors, such as personality, or as external factors, such as cultural and other social influences. This study attempted to analyze the social psychological study of the characters. No character remains untouched by the socio-political background. The dream of Drishya, the unexpected journey made by him to his homeland, the reactions of the people about Maoist insurgency, the aftermath situations brought by the bombardment are the performances brought about by the social influences.

Self-presentation, formation of attitude, persuasion, obedience, prejudice, discrimination, aggression, pro-social behavior are the tools of social psychology that have been used to draw the conclusion that every character is affected by the situation and performs his/her behavior accordingly.

The Nepalese citizens were in psychological trauma of uncertainty. Someone wails for losing his/her offspring, and the other cries, due to Maoist insurgency and state action. The study shows the situation of uncertainty. No one enjoys happiness and civil rights. One had to pass many obstacles and hardships to travel within one's own homeland. These are the product of contemporary situation.

This thesis started with the hypothesis that the feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and the actions of the central characters are guided by their mental state and the social situation during their journey. It has been proved by the allusions, examples, references and the events from this novel. The conclusion of this study is that the major and minor characters' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are influenced by the situation. This is a prominent novel to justify the socio-psychological tools for the plot and the characters.

To ensure the objective of applying socio-psychology, this study makes an important effort. It comes with the outcome to justify the hypothesis. Penetrating the problems, this study opens new insight that mental state of mind guided by socio-

political background performs actions and behaviors. It shows how it leads towards destruction and war. Based on the facts and theme of social psychology, it is believed that this research work will open possibilities for further study on social psychology in other works of art and literature.

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