

I: Nepali Literature and Domestic Violence: An Introduction

Nepali Literature: A Historic and Thematic Review

Literature is affected by the social life or by certain period and literature affects the life as well. It means the history of literature moves along with the history of social life. Literature couldn't keep itself outside the complexities of life, no matter how unpleasant it is.

Nepali literature has its root on the unification of the modern Nepal. The unification was the geographical and the political need, and the use of Nepali language as the national language was the cultural need, which helped to establish the different genres of Nepali literature. As a national language and as language of wider communication, it offered a great opportunity—it was adopted as a medium of education and expression.

Sanskrit has served as a model for Nepali language during the historical or ancient period of its development for a long period of time. Sanskrit words were translated and this enriched the language to a great extent. So, in its initial phase Nepalese literature was influenced by the Sanskrit literature. Sanskrit was the medium language and most of the text in Sanskrit was translated into Nepali. Bhanubhakta Acharya's *Ramayana* is the most important contribution to Nepali literature. His translation of the holy *Ramayana* into Nepali language in metric form using meters as in Sanskrit shows impact of Sanskrit language in Nepali literature. At that time literature used to be more religious and morally preaching.

The age of printing press brought about modernism in Nepali literature. On the one hand, it brought the writer and the reader closer, and on the other hand publication flourished as a business. The publication of the *Gorkhapatra* in 1901 drew a generic border between poems, essays, novels and stories.

The establishment of Tribhuban University, Nepal Academy, and Gorkha Bhasa Prakashini Samiti, and the publication of *Sharada* (1934) added stones in the upliftment of the Nepalese literature. As an independent magazine *Sharada* provided the print medium for the publication of Nepali literature during the Rana Regime, the time with the lack of freedom of expression. Besides this, some centers like Darjeeling, Sikkim, Banaras, Calcutta and the northeastern territories of India also played important role towards laying the foundation of Nepali language and so of literature.

After the people's revolution of 1950 Nepalese literature flourished. Socio-political situation as well as the wider contact of the people with world has geared up the pace of new writing in Nepali. Social realism got experimented in it. The trend of realism in writings began with the writings of Gopal Prasad Rimal. Supporting this view Dayaram Shrestha and Mohan Raj Sharma argues: "Gopal Prasad Rimal is the pioneer of realism in Nepali literature" (my own translation 72). Realism has had a long lasting influence in Nepali short fiction. Still realistic writings are produced and it seems to be the most permanent of all principles in writing. But there are different facets of realism such as, social realism, critical realism, historical realism, idealistic realism etc. Lainsing Bangdel's "*Muluk Bahira*" (1947) and Lila Bahadur Chhetri's "*Basain*" (1957) are the best examples of realism in fiction.

Up to the present time, Nepalese literature experimented over idealism, realism, romanticism, psychoanalytical trends within its own tradition. In support of these developments, Dayaram Shrestha and Mohan Raj Sharma comment: "Laxmi Prasad Devkota and Siddicharan Shrestha introduced Romanticism in poetry. Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala introduced psychology in literature through his literary

works "*Teen Ghumti*", "*Doshi Chasma*", "*Narendra Dai*" etc." (my own translation 49).

Contemporary Nepali literature has experimented over vast numbers of subject matter. During the recent years, a great shift from all the past traditions has been noticed and every year we can see new inventions and experiments coming up increasingly. Existential philosophy has had a great influence upon Nepali fiction as well. This inspired the writers to introduce experimentation in writing. Remarkable writers of this school are again Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, Parijaat, and Dhruvachandra Gautam, and their works. Gautam is considered as the forerunner of experimental writing because his writing for more than three decades has shown indications of clear departure from the convention. He introduced absurdist philosophy for the first time in first Nepali fiction and gradually his novels of the 1990's became more experimental. His novel "*Phulko Atanka*" best illustrate new techniques of postmodernist paradigm. Bal Krishna Sama established the trend of romanticism in drama. Sama too started the trend of idealism in poetry. Bijaya Malla on the other side came up with progressive writings.

Nepali literature has witnessed a great shift in all directions. Nepali writers in the recent years have attempted to blur the geographical and linguistic boundary by entering into the world literature and also by adopting English language. Though the writings are in English they are set in Nepali society and carry the Nepalese notions to the wider English speaking zone. Samrat Upadhyaya's fiction *The Guru Of Love* and a collection of short stories *The Royal Ghost*, Ammaraj Joshi's *A Night's Drama* (2008) an anthology of short stories and Manjushri Thapa's *The Tutor of History* and *Forget Kathmandu* are some prominent works which reflects the voices of Nepal.

By means of translation Nepali literature has received wide readership. So many Nepali texts are translated into other languages of the world. Laxmi Prasad Devkota's poem "*Pagal*" was translated into English as "The Lunatic" and Parijat's "*Sirish Ko Ful*" (1965) as *The Blue Mimosa* are some great translation that the Nepali literature can proudly boast of. The *Palpasa Café* (2008), *Stories of Conflict and War* (2007) are some other translations made into English by the authors themselves.

New writings have shown that whole sets of values are changing and people's understanding and the interpretation of life is different. It is not the question of merely introducing a new technique but also question of courage to new challenge. In fact one important section of Nepali writers is producing such works as are comparable with new world literature. This indicates a new direction that Nepali literature has taken shape.

Nepali Short Fiction and Its Development

The genre of Nepali fiction has recently completed two hundred years if we consider Shakti Ballav Arjyal's *Mahabharat Biratparba* (1770) as the first fiction in Nepali. It took many years to cross the threshold of hazy and undefined borders of the past and to start drawing the outline of modern western model in different genres such as epic, drama, novel, essay, short story etc. The first samples of these works, especially of the short story in the vernacular, reveal a lack of clear-cut departure from old narratives, tales of morality, parables, fables etc. Idealistic philosophy and realistic picture were combined in the writings at the beginning.

The short fictions of the first stage were written in consonance with idealistic principles in mind so as to entertain, teach, and instruct the readers by strengthening a moral foundation. So, their sources were religious narratives and folktales and the results were horror, fantasy, and tales of infinite variety:

Guru Prasad Mainali, B. P. Koirala, Pushkar Samsheer and Bhawani Bhikshu are regarded as the forerunner of this genre. Idealistic philosophy and realistic picture were combined in the writings of the beginning. One can trace a slow moving departure of idealism towards realism and realism shifting towards psychoanalytical trends in their works. Gradually modern short stories started to reveal a great variety, novelty and experimentation unique to our tradition. (Bhattarai ix)

The publication of *Gorkhapatra* in 1951 provided a media to Nepalese short fiction. Different stories with different subject matters were published. When short fiction was related with newspaper and magazines it entered into modern age. Short stories had Laxmi Prasad Devkota, Guru Prasad Mainali, and Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala as the recognized trident force.

The impact of revolutions and the social changes were obvious in short fictions because literature is the mirror of society and it cannot remain untouched by changes. After the revolution of 1950, Nepali short fiction established a strong trend following its own cultural source and realism, which was the special symptom of it. Guru Prasad Mainali's "*Naso*" (1935) was the turning point to realism and modernism. Bhawani Ghimire, Taranath Sharma, and D.P. Adhikari contributed for social realism in Nepali short fiction.

Nepali short fiction has crossed different phases. It has incorporated into its history, different trends and techniques of writing, different philosophies and styles ranging from medievalist features to postmodern trends. Along with B.P. Koirala's psychological realism, Daulat Bikram Bista established the trend of psychological socialism. In the same manner Bhimnidhi Tiwari introduced social idealism in Nepali short stories. In fact a wide range of variety in terms of themes, styles and techniques

will be seen in Nepali short fiction. Indra Bahadur Rai's stories were anti traditional. Following the Rai's trend Prema Shah, Daulat Bikram Bista, Shanker Lamichane revolted against the traditional writings to establish new values and to give it freshness to the Nepali short fiction. All these have claimed for the existence and importance of pluralistic thoughts, invented new possibilities where different borders are wiped out and new centers reestablished.

Newness in style, technique, characterization, theme— challenges the traditional definition of different literary forms. Gradually modern short stories started to reveal a great variety and experimentation within our own tradition. In this connection *Beyond the Frontiers: women's story from Nepal* (2006) is an anthology to appear ever in English translation which proves that the themes and contents, style and subject matter are taking a new direction. Most of the stories collected in it are of the male domination, oppression, and violence against women.

Domestic Violence in Literature in General, and in Nepali Short Fiction in Particular

Great world literature begins with war, from *Iliad* to the *Mahabharata*, where the warriors are honored for their physical prowess. Cosmic terror appears as an ingredient of the earliest folklore of all races. So, projection of violence in literature especially in fiction is as old as human thought itself. From the ancient times to modern times literature got its ingredients from the society.

While talking about the representation of domestic violence in literature we may assimilate with the ideas of E.H. Gombrich, an art historian and critic and the first man to assume that “representation is a copy of the external form” (1082).

Literature has its connection with the society. As a mirror to the society, it reflects the social upheavals.

Representation of domestic violence in literature has raised the issue of conflict, fear, and power. Whether it is the *Ramayan* or the “*Muna Madan*” they somehow depict the social values. Laxmi Prasad Devkota’s “*Muna Madan*” shows the social, economic and political condition of the Nepalese society of that time, Madan moves to Lhasa to make money leaving his wife at his home. While returning back to home he dies on the way. It also portrays the life of a poor woman who suffers much without her husband.

Representation within patriarchal ideology is to carry the male interest because it is the patriarchal mentality that creates binary opposition to dominate the women. So their representation is misrepresentation which create women as inferior and passive as Radhakrishnan says, " All representation is an act of violence and inauthentic" (42). Patriarchy ideology always form images about women and aim at ruling and dominating over them.

Domestic violence might come to literature as other elements come naturally and has become the common practices. No laboratory experiment can test the relationship between violence in literature and real life violence. It is axiomatic to say that there is some sort of relationship between violence in literature and violence in society.

Violence against women is widespread, and may affect women of any age, class, race, religion, sexuality, or ability. Factors which may increase women’s vulnerability to some types of violence include age, disability, and poverty. Across all forms of violence and abuse, women are most at risk from men they know. A word on terminology – throughout the research, the phrase ‘violence against women’ is used interchangeably with ‘domestic violence’ and ‘domestic abuse’. In contexts where what is being discussed is violence against women by an intimate partner or the

family members. For the sake of clarity, in this study, 'violence against women' is used as a generic term, indicating the whole spectrum of abuse which may be experienced by women.

In Marxian terms, class conflict is the root of violence. The capitalist structures, processes, and contradictions at the level of the mode of production, establish observed forms of gender inequality that is always historical. Hence, social reality ought to focus not only on the elements that it has in common with other periods but also on those unique to the mode of production under consideration.

Due to biasness, excessive exercise of power upon other, misuse of authority and sexual exploitation, violence takes place. However, the particular ways in which women are targeted for violence, or are otherwise affected by armed conflict, are usually overlooked. They suffer human rights violations in conflicts, such as unlawful killings and torture. Women and girls are more likely to be the target of sexual violence especially rape. Amnesty International, an internationally recognized organization for human rights, in its publication *Lives Blown apart; crimes against women in the time of conflict* (2004) defines violence and its forms as based on its research:

Violence can take a variety of different forms, psychological as well as physical, resulting in extreme economic hardship and social deprivation which deny women economic, social and cultural rights as well as their civil and political rights even where women suffer the same human rights violation as men, they may have different consequences for women.(6)

All forms of social violence –physical or psychological may originally have a purpose. They are to remove the victim as an obstacle in the way of aggressor.

They can go further and into deliberate cruelty, with the attacker taking a sadistic pleasure in the sufferings of his opponent.

Since history of Nepal shows its nexus with violence, violence has been the prime focus of Nepali literature proving it as a mirror of the society. Nepali fiction as a literary genre is not far from them. “*Samakalin Nepali Dwanda Katha*” (2006), edited by Laxman Prasad Gautam, represents the violence that the Nepali society experienced during the Maoist insurgency. *Stories Of Conflict and War* (2007) is another notable collection of the stories which explores the lives which were torn between the violence created by conflict and economic crisis. The people at the time of conflict were victimized physically, mentally, socially and politically. The victimized society and its members have been portrayed in those stories.

Exploitation against women has been an integral and endemic against society. It is shown prevailing in the patriarchal societies throughout the short fictions. We encounter the irrecoverably victimized women living the life of suppression and subjugation. Mahesh Bikram Shah is one of the remarkable writers, who had depicted the society from its depth. “*Chapamar ko Chora*” (2006), his ‘Madan puraskar’ winning short story collection, explores the pains and pangs the nation faced during the violent conflict in the past decade. In most of his stories women are presented as the victims. Rape and other sexual abuses against women are the worst manifestation. As a result of the violence they have experienced, they have been left with the difficulties.

The conventional division of labor between men and women is sufficient to show the status women have in the society vis-à-vis men. Men are assigned production work where as women are forced to do reproductive work. Women face

obstacles to obtaining justice, because of the stigma attached to survivors of sexual violence, and women's disadvantaged position in the society. In contemporary writing, Ammaraj Joshi's story "The Drunkard's Wife" (2007) knits the poor situation of a woman. Sushrusha, the wife of a drunkard husband, suffers much socially and economically as her husband has devoted himself to his liquid friend than his family. She has to take care of her two daughters and to tolerate her husband's ill-treatment.

Violence either in society or home it is violence after all, though it differ in its form and medium, it victimizes, either physically or mentally. The role that male violence plays in limiting women's social and economic potential is acknowledged throughout the short fictions. Bhagirathi Shrestha's story, "Underground" (2006) seems to be the projection of poor women's condition in the Nepalese society, where a women is deserted by Lakshya Sharma, a politician and a minister later on, even refuses to recognize her.

Although sexual violence against women is established as a political problem worldwide, it still fails to be recognized as a political issue in Nepal. Sexual violence against women primarily centers on patriarchal socio- cultural norms and practices, and hence is suppressed in the private sphere. This suppression brings the culture of silence into effect. The silence that women are forced to exercise has made sexual violence invisible in the public sphere. "Jubilation" (2006) a story written by Pitambara Joshi represents the same condition of a women, who silently tolerates her husbands misbehavior and is even ready for the 'Sauta' (another women as her husbands wife). Due to the discrimination against women, there is a trend of silencing their voice because the incidents involve such things as shame and guilt.

There are several acts categorized as gender-based violence in the context of Nepali society, namely domestic violence, trafficking, forced prostitution, rape,

incest, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, child marriage, dowry related abuses, torture for charges of witchcraft, public stripping and polygamy. Many abuses have been committed by people the victims knew or even by relatives of the victim.

Nepali fiction seems to be inspired by the decade long people's war. The victimized people are still not free from that heart rendering pains. The wounds are still burning, hearts are still trembling, and the dead days are shocking. The flows have not returned yet, doors are still locked, lands are barren and the eyes haven't been dried up. This sort of situation has been represented in Illya Bhattarai's "Biplavi" (2006), where Biplavi, a female character is being kidnapped on her first day to college and she too was forced to take part in the revolution. Later on those revolutionist sought freedom of the poor voiceless proleterians in her painful cries after being raped. However, Ramesh Bikal's story "Tee Dui Nirdosh Aankhaharu" (2006) is also not far from such subjects, where a woman is being raped and looted, whose husband was murdered.

Social, cultural, economic and religious factors reiterate male dominance and allow systematic discrimination and violence to pervade women's lives in Nepal. The deeply rooted patriarchal convention in Nepalese society treats women as second class citizens and their voices have been suppressed. They have often been victims of exploitation at the hands of the male: "God these men are ruthless. They think wives are their father's own property or what? A wife beater!" (Newar35). As Newar says women are considered as commodity in the patriarchal societies, where they are given physical tortures. Their suppression is bolstered not only by the conventionalized genders prejudice embedded within the political- religious consciousness of the Hindu but also the legal provisions which are still discriminatory against women.

Harmful traditional or customary practices, including early marriage, wife inheritance, and female genital mutilation, and crimes committed in the name of honor, are forms of violence. Domestic violence, which encompassed marital rape as well as other forms of physical, psychological, and sexual violence, is one of the most common, least visible forms of violence against women and girls. The male partners consume the females as a body: "...he had already made a mess of her health and ruined her by abusing her physically and mentally all throughout her life" (Upreti144). Women are oppressed and feel their inferiority due to the male domination. Srijana Sharma in "Price of Life" (2006), introduces a character Haripriya who got married at the age of thirteen in the village, and gave birth to seven children with the belief that they are the gifts of the God. Child marriage and unnecessary pregnancy has victimized women physically and psychologically.

There is a belief in the Nepalese society that the parents of a daughter will only get place in the heaven only after the 'kanya-dan' (marriage of the daughter). So the parents hurry to give their daughters hand to the selected bride. And the little girls are made scapegoats for the marriage before the right age. All levels of the Nepali society, the family and the community, and the government and political institutions need to change their practices in order to make sexual abuse a visible issue. However, domestic violence must be seen in the context of the structural inequality of the wider society within which it takes place, as exemplified in the attitudes, cultural norms and institutions of that society. "Symbol of Religion" (2006) by Bhuban Dhungana deals with the religious aspects of Nepali society, where menstruation is considered as the symbol of the religion. Hindu girls in their first menstruation have to stay within a closed room only in the name of religion and tradition.

No one needs to wonder at the existence of fear and violence. Some of the evidence at least conceptual and possibly behavioral accommodation to violent activity cultivates violence in fictions. The readers release built up frustration and aggression through the vicarious participation in the fictional violence. Artistic integrity and social impact are closely related but there is a line of distinction between entertainment and information. The depiction of violence in literature is giving people an impression of the amount of violence that actually does exist.

This thesis aims to study the representation of domestic violence in Nepali short fictions. Four stories by three different writers are at the core of this study. All selected writers are women have made long contributions to Nepali short fiction for a long time. Women's writing has become more distinct and powerful, the topics and themes most of the writing is new—they touch upon the marginal people, their culture and political awareness. These short stories present pictures of violence, suffering and the life in strain. Manju Kanchuli's "Nausea", Chandrakala Newar's "Agnisnan" and "Hunger" and Laxmi Upreti's "Kamali" are some representative short fictions the study centers on.

Moreover, this study is also an attempt to show the Nepali fiction in connection with the presentation of domestic violence. These stories reveal a world that particularly Nepali women have lived in, experienced, and perceived. The methodology of the proposed research draws on the theory of representation, Marxist feminism, and gender issues.

II. Structural Determinants of Women's Problem: A Marxist Feminist Stand-Point

Women in patriarchal social structure are facing domestic violence because of their dependency upon male partners. Marxist feminists believe that the capitalism is primarily responsible for class structure in the society. Marxist feminism reaches at the point of defining women's position in terms of socio-economic basis. They take women as proletariat and men as bourgeois in order to propose to wage a war against that unequal distribution and, thus, to disrupt the socio-economic structure. In this way, economic hierarchy would be dismantled. The historically specific structural determinants of gender inequality under capitalism are located in the specifically capitalist articulation between production and reproduction, which makes the latter dependent on the former; "but to take representation as our focus is to deny neither the reality of certain practices nor to downgrade the substantive political and economic forces at work in Indian society at the time" (Price and Shildrick 388).

Structures are reproduced constantly through the unanticipated consequences of intentional behavior, and the latter, in turn, is what it is because of the structures that condition its possibility. Non-Marxist social science is divided between voluntaristic and deterministic perspectives. Feminist theory tends to rest upon voluntaristic assumptions. Women and men are social beings; their differences in resources, power, attitudes, and behavior are dependent variables that have to be explained. Marxist feminism is a sub-type of feminist theory which focuses on the dismantling of capitalism as a way to liberate women and states that capitalism which gives rise to economic inequality, dependent, political confusion and ultimately unhealthy social relation between men and women, is the root of women's oppression. Marxist feminists are to bring together the knowledge of oppression under capitalism and of oppression under hierarchy into unified explanation of all forms of social

oppression. It, thus, describe unified system as “capitalist patriarchy”. On the other hand, capitalism depends basically on the production of women who has to work as housewives and mothers and women’s working as consumers of goods and their services for the household become main source of capitalists’ profit-making. Rosalind Coward, Mary Jacobs, Cora Kaplan, Michele Barrette and Juliet Mitchell are few among British feminist who have combined ideology of literature and Marxist theoretical interest in the production with feminist concerns for women’s writing.

From a Marxist-Feminist perspective, analysis of that awareness has to go beyond what is empirically observable: for example, relationships between women and their babies, between donors or sellers of the elements of the reproductive process and recipients or buyers, and so on. This requires theoretical investigation of the social relations underlying these phenomena that are to be found in the capitalist mode of production and reproduction.

Using Marxist-Feminist theory, this research has endeavored to identify the structural determinants of the problems, experiences, and ideological conflicts that feminists have so eloquently written about. It is important to differentiate between concrete instances-at the level of analysis of social and market relations-where male dominance and class and racial/ethnic differences may be the most important factors.

Women in Patriarchal Set-Up and Their Experiences

Patriarchal capitalism creates an order for it to sustain in the society and in the society in this process it subordinates the women by creating ideologies of gender, religion, family, duty, race class, etc. Marxism, on the other hand, given its historical materialist premises, acknowledges the dialectical unity between agency and structure, subject and object; socio-historical agency has an objective social content, and structures are embodied in socio-historical agents. From this standpoint, the

development of the awareness and their effects upon women and men and upon the mode of reproduction cannot be solely explained in terms of the motives of those who develop them, sell them, or once they are available purchase them. In *Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), Wollstonecraft attacks the societal idea that women were created simply to please the male gender:

The mighty business of female life is to please, and restrained from entering more important concerns by political and civil oppression, sentiments become events, and reflection deepens what it should, and would have effaced, if the understanding had been allowed to take a wider range. (398)

And this notion is not likely to disappear soon. However, because biology posits limits to the social construction of motherhood, which alter the biological basis for feelings and experiences, it is unlikely to become widespread at least in the near future.

Hazard Adams, in *Critical Theory Since Plato*, introduces Beauvoir and her most acclaimed critical work *The Second Sex*: “when the second sex first appeared in 1949 Simone de Beauvoir was attacked by those who felt her account of women’s lives was too heavily based on her personal experience and her middle class values... was also criticized for her historical inaccuracy and anthropological suppositions” (993). Adams writes: “Indeed, it was encyclopedic in its coverage, offering historical, biological and psychological perspectives on women, a consideration of the prevailing patriarchal myths about them, and an account of female love and sexuality in virtually all of its form” (qtd. in Adams 993). Simone de Beauvoir contends in *The Second Sex*:

It is to be seen from these examples that each separate writer reflects the great collective myths: we have seen women as flesh; the flesh of

the male is produced in the mother's body and recreated in the embraces of the woman in love. Thus woman is related to nature, she incarnates it: vale of blood, open rose [the rose of Jericho], siren, the curve of a hill, she represents to man the fertile soil, the shape, the material beauty and the soul of the world. She can hold the keys to poetry; she can be mediatrix between this world and beyond: grace or oracle...praying mantis, an ogress. In any case she appears as the privileged other, through whom the subject fulfills himself: one of the measures of man, his counterbalance, his salvation, his adventure, his happiness. (qtd. in Adams 994)

The myth of women plays a considerable part in literature; but what is its importance in daily life? To what extent does it affect the customs and conducts of individuals? In replying to this question it will be necessary to state precisely the relations this myth bears to reality.

Current changes in the material conditions of reproduction reflect the development of the forces of production under capitalism and, as such, require a Marxist analysis. Marxist feminist like Sheila Ruth argues that women of any particular class have with the men of their class: "The woman created in and by the male perspective is called by the women's movement identified the male-identified women" (85). At the level of market and social relations, men and women engage in conscious, intentional activities through which, while they make choices and build their lives, they unintentionally reproduce their conditions of existence.

Sheila Ruth further writes: "She is a person who indeed understands herself to be subject (self), not object (other); she respect both her womanhood and her humanity, she takes her direction and definition from values that are her own, born of

her own self-perceived qualities and goals as well as those of other women” (85). From the standpoint of Marxist theory, on the other hand, people are ensembles of social relations and, among these relations, the most crucial in determining historical identities and opportunities are the relationships with nature, through labor, and through gender. This standpoint does not imply a theoretical dualism: at the metatheoretical level of analysis, production i.e., the exchanges between humans and nature are twofold. It entails the production of things and the production of life.

Production pre-supposes reproduction: the reproduction of life, biologically, physically, and socially, is part of the material basis of social organization. The structural determinants, located at the level of analysis of the mode of production, are conditions for empirically observable forms of male and female activity and for the continuously reproduced effect of their actions. Marxist feminists associate gender inequality and women’s oppression with capitalist system of production and division of labor. The reason behind gender inequality was found by the feminist thinkers in unequal distribution of capital. Raising the issues of limited employment of women and physical harassment of female workers by male workers at factories is the cause of gender inequality.

There is no male conspiracy to separate procreation from its social, economic, and legal integument in the mode of reproduction in order to victimize women, nor are women blindly:

More recently, feminist scholars have clarified how Wharton's representations of women issue from her "argument with America," to use Elizabeth Ammons's fine phrase, her sympathetic, complex and often deeply pessimistic assessment of the plight of American women.

(Marchand 1)

The development of the increasing awareness is part of the overall development of the productive forces, a Marxist concept that refers to the growth in productivity and human capacities inherent in the use of science and technology in the process of production.

Impact of Ideology and Problem Faced by Women

Patriarchy, as an ideological foundation, that thus served the interests of men as well the interests of capitalism. Commenting on the operation of patriarchy, Janet Saltzman Chafetz writes:

Patriarchy is probably the oldest forms of exploitation of one part of population by another. It probably has also served as the model for all other forms of relegation, by they on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, or class, once such a system is established, those in the high caste positions, in this case males, develop a vested interest in the maintenance of the basic structure and their own advantaged statusthe short- run interests of males as males and, perhaps more importantly, as leaders of political, economic and cultural institutions are best served by maintaining and reinforcing traditional gender roles.

(115)

Within any class, women are less advantaged than men in their access to material goods, power, status, and possibilities for self-actualization. The causes of this inequality lie in the organization of capitalism itself.

Patriarchal myths collectively render women to the flesh and she is doomed to immanence. She is to hold passivity for peace and harmony, for, if she declines this role, she is taken to be an ogress. She appears as privileged other or man's counterbalance, his adventure, his happiness and his salvation. The patriarchal society

which claims women home and hearth defines her as sentiment, immanence and inwardness in accordance to its need to dominate and enclose women within the house. Generational reproduction of labor of different qualities by giving access to education, health care, housing; family size, etc. are subordinate to the needs of production and have never been fully met. Fertility differentials according to social class, the welfare state, growth of underground economies, and the presence of a substantial proportion of the population living below or near poverty level in all capitalist countries attest to the subordination of reproduction to production under capitalist conditions.

Among the owners of capital, reproduction is subordinate to the maintenance and expansion of privately owned wealth. The legal system ensures the orderly intergenerational transmission of wealth, power, privilege, and prestige. The ability of the propertyless to form stable relations of reproduction is determined by their access to the conditions of reproduction. "Marx attempted systematically to seek the structural causes behind what has as was a system of capitalist exploitation and degradation, and to offer solutions in the spheres of economics and politics" (Habib 528). This, in turn, depends on whether or not they find steady employment. Accumulation strategies prevalent in different sectors of the economy open and close opportunities for male and female workers.

There are all sorts of reasons why men and women enter into different relations of reproduction and why children are raised or not by their biological parents. Underlying their variety, however, are the characteristics of the capitalist mode of production itself: the universalization of commodity production and proletarianization make employment a prerequisite for access to the material conditions for reproduction; constant revolutionizing in the technical and social

division of labor results in the development of occupational differentiation.

Occupational hierarchies, and pay differentials; fluctuating structural unemployment and a fluctuating but ever-growing unproletariat composed of unemployed and unemployable people keep wages down; and the erosion of the servants that concomitantly transforms most women into servants in their own home.

Marxist Feminist Standpoints

The Marxist concept of mode of production refers to the historically specific combination of the elements of the production process -labor, the subject of labor, and means of production- through social relations between the agents of production e.g., relations between capitalist and workers mediated by their respective relationship to the conditions of production. Neither relations of production nor relations of physical and social reproduction are purely voluntaristic and inter-subjective. They rest upon a material basis that exerts its effects whether or not those affected are aware of them or believe in them. Barret argues: "The oppression of the women, although not a function pre-request of capitalism, has acquired a material basis in the relations of production and reproduction of capitalism today"(11). Current changes in the material conditions of reproduction reflect the development of the forces of production under capitalism and, as such, require a Marxist analysis. Using Marxist-Feminist theory, it has endeavored to identify the structural determinants of the problems, experiences, and ideological conflicts that feminists have so eloquently written about.

For example, capitalists objectively exert power over workers regardless of their self-perception as businessmen just doing their job. Women, who are full-time wives and mothers, if they lack independent wealth, are objectively under their husbands' economic control regardless of their beliefs about their relative power within their household. Under capitalism, production is for profits, not for the

satisfaction of needs; the needs of reproduction (example, marriage; wage or salary levels). Marxist feminists argue that domination of women by men is in timely connected with patriarchal capitalism, because patriarchy and capitalism are mutually supportive. For example, within the household women produce labor power in the sense of bearing children, and caring for their husbands, who are workers, which supports men, but the women do not get benefits for their domestic work.

It follows that it is structurally impossible for capitalism to provide full employment in jobs that pay a family wage to all adult workers regardless of sex and male workers have only one major source of economic survival: waged or salaried work, while female workers have two: waged or salaried work and unpaid domestic work. From a Marxist-Feminist standpoint, this is the structural and not reducible to micro-level explanations such as, for example, male agency basis of the capitalist mode of reproduction among propertyless workers that is the combination of the elements of reproduction under conditions that make housekeeping and reproduction a source of economic survival for propertyless women. Concomitantly, this is the basis for the objectively unequal locations of male and female workers in production and reproduction, Michele Barrett stresses:

The intimate connections between economic oppression and the "role of familial and domestic ideology," as well as the changing form of the family organization during and since the transition from feudalism to capitalism. (qtd. in Habib 695)

These result in observable forms of gender inequality in the market, where male and female workers compete for jobs in a context that subordinates female employment to domestic labor.

Differences in male and female biology mediate the effects of these structural tendencies upon the work force; sexuality and reproduction form the basis for relations of cooperation and dependency between men and women in reproduction and cement the primacy of domestic employment for women. Reproductive technologies, ranging from the oldest forms of fertility control to the latest contraceptive technologies, can be fruitfully conceptualized as forces of reproduction, a concept similar in its theoretical importance for the study of social change to that of forces of production.

Recent developments in reproductive technologies constitute changes in the forces of reproduction that have already produced, albeit in a small scale, profound changes in the relations of reproduction. To speak of forces of reproduction does not entail a form of technological determinism. Technological developments and their use always take place in the context of social relations and power struggles that affect their economic and social effects. Economic and social inequity between the sexes is increased and women's subordination in marriage, the family and in society in general is intensified:

Female rank as a lower caste generally deprived of wealth, power and prestige. They are trained psychologically so that directs expression of hostility towards male is often impossible. Excluded from the power structure of all institutions, their opportunities to change the normative structure the society are very limited. In short, they are prime candidates for a value-oriented movement. (Habib 236)

Under capitalism, existing relations of reproduction presuppose the unity, in the context of the nuclear family, of relations of sexuality, physical and social daily and

generational relations of reproduction, domestic work and child care, and economic co-operation between men and women.

Capitalist development, however, at the same time that it selects that unity as the most functional for intergenerational reproduction, constantly undermines it through changes in the productive forces in the realms of production and reproduction; thus conditions are created for the emergence of other social relations of reproduction. The awarenesses have qualitatively changed the biological conditions of reproduction by entirely separating procreation from heterosexuality. A new theoretical concept is needed to capture these changes in the mode of reproduction: the mode of procreation- that is, the combination of the biological elements of the process of reproduction through relations of procreation separate from sexuality and from the social relations of reproduction. Taken-for-granted, obvious or natural meanings of motherhood are undermined.

In capitalist societies, women become segregated into the domestic spheres and men into the outer world of paid work. By changes in the material conditions of procreation that determine their real deconstruction, first in practice. The material fragmentation of motherhood among women with competing social, genetic, and biological claims over a child, and then in thought, the emergence of competing concepts of motherhood.

One of the main tenets of Marxism is that social existence determines consciousness, not vice versa, and that changes in the material conditions of life determine changes in consciousness. In this luxury and comfort, Marxist feminists argue, they forget their exploitation. Claire Tomalin has remarked ". . . society is wasting its assets if it retains women in the role of convenient domestic slaves and alluring mistresses, denies them economic independence and encourages them to be

docile and attentive to their looks to the exclusion of all else" (qtd. in Adams 394). This metatheoretical standpoint does not entail a naive determinism; it simply gives primacy, in the constitution of the social world, to the lived experience of people who, in the processes of producing things and reproducing life physically and socially, daily and generationally, transform the world and themselves at the same time. From this standpoint, dominant ideas about motherhood acquire their social power or efficacy from the unity of biological and social reproduction that underlies the experiences of most people.

Given the fact that the ideological connection between biological and social parenthood is still dominant, because the material conditions that sustain it are still prevalent, it is to be expected that people entering into these relations, particularly women, find it difficult, afterward, to relinquish their claim on the child thus produced. Depending on their own experiences with children, childhood memories and experiences, social class, and political views, some women might perceive parenthood as essentially social. The conventional patriarchy views that marriage is the true connection of both males and females, which brings the new journey with happiness but "the examples of sexual oppression, inequity and violence are hardly far from hand" (Deutscher 13). Most women, however, are likely to adhere to a biologically based concept of motherhood rooted not only in ideology but also on their own experience of pregnancy and childbirth.

The feminist understanding of the conditioning that nature exerts upon social reality follows the idealist philosophical and methodological standpoints in its efforts to avoid vulgar materialism. If compared to changes in modes of production, she argues, nature changes slowly, for all practical purposes, it can be taken as constant. The fact that we are biological beings, however, remains; as such, we have strengths

and frailties, for example, the capacity for pleasure, the experiences of pregnancy, childbirth, disability, pain, illness, aging, death that affect our experience and shape our consciousness: since the biological is always presented to us as mediated by the social, the biological is nothing and the social everything, would be idealists history. If we agree, how we defend ourselves from those who will in turn maintain that, since all reality including economic and social reality is knowable only through language or the thinking mind, language is the sole reality and the rest abstraction.

Feminists have critiqued the dangers of biological essentialism. But those who defend the claim of biological mothers who find themselves unable to fulfill a surrogacy contract also acknowledge a realm of experience that is the material condition for the persistence of the biological concept of motherhood: "while not endorsing the notion that cultural differences between the sexes are biologically determined, it does recognize and attempt to deal with both biological and social differences" (Littleton 717). Court decisions and changes in women's lives and in social and political perceptions of mother-hood cannot fully eradicate the effects of that material condition because, although the biological level has virtually no importance in determining traits distinguishing large human groups. Bourgeois women are attractive and distinctive commodities in an ongoing process of exchange between men and are often means of sealing property alliance among men. Bourgeois women produce and train sons who will inherit their fathers' socio-economic resources. It does again have a conspicuous weight in the determination of individual characteristics.

In addition to class, socio-economic status, and racial/ethnic differences, differences in women's biological history are also extremely important to understand, how individual woman experiences equality, pregnancy, childbirth, and its effects. On

the other hand, it is irreducible to thought about it, and the historically specific meanings that mediate it have developed precisely on its terrain. This terrain is not immutable. It constitutes the material base for new biologically grounded experiences and emergent forms of consciousness. The ill patriarchy compels the females to do whatever it likes. We find the ill treatment to woman world. The women are more responsible in this society. They have to do everything but the males have nothing to do or cross the difficulty: "like maleness, femaleness is not a fixed inalienable quantity: it is, rather, a mode of *social* being and so a historically specific value which can be redistributed and reformulated" (Sangari 29-28). So, that the women are compelled to do whatever society likes.

The important to differentiate between concrete instances-at the level of analysis of social and market relations-where male dominance and class and racial/ethnic differences may be the most important factors in determining how the women are used and how they affect individual women and the structural determinants of technological change and changes in social relations that are irreducible to micro-level explanations based on the motivations of the men and women who participate in these relations as scientists, doctors, lawyers, buyers, sellers, and so on. This distinction is important theoretically, methodologically, and politically because it helps clarify re-search goals and set political aims. These structural changes and their unintended effects are unlikely to be substantially modified through changes in the ideology or the gender of those at the top of the research, medical, state, and business organizations within which these technologies are used.

While in specific instances women's control or men's support for feminist values could make a difference, in society as a whole the process of structural

differentiation is likely to continue unabated until it runs into structurally generated contradictions and effective political opposition seizing the opportunity provided by those contradictions. The point is that as long as feminist concerns remain focused on the unintended effects of those structural changes, while identifying their causes in male dominance alone or in interaction with general capitalist processes like commodification, their structural underpinnings, which require far more theoretical work than is possible in this essay are likely to remain unnoticed and unchallenged. Ideological differences among women about the nature of these technologies and about the meaning of motherhood are not likely to be resolved at this time of transition: "a homogeneous notion of the oppression of women as a group is assumed, which, in turn, produces the image of an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender" (Mohanty 95).

Women have been nourished in this fashion of male ideology and so they have internalized this male image of women. Marxist feminist strongly protest against the commodification and objectification of women in capitalistic societies. They argue that women have been treated like an art object, to be admired, to be possessed, and the men play the role of connoisseurs. In this connection, Joan Wallah Scott proclaims that: "Sexuality is to feminism what work is to Marxism: that which is most one's own, yet most taken away. Sexual objectification is the primary process of the subjugation of women" (158). Production produces not only an object for the subject, but a subject for the object. There is an abundant and growing feminist literature examining the implications of reproductive technologies that separate genetic, physiological, and social motherhood. The literature explains the development of these technologies in terms of the motivations of men stressing the victimization of

women by the medical and legal institutions and the commodification of these technologies.

In separating the mode of reproduction physical and social from the mode of procreations create not only new objects for sale and lease ova, wombs, sperm, embryos but also new historical subjects willing to enter in these relations. Women willing to sell or donate their eggs or bear a child for another woman; men eager to have a child with another woman while planning, with their wives, to raise the child as their own; couples willing to donate extra embryos to anonymous recipients; sperm donors unconcerned about the number of genetic children they may have, and so on. The emergence of these subjects is still in the process of becoming. Women of the bourgeois class are not propertied, but are themselves at the deepest level the art of passion. Bourgeois women also provide emotional, social, and sexual service for the men in their class, and in return they are provided with luxury and comfort.

III: Domestic Violence Against Women: An Analysis

The situation of Nepalese women has certainly changed after the political change in 1950 AD, but not to the extent it should have been. Though they constitute the major workforce doing hard manual labor and engaging in the agricultural operations, they are twice discriminated on the basis of class and gender and their social economic and political status is inferior to that of male. Patriarchy has given the supreme position to the males, due to continuing dominance of Hindu religion and culture.

Although women are said to be equal legally, in practice, gender discrimination and violence against women is rampant in Nepal. It is indeed more severe in Hindu society and also in other societies as they are also influenced by the dominant religion and culture. Women are confined to household work with no access to and control over resources and restricted mobility in the private sphere.

Many Nepalese women are still trapped within the subordinate gender roles. Tradition continues to play an important part in Nepalese society and women are often marginalized as a result. Violence against women goes largely unrecognized. Violence, like wife beating, is considered a natural part of our society. Many do not even consider it a form of abuse. Although discrimination against women in Nepal varies among various ethnic and cultural groups, women remain a disadvantaged segment in all caste-ethnic and class-categories of the population.

Domestic violence is an abuse of power perpetrated mainly (but not only) by men against women both in a relationship and after separation. It occurs when one partner attempts physically or psychologically to dominate and control the other. Domestic violence takes a number of forms. The most commonly acknowledged forms are physical and sexual violence, threats and intimidation, emotional and social

abuse and economic deprivation. Domestic violence is a generic term, which refers to abusive and assaultive behavior between intimates, among members of a household, and/or between former partners. Its most dominant form is man to woman within a partnership or former partnership.

Stories selected in this study reveal a wonderful world that women have lived in, experienced, perceived and predicted. The characters are men and women-their relationship, love, hatred, divorce, reunion, disgust, isolation, longing for something and all the rest. They are in love with or the children they give birth to, their husbands, family members they live with, or their own self seeking freedom from the drudgery of life and society that criticizes, cares and controls, and their revolt against fundamental foundation, which is symbolic and representative of Nepali women's experiences in Nepali short fictions.

Domestic Violence in Chandrakala Newar's "Agnisn" and "Hunger"

"Agnisn," basically centers on a traditional family in a modern city. Junu, the main character around whom the story moves is victimized much by her in-laws only because of her failure to bear a child. She is treated as if she has done something wrong. She discloses her condition as "I am being robbed of my dignity today. The daughter in law of the house is being insulted for no fault of hers. My childlessness is taken as a sin or a crime in the house" (Newar 30). Junu is childless even after many years of marriage. Feelings of guilt, shame and self blame is experienced by Junu, which is a common phenomenon in Nepali society. More common is the physical abuse of wives by the husband and his family to force the woman to leave, to enable the son to remarry. The patriarchal society treats female as a child bearing machine.

Since machines are brought for production, women in patriarchal society are taken as child bearing machine. Machine that fails to produce goods are repaired first

but Junu, as a child bearing machine in the patriarchal society is going to be replaced by another woman. How a woman feels when her bed is going to be shared by or replaced by another: “Her body is burning like a furnace. The pain is intolerable” (28). This evokes the pathetic condition of Junu as well as the women in general in the patriarchal societies. They face hardship due to the child marriage, double marriage, bride price, and even dowry systems that prevail in the society.

Junu’s in-laws secretly plan to get Bhuban to be married again for the baby because she was thought to be incapable of bearing a child. Junu suffers much when she knows about Bhuban’s remarriage with Keshari. Her mother in-law or the whole family treats her as if she is lacking something to give birth to a baby. Bhuban also casts his impassive glance at her “she were nothing but a corpse burning on a pyre” (28). She has no choice but to sit by the side of the river and wait. She is treated as the ‘other’ in the house.

Home is not a safe place for women, yet women and children have no other choice than to stay at home with the perpetrator. Males hide their impotency and blame women. When Bhuwan goes for his semen test and the doctor proves that he himself is blame worthy for not having baby:

The doctor calls him to his chamber. Bhuban pulls a chair and sits down. He tries to read the doctor’s face. With a grave face the doctor says “sorry Bhuban, I hate to say this but your semen analysis report is not good. I have rechecked it. Your semen account is very low. You are as good as impotent.” Handing the report card over to Bhuban, the doctor excuses himself and leaves the chamber. (31)

This clarifies that Bhuwan, though he comes to know that he has got the weakness, tries to save his masculinity by marrying another woman; because in a male

dominated society if a man can't show his ability to give birth a baby he losses his masculinity.

Women remain vulnerable and largely dependent on men and this makes extremely difficult for a woman to report that she is being abused within her home. There is a strict hierarchy within this joint family system, wherein the bride is subject to the domestic needs of the household, husband, and in-laws. This hierarchical structure, coupled with male primacy leaves, women generally, and young brides in particular, vulnerable to abuse. The seemingly insignificant reasons for such domestic violence by husbands and in- laws were noted by Junu as: "No one understands my grief. I am longing to be a mother. My womb yearns for a baby. Who is there to understand me? I haven't had a peaceful sleep for the past four years. My husband is no more the same and neither are my in-laws. I am a loner in this house" (30). Junu feels miserable since women have to feel estrangement within their own house. She has to face all the difficulties by herself.

Hindu religion has given the superior position to the men. They are the only owner of the properties and they even own female bodies as commodities and exercise their power on them. The only reason behind it is that the women own nothing. They even get less pay at work equal to men. Women are treated as if they are the second class citizen. She lacks identity of her own. Even when she tries to revolt and to come out of the restriction she is mocked as if the crackling of the hen and the patriarchy suppresses her voices. She becomes the 'other'.

Violence against women is experienced by women of all ages and social classes. The basic difference between high class women and the low class women have been forced to live in most vulnerable conditions. Junu, from the aristocratic family and her maid Shanti, a common working class woman have their own

problems, besides the difference in their class they both suffer. Junu is psychologically victimized by her in-laws and Shanti has to suffer physically and economically, as her husband has spent all his property in gambling:

”I will need this money for my son’s admission to school,” Shanti would often say. Poor Shanti! She worked so hard to fulfill the smallest of her dreams. Her husband didn’t seem a bad person. He was always polite. But Shanti said he gambled all night. He squandered off all his ancestral property on gambling. Shanti always wished that ‘Dashain’ and ‘Tihar’ festivals would never come at all as her husband would then spend all the money away. (29)

On the one hand, she had to bear the brunt of poverty and on the other she had on her the burden of her children. She has her intimate connection with her children, they are her part, and they grow out of her flesh, in her body.

The husband invests his ancestral property into gambling, while Shanti has to work at others house to earn for the food, clothing and the school fees of her children. She even cannot keep her earnings with her because of the fear of her husband. Shanti has her own sufferings as a wife of a gambler:

She too has her own problems. Probably she has more problems than others have . . . She uses half of the money buying rice, daal, salt and oil. Rest of the money she deposits in Junu’s custody for her use in her emergencies and exigencies. But yesterday, she had taken all her salary. She had said,” I have to buy new clothes for my son. He has nothing to wear for winter. I think I will buy a sweater for him” (29).

Poverty can be seen as both a causal factor and a consequence of violence against women. That women become homeless as a result of domestic abuse is

perhaps self evident. It is perhaps to be expected that most people, if asked to consider violence against women, will focus women as a wider phenomenon. At an individual level, all of these factors may play a initially on the circumstances surrounding an individual act, rather than violence against role: “Poor Shanti! She doesn’t work at peoples houses for pleasure” (28). There is, however, a need to look at the wider picture. If the abused woman works outside the family home, she is often forced to deposit her pay. Often the abuser will put all the family assets in his name. For the abuser, money is an extension of his power. The abused woman is aware that if she leaves her partner, she and her children may live in poverty thereafter.

These socio-cultural practices, as well as under education and lack of independency must be considered the main factors those contribute to the violations of the rights of women. The male psychology in most of the cases portrays them as most undesirable oppressive agent that has always exercised discrimination against women power. Alcohol and/or drug use, poverty, unemployment, mental illness, stress, poor, anger management skills, sexual deviance and personality disorders are all commonly identified either as causes of, or triggers for, male violence against women: “She even cannot take all her salary home for the fear of her husband” (29). Women get fewer wages in comparison to their male counterpart. Generally, women work as daily labor for transplanting seedlings, threshing paddy/wheat or even as labor in road or building construction. Women living below poverty levels appear to be more vulnerable to assault, but also that women living above poverty levels at the time of an assault are twice as likely to lose income as a result. Constrained by the monetary and emotional impoverishment of her life, woman has adopted her society’s image of women narrowly and literally; she has long practiced the art of making herself an exquisite decorative object.

“Hunger” is set in a rented house and about a recently married couple, where the wife tolerates physical violence silently. Hunger is no more than a physical hunger of the husband, who usually beats her wife to his entertainment and to satisfy himself, which can only be put down by violence and injustice. Such a deadly hunger the husband has, a kind of pleasure in pain of other: “Ouch!...ouch!...I’m going to die...that’s enough...enough...leave me alone!! (Newar 35). Rape within the relationship of marriage; by one’s own husband, is one of the most traumatic violence against women. Husband is the one from whom, also due to social, traditional and cultural values, a wife expects love, care, affection and the most security, however marital rape does exist in many marital relationship. This articulates the idea that patriarchy has used the institution of marriage to oppress women. Women become victim of their male partners because of marriage.

Arranged marriages still exist in many societies where the woman has a minimal say in her future. Marriage vows until recently stated that women must love, honor and obey their husbands while losing their own name in the contract. This process makes women economically dependent on men. This dependency causes them to tolerate the violence.

Due to the dependency of women for economic support on men or their families, both parental as well as husband’s house, they have no other option but to meekly follow men. Poverty entails a lack of option to women and that lack of option forced them to accept their inferior position in the family: “What? A shame...! It’s not been three months and he’s already beating his wife...!”(35).The wife is bound to face such kind of injustice upon her. She has no access to the property and the economic resources. She even lacks her control over her own body as she is treated as the commodity by the males in the capitalistic patriarchal societies. She is just a doll

in the hand of the male as an object to enjoy with. A pathetic condition of a woman where she silently tolerates her husband's misbehaves. No objection on the unlawful act of the males. Because of the thought in Nepalese society that husbands are the gods and 'Patiparmeshor' and should be worshiped. Our religion, society and culture have given the higher position to the males whereas women are submissive and subordinate.

The ancient myths clearly show how women are subjected and mistreated by men. According to the "*Ramayana*", a Hindu religious book, Sita had to jump on the fire to prove her chastity, though she sacrifices all the stately pleasure and prosperity for her husband Ram by following him for fourteen years in the jungle. Draupadi on the other hand in another Hindu epic "*Mahabharata*", is bound to get married with five men. She even was sold as cattle by her husband to his cousin (brother) not even informing her. There are enough examples of such women from Medusa to Circe in western mythologies as well.

Wife beating or in more extremes cases wife battering is the most common form of abuse worldwide irrespective of class, caste, religion and community. Wife's neglect to household duties and her disobedience of her husband's dictates are all considered legitimate cause for wife beating. The odd slap or blow was regarded as routine husband-like behavior, it was only if the beatings were very severe did women perceive of themselves is being abused as the narrator says: "They think wives are their own father's property or what? A wife beater! Disgusting! Shame on his manhood" (35). Woman is a person with disability, refreshing object which man wants to possess. She accepts propriety and love from her husband, she keeps relationship with him.

Women have a valuable, peaceful and tolerant attitude, always non-violent position that they want to get rid of discrimination and violence against them as the narrator says: “Surely he’ll kill his wife. Why the hell is she forced to bear such injustice in this day and age?”(35). Silence plays a role in the dynamic of domestic violence. Marginal role of women and cultural practices that uphold this status are plentiful in history. This can be seen today in bride price and dowry practices in some cultures.

Violence against women impacts on the lives and development of children, either as a result of witnessing violence against their mothers: “Hunger is also a psychological story, where a woman is ready to tolerate physical violence of her husband instead of deserting him or revolting against him” (Bhattarai xiii). Children are taught from the time they are very young that wives should not to voice disagreement with husbands. There is also a societal taboo, a conspiracy of silence, about the existence of domestic violence in Nepalese society. The conspiracy of silence renders domestic violence an invisible epidemic.

Domestic Violence Embedded in Laxmi Upreti’s “Kamali”

“Kamali” is a story of a woman who has been victimized by her husband and abandoned at last. The protagonist, Kamali got into all kind of miseries only after she got married. She belongs to the lower caste community. She works at others house to make her living and to look after her children as her husband, a soldier in an Indian army, who abandoned her, and remarried a Bhutanese girl. His ulterior motives become clear only when he tricks her into coming to his house and makes a claim that the man who pays for the great role in family is generally allowed to have a next wife and behaves like an animal. Neither she is happy with her husband nor can she enjoy

her lonely life. Her situation is narrated as: “He never gave her happiness in his life and never cared about his daughters” (Uperti144).

Many women experience ongoing harassment and abuse after leaving an abusive partner, and may resort to civil remedies in an effort to protect themselves. Women become victim of their male partners when they use alcohol. They are severely beaten by their husbands:

And on days when he was somehow able to stagger his way home he would raise a big hullabaloo and vent his anger by beating his wife. Before he had died four years ago he had already made a mess of her health and ruined her by abusing her physically and mentally all throughout her life. She had a bright and cheerful looks but she also had as much as much dark and ugly parts in her life. (144)

Though she seemed cheerful, she had ugly experiences in her life. Her husband's misbehaves tortures and ruins her and her life.

Patriarchal feudal system considers women folk in general as commodity, means of entertainment, and second-class citizen. That is why even women face discrimination injustice, education, job, property rights, wages and decision-making process. Women get to loose their identity after marriage since their children follow their father's family name that is reflected in getting citizenship certificates. Mostly women have been the victims of intra-caste and inter-caste marriage. Women have to bear all such unbearable sufferings socially, economically, culturally and politically at great risk of her own and her children's life:

”He used to intimidate and browbeat Kamali daily”. He started ill-treating with his second wife and the wife being unable to put up with his rude behavior had left him for good and had gone with the son back

to Bhutan. His habits got worse after the money he had with him was all finished: "Though I knew very well that I would be beaten and ill-treated by my husband yet I always looked upon him for my safety and protection" (142).

The family has been presented as a site for women's oppression in the stories and then oppression encompasses two arenas: financial structure and the devaluing of domestic work and parenting. These include feminine nurturance, romantic love, self-sacrifice, maternalism, masculine protection and financial support.

Gender polarity establishes dominance and control as central aspects of the masculine and as inappropriate in the feminine. An analysis of patriarchy as a condition of abuse explains why women appear to accept psychological abuse to some extent identifies that the family is and always has been the privileged locus of the exploitation of women. Although marriage has a protective effect on men, it has been found to be detrimental for women in terms of both mental and physical. In order to sustain in this society, she must marry. She has no choice except marriage, a so-called respectable marriage. But Kamali cannot live a happy, prosperous and affluent life and she narrates her past as:

It was only after my marriage that I got into all kinds of miseries. How fate changes a women's life after her marriage? And the change is tragic if one is married to a useless man. I always had men going crazy about me and courting me even after my marriage. But I was always nervous and terrified. (Upreti 142)

Yet she was a woman of integrity her husband was of evil nature. Kamali's life had always been covered with black clouds. Her mother is indeed a harsh kind of lady. She became indifferent towards Kamali's feelings after her husband's death. Her

behavior was enough to torture Kamali. She however praises her father. Women's obsession towards a keepsake, and psychologically her bond of love towards her maternal home and symbolically mother. These reflect poverty, ignorance and endless suffering issuing from these. Kamali has fallen apart the relations. Her mother and her husband both were unjustful towards her.

However, Kamali dares to live with her children, leaving her husband behind. Since she has been brought up in a materialistic environment, she hates poverty and dinginess. The society in which Kamali dwells is a growing capitalistic society absorbed by material gain and monetary worth. In this society, the economic worth of everything is known.

Women have no social worth unless she regains her previous position to affect her re-entry into society. It is the women who have to bear all such unbearable sufferings socially, economically, culturally and politically at great risk of her own and her children's life: "On the one hand she had to bear the brunt of poverty and on the other she had on her the burden of daughters who were on the threshold of womanhood" (142). Woman is a person with disability, refreshing object which man wants to possess. Though Kamali accepts propriety and love from her husband, she keeps relationship with him. He himself lacks faith but demands it from her. He fails to show courage enough to go to rescue her when she needs him the most.

In the Nepali context, the birth of a girl is usually marked with sorrow as if some great misfortune had befallen her parents and family. She is regarded right from her infancy as an additional burden to the family that somehow has to be brought up and married off. She will soon belong to her husband's family and is thus not of any use to the family in which she is born. However, since she is already born and has to live anyway, she should at least pay a good price for her breeding. And she pays this

price in terms of work - any work that may assist the family right through her early childhood to the time she is married off.

Manju Kanchuli's "Nausea" as a projection of Domestic Violence

"Nausea" is an educated woman's condition in our society. As entire family works towards transmitting its cultural and social capital, which underline the subordination of women to its younger members. Family as an institution plays an important role in oppression and exploitation of women. Hierarchic gender relations confine girls and women to definite roles and obligations i.e. stereotype works, confining girls within the household chores in the name of physical chastisement etc. This leads to the devaluation and discrimination against women.

Sarala seems to be mouthpiece of the writer who evokes the pathetic condition of women in patriarchy: "House work takes up all the time for women like us. I don't even have chance to rest my body with all the house works" (Kanchuli 103). This society judges everything on the basis of use-value. Woman's use-value lies in her house work and elegant manners; it is her real asset. Women are thrown into such situations as to create love-hate tensions in their individual or social lives. It is an expression of a society that encourages people to define their identity and create a sense of value, through luxury goods, though Sarala participates in 'conspicuous', she seeks to transcend this role forced on her and yearns for a more meaningful form of existence in which she fails.

However, violence against women must be seen in the context of the structural inequality of the wider society within which it takes place, as exemplified in the attitudes, cultural norms and institutions of that society. Sarala used to do paintings before her marriage but after getting into the marital life she was confined within the four walls of her husband's house and her creativity was restricted. The narrator

narrates Sarala's condition as: "Why did she go cold and disappear after her marriage" (102). In terms of employment, history discusses the male workplace the story of women's work encompasses the nursery, kitchen and delivery room.

Religious tradition in Nepal has had a profound impact on women's roles in society. The majority of the Nepali population practices the Hindu religion in some forms. The current practice of the Hindu religion supports a social order that promotes the superiority of men over women. Religion has its influences over the role of Nepali women. Spiritually, the husband is the wife's God and master and the wife is seen as the husband's "unpaid servant," "unbought slave" and "married cohabit": "I have to go to the kitchen at six a.m., to get the breakfast ready by nine o'clock. I have to make tiffin for our three children to take to school, iron their clothes and polish their shoes. I don't even have to breakfast myself" (103). Sarala gets all the physical facilities along with the constraints on her freewill. She had to take care of house and children. The husband is supposed to be dynamic and dominant while the wife is supposed to be dominated and docile. He is trained to rule and reign, while she is taught to submit.

Traditional, Hindu beliefs also create a distinct preference for male children. According to Hindu religious customs, it is the son who must look after his parents in old age or in infirmity. The son offers prayers and rituals after his parents' death to assure their place in heaven: "Your life has already stuck in the quicksand of the tradition of having to bow and scrap to the family" (106). Male versed patriarchal social system, attitudes communications and norms became an obstacle on the path of women's progress, dignity and prosperity and instigate men to dominate, discriminate and exploit innocent women and perpetuate the suffering of the women. Sarala is given all modern facilities within her house but not the freedom, ironically the narrator describes her pathetic condition in the capitalistic society as: "She has cars,

servants, a huge palace like this; luxurious food and clothes are all arranged here. She's the queen of the household, what more does she need?" (104). But these facilities can not fulfill her wishes and desire because her palace like house is just a golden cage. She devotes herself to the world of art and these material luxuries are just absurd for her.

Specific acts of domestic violence against women may have their roots in a combination of factors including the personal history and circumstances of women who are victims of such violence and the men who perpetrate it, and the nature of the relationship between women and the men who are their partners, family members, neighbors and colleagues:

One day in the course of praising all her works of art, Basanta Singh had invited her to his house to see examples of famous works of art by Michaelangelo, Van Gough, and Picasso. Poor naïve Sarala went trustingly after her teacher. At that time Basanta Singh's wife and children had gone to his wife's uncle's house. He showed Sarala pictures of his countless tours abroad, trying to impress her, and then his courage grew to try to do to Sarala something he should not.

Somehow Sarala escaped from his beastly attack, his fingers quivering with lust, and like a tigress saving her cubs from the claws of another animal, she succeeded in saving her virginity and fled home. (108)

Basanta Singh forgets his role of teacher and blurs the sacred relation with his student. He tries to abuse Sarala physically. Rape by anyone is a heinous form of violence against women, and to the fear of social ostracization and stigma women rarely comes out with reporting of such crimes against their body. Sarala secretly saw the dreadful pure animal image inside the civilized suit. But sarala never told this to other people.

After that, she left the campus and took a private examination. Women are not safe in their own house and in the surroundings. They might be victimized by anyone and anywhere.

Sarala seems to be rebellious while burning the paintings believing them to be the false signs of Bashanta Singh's praise, inspiration, and encouragement. "To one side the sudden fire of the artist's materials blazed up; on the other the tumultuous fire in Sarala's flaming eyes could be clearly seen. Her white face was washed over with bright red" (109). The flame of this belief was going to make her free from nausea.

These stories reveal the tensions that a woman undergoes. They cannot take a male character for granted neither can ignore him for ever. The female psychology in all cases portrays them as the most undesirable oppressive agents that have always exercised discrimination against women power. The male is the protagonist-whether he is an individual or a spokesperson of fading social norms. One can see a vivid, contemporary Nepali world as seen through the eyes of mothers, social workers, many a souls caught between dilemma- whether to stand against the world, be rebellious and try to go for a total change, restructuring of the society or submit everything silently as in "Hunger".

The characters seem to be the representatives of all the Nepalese women, their class and how they are becoming commodities for men and forced to live the life of suffering like animal. Most of the female characters look into life as an independent being of equal status or free entity. They contemplate a happier life; think of the relationships within and outside marriage and consciously their strong desire to define their own status. They look into life as an independent being of equal status or a free entity. The husbands are represented as useless and vagabonds and the women as

uncomplaining, and silently keeping family life going despite everything. This mode defines women primarily in term of their object status.

Capitalism is primarily responsible for class structure in the society and questioning the existence of equality in capitalistic system where, the optimal combination of the elements of the mode of reproduction, from the standpoint of capital, occurs within the oppressive features that should be examined from the Marxist-feminism.

Women are seen from social and psychological perspectives, women from the rural life and urban settings, women educated and illiterate, women young and old against the backgrounds of social values and norms. They reveal the great power of love, creativity, family making, existence and harmony.

IV: Conclusion

Exploitation of women's Labor in the home is entangled with other aspects of patriarchal power which it may both reflect and maintain; it is also bound up with other dimensions of economical and social life. Patriarchy is based primarily upon male violence and control of women's sexuality: Here it should be noted simply that increased awareness of domestic violence and the sexual abuse of women within the home mean that for many feminists the family is seen as the cutting edge of patriarchal oppression where many women face male power in its crudest and most aggressive form.

In studying any aspect of social reality, one ought to focus not only on the elements that it has in common with other periods but also on those unique to the mode of production under consideration. Junu's weakness to give birth to a child and her maid Shanti's poverty is the force that keeps them from leading a happy and prosperous life. They were victimized by their family members, in Chandrakala Newar's "Agnisnan". Newar's another story "Hunger" explores the physical hunger of the male character, where the wife tolerates all violence upon her silently. Likewise Sarala in Manju Kanchuli's "Nausea", is abused physically, and psychologically. She is destined to face the restriction in her creativity. Kamali, the protagonist of the Laxmi Upreti's "Kamali" receives several physical tortures by her husband. Collectively Kamali, Junu, Sarala and Shanti are the victims of the domestic violence because of their lack of economic independence. It is the true representation of domestically victimized women in the Nepali short fictions.

Marxist feminists argue that domination of women by men is in timely connected with patriarchal capitalism, because patriarchy and capitalism are mutually supportive to each other. Within the household women produce labor power in the

sense of bearing children, and caring for their husbands, who are workers, which supports men but the women do not get benefits for their domestic work.

Likewise, gender inequality has causes and structural supports specific to each mode of production and is intrinsically related to other historical forms of inequality as the writers find to bring the tragedy, in a way at once natural and picture making, to the knowledge of its narrator. They might have sat down before a village gossip who would have poured out the whole affair to them in a breath, but in doing this they should have been false to two essential elements of the picture: first, the deep-rooted reticence and inarticulateness of the people they were trying to draw, and secondly the effect of roundness produced by letting their case be seen through. The historically specific structural determinants of gender inequality under capitalism are located in the specifically capitalist articulation between production and reproduction, which makes the latter dependent on the former.

Similarly, Kamali is likely the poorest woman living as house worker in the town. An accident of some sort, which is one of the main sticking points of the story, has left her body warped and disfigured. Just what that attrition was, however, is the great mystery of the story, the answer to which is revealed little by little, bit by bit; the reader notices immediately that the relationship she has with her husband consists almost entirely of brief, curt exchanges, during which the reader can easily sense the sharp bitterness just barely veiled by each side.

A woman is not only a member of the crowd or simply a voting citizen, she has her own corner and her different space and as an individual she lives there secretly. Domestic violence against women is prevalent in the Nepalese society and Nepali short fiction as a literary genre, has its nexus with the domestic violence as literature is the mirror reflection of the society.

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