

## Introduction

The present thesis is an exploration on Manjushree Thapa's seminal work *Forget Kathmandu* which interrogates the established historical convention and aims to recreate a new history of Nepalese Society. *Forget Kathmandu*, by showing the bleaks, fissure, and disjunctiveness of linear history of Nepal, questions the authenticity of the Nepalese history and simultaneously redraws the boundaries of the forgotten, neglected, sidelined, and problematised aspects of the history. It breaks the several established conventions and traditions. So it is anti-conventional. Putting it in another way, it advocates in favor of forgotten history of Nepal and subverts the traditional so called authentic history. Particularly, through this study the researcher strives to explore how the Nepalese history was evaluated and interpreted on the part of powerful people and how the history was used as an authentic background to foreground the truth in favor of the rulers and powerfult. Hence the researcher explores problems in the Nepalese history which is shown in the text.

Born in Kathmandu in 1968, and grown up in Kathmandu, Canada and the United States, Manjushree Thapa gained school education in National Cathedral School in Washington D.C. in 1985 and graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography. Later on Thapa began her writing carrier with a travelogue to Mustang and Nepal's border with Tibet. During her time in rural Nepal, Manjushree Thapa was witness to the revolution in political consciousness that followed the country's 1990 movement for democracy. People who had for centuries understood themselves to be the subjects of absolute monarchs suddenly felt themselves sovereign citizens. Many rights movements started- including the women's rights movement, the labor rights movement, and movements for caste and indigenous rights. Feudal social norms were giving way to openness, equality and pluralism. Through this exciting, but also

turbulent and often violent period, Nepalis were engaged, individually and collectively, in a search for democratic freedom and equalities. Manjushree Thapa has brought into these themes in her writing. In 1998 she received an MFA in English (creative writing) from the University of Washington in Seattle, where she was a Fulbright fellow, studying under Maya Soneberg, Shawn Wong and David Shields. The novel she began as her MFA thesis was later published as *The Tutor of History*.

Her next famous book *Forget Kathmandu: an Elegy for Democracy* is a personal meditation on Nepal's troubled search for democracy. Written as the country succumbed to a violent Maoist Insurgency and an even more violent military counterinsurgency, the book was released a month before the February 2005 military coup by King Gyanendra Shah. It instantly became a coveted primer, selling under the table while the country was under strict censorship. *Forget Kathmandu* was a finalist in the 2006 Lettre Ulyses award for literary reportage.

*Forget Kathmandu* is a patch work of fiction and historical facts. It is the collection of different patches such as history, memoir, reportage, travelogue, history of royal family, Maoist rebel, royal massacre, joke and so on. Thapa's *Forget Kathmandu* starts with the royal massacre of 2001 and retrospectively goes back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century of the unification time of the king Prithvi Narayan Shah. Then it digs out the forgotten, sidelined, and otherwise history since unification period to the parliament reinstatement in 2006.

As commented by Sam Miller, Manjushree Thapa's innovative approach to the norms of historical scholarship provides refreshment to its readers who have tried and failed to make sense of the long lists of kings and ranas, prime ministers and regents which figure in all traditional accounts of Nepal's history. By going through the book one can infer into the minor but important incidents that had not got any

space in earlier discourses. It is an approach that often, brings real insight, as when she makes an unexpected but thought-provoking comparison between the pre-1990 monarchist, panchayat system of government and the communist one-party states in other parts of the world. She suggests that the Nepalese Monarchy was like a single party's monopolistic rule although the kings would always talk about the democracy.

If we trace back to the Nepalese history from past to the present almost all of it has been created by the rulers and powerfuls according to their ideology, beliefs, social structure, culture and interest. The marginalized people's history has not been written and documented in the official history. The marginalized and minority people's voices are unheard throughout the history. They are deprived of even to utilize their basic rights. They are also kept far from the access to national economics, national politics, administration, military, business and so on. They have never got the opportunity to utilize the national properties on the basis of the equality and equity. Only the handful of so called higher caste people have hegemonized the national properties, post and power. In the past only the three castes ruled the country since so long. The Chhetri had dominated the palace, the court and the military. The Bahun caste had held the religious authority. Likewise, the Newar caste held the key posts in administration. In this way, Chhetri, Bahun, and Newar were only the castes who had dominant role in the national ruling system. Many of other ethnic groups and also the women hadn't got any place to represent. So history was just representative; it was not inclusive. Actually general people's history was neglected and they were sidelined from the mainstream of the nation. They were deprived of their rights. So the present study suggests that such hegemonization should be stopped and all the people should have equal access in the all sectors of the nation.

After deconstructing the history from the unification period to the present decade Thapa presents her travelogue of west Nepal. In the travelogue she includes the effects of the Maoist insurgency, the people's hardships and the injustice they had to suffer from the both guns i.e. Maoists' gun and the government army's gun. However, giving a credit to the Maoists movement for the high growth of the awareness especially in the margin, she wishes to be a Maoist had she been born in the remote village of the western Nepal. Yet, She ends up cursing all sides—the monarchists, the Maoists and the endlessly wrangling political parties and concludes with an strong, if rather nebulous, plea for Nepal to become a real democratic.

Likewise the past Nepalese history is beset with problem of logocentricism in which there is no accurate account of history, rather it is full of crimes, passion, sorrow, follies, pathos, frustration, humiliation, discontentment, agonies, injustice, impunity and so on. The historical interpretation is the misinterpretation of the history. It was the history of status quo not the history of otherwise. In the long run of Nepalese history, the official historical discourses played the tricks of power to continue their legacy and ideology. It is because, as Foucault says, discourse consists of representation, power and truth and the power is circulated through different forms of representations. That is to say, power is seen in discourse. And that represented power creates truths in favor of the power holder people. So, any historical representation in our country too is the construction of power which only presented the positive sides of the center neglecting the margin.

In this research, the researcher focuses that history must be studied and interpreted within the context of the history and shows how all the Nepalese historical narratives are necessarily influenced with rulers' culture, ideology, beliefs, social structure and interest. So to suit it he rightly bases the present study on the ideas of the

prominent New Historicist scholars like Greenblatt, Nietzsche, Tyson, Foucault and so on. Especially, he bases his research on Foucault's ideas. We can conclude that New Historicism, rightly infers into the seamy side of the history by breaking the established boundaries of text and history i. e. fiction and facts.

### **New Historical Perspective in *Forget Kathmandu***

By employing New Historicism as a methodological tool in *Forget Kathmandu* the researcher strives to dig out how the Nepalese history was evaluated and interpreted on the part of the rulers and powerfuls and how they used history as an authentic background to foreground the truth in favor of them. Hence the researcher longs to blur the problematised and forgotten side of history of Nepal from the period of unification in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present decade. Manjushree Thapa's *Forget Kathmandu*, by showing the bleaks, fissures, and disjunctiveness in linear history of Nepal, questions the authenticity of Nepalese history and redraws the new boundaries of the history.

*Forget Kathmandu* is a patch work of fiction and historical fact. Going through this text we can find different patches such as memoir, reportage, travelogue, history of royal family, Maoist rebel, royal massacre and so on. It is the illuminating study of the tangled politics of Nepal. In this patch work, Thapa examines what has gone wrong, and why in the country. Starting with an account of the Narayanhiti Massacre and its aftermath, she goes back in time to trace the history, often chaotic, of Nepal's monarchy since the unification in eighteenth century and of the struggle to the present decade for genuine democracy. She has ended this text with a record of her trek into Maoist-hold territories in west Nepal where majority of the people continue to live in poverty, human right abuses are on the rise, the young boys and girls have taken to the gun .It is an unprecedented examination of Nepal's past and present. *Forget Kathmandu* does not permit the reader to forget either the past or the immediate present. This text is the mix of history with stories of struggle, of pathos, of triumphs, of gloom and finally some hope.

In June 2001, along with the King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah the nine members of his family were killed in a massacre at Kathmandu Narayanhiti royal palace, by his own son ostensibly, the Crown Prince Dipendra Shah as it was officially documented. In that massacre, Dipendra Shah was blamed as the murderer of his family. The member of the High Level Investigation Committee Taranath Ranabhat, the then speaker, publicized the report claiming that the crown prince was the murderer it was established in the official history of Nepal. This very instance is enough to prove that the official history is full of falsifications and pretensions. Almost everybody in the country does not believe that the crown prince could be the murderer of whole of his family. Nepalese people believe that the royal massacre was plotted by the King's brother named Gynendra Shah who became the King after the death of the lineage of the King Birendra. When he became the king the power of the governance went to his grip. So he made several pretensions and fictions to prove by himself a just king. He made the High Level Investigation Committee and commanded them to carry out the reality. But on the other hand he himself went on destroying several of the evidences of the massacre before the investigation was carried out. This shows that the king himself was the real culprit of the massacre. But till today it has not been officially revealed so as to make everybody believe what the official history established. The powerful people who made the event happen have veiled it by creating several false discourses. No people have assured that gloomy event had been made by Dipendra Shah. It is just officially proved and documented that the event was made by Dipendra Shah himself. To subvert this notion a prominent new historicist Michael Foucault argues in his essay 'Power and Truth' in this way:

Truth is a thing of this world; it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as the true.

(Adams, 1144)

In a society truth is produced by using discourse and in turn discourse is produced by using power. Thus discourse is the tool which creates truth. The discourse is always handled by the powerfuls to make the decision in favor of them. Ranabhat's attempt of ascribing the whole blame upon the innocent Crown Prince shows that the powerfuls deliberately create the discourses in their favor in order to legitimize their position. So the construction of the fact by the powerfuls is just the construction of fiction since the fact no longer is the fact but rather it is imaginary. Thus, Manjushree Thapa too tries to subvert the history by putting several questions about the truthfulness of the establishment. As the speaker Ranabhat completed revealing the report about the royal massacre in the press conference, many people as well as the journalists could not believe it and particularly they were dissatisfied with the blame upon the then crown prince Dipendra Shah. Thapa tries to show some of the scenarios of the press conference that questioned against the establishment of the history. Thapa further writes:

'Can you believe he killed his whole family?' We all exchanged banalities. 'Then he shot himself. It all sounds so-unreal.' 'Who's the army source talking to the international media? It sounds like a prepared statement to me.'(14)

Nobody believed that the crown prince, Dipendra killed the whole family. Nobody believed that he shot himself. It seemed quite unbelievable and illogical. But it

seemed like a preplan and prepared statement conspired by the powerfuls. All the media such as newspaper, magazine, T.V., Radio, Court and so on which produce discourse were controlled by the powerful people. After the preparation of massacre report, the investigation committee called press conference at that time the speaker Taranath Ranabhat responded the questions asked by the journalists like this:

‘Who shot the crown prince, Sir? Did he shoot himself?’ Ranabhat shrugged. ‘God knows.’ The he added: A bullet had been fired the crown prince’s head from the left side. Again he paused to give everyone a significance look. He did not say, but it was soon discovered that the crown prince had been right-handed. (38)

At the press conference the speaker responded that the crown prince shot himself. He was shot from the left side of his head. It was surprisingly unbelievable that the crown prince shot himself because he was right handed. How a right handed man shot himself the left side of the head? It was quite unreasonable and humorous thing. After that the speaker didn’t further response more questions asked by the journalists. Now we can ask the questions ourselves whether the both members were free to investigate or they too were rendered a cog in royal machine of the power. Of course they were not free in the act of investigation. It was due to the power of the monarch they were forced to prepare the report in the favor of the monarch. So here the real problem seems in the authority which commanded them to prepare report according their interest and favour. The two investigation committee members the then speaker Taranath Ranabhat and the then attorney general Keshab Prasad Upadya were not only compelled to bring report in the favor of the monarch but might also be attracted by the monarch’s power because the monarch could play crucial role to send them upper rank in the later life.

The power which could create the discourse had full control over the national media like the television, radio, and newspapers. Through these means of the creation of discourse they tried to establish their truth. They used the media as the tool to create the allegedly truth. In this context, Thapa further writes:

None of the Nepali newspapers came the morning. The private FM stations—of which there were seven in Kathmandu—did not broadcast any morning news, and eventually they all halted transmission. The satellite TV entertainment channels had all been blocked—apparently in mourning, though it felt like in censorship. The state media offered no news: Radio Nepal was playing dirges, and Nepal Television was flashing pictures of the Pashupatinath temple, one of the four must-visit pilgrimage sites for South Asia’s Shiva devotees. This felt like a sick insiders’ joke, for Nepalis widely laugh off the monarchy’s shadowy powers with the refrain: Only Lord Pashupatinath knows what holds this country together.’ (12)

Thapa satirizes the silent media which did not try to take out the reality in the state of confusion and turmoil. It is their irresponsibility because they had to give true information to the public in time. They did not do so either because they were afraid of the kingly power or because they were playing a supporting role to strengthen the chaotic state. The incident is so difficult to believe and the evidences that were found afterwards make the official claim false. Though they claimed the crown prince Dipendra Shah was the murderer of all but the evidences prove that he was innocent. Thapa writes:

The chairman of the Royal State Council, Keshar Jung Rayamajhi, announced that Dipendra Bir Birkram Shah had been named the king.

As the new monarch was 'unable to discharge his duties', he said, his uncle Prince Gyanendra had been appointed his regent [...]. What the hell? How could an alleged murderer be named the king? And all the rumours were that he was brain-dead. (19)

By this event we can easily infer that, this is quite contradictory discourse created by power holder people. As the poststructuralists intellectuals say there is no single 'history', only discontinuous and contradictory 'histories' the then historical narratives are found full of contradictory ideas. It was officially proved that Dipendra Shah is the sole character who committed that royal massacre but, on the contrary, the Royal Council announced Dipendra Shah as the king. We can easily question how a murderer can be named as the king. It is quite unbelievable matter for everyone. By this contradictory matter we can easily deduce that it was not Dipendra Shah who made that massacre happen. It was the power and discourse which made Dipendra Shah a murderer. The idea of a uniform and harmonious culture is a myth imposed on history and propagated by the ruling classes in their own interest. In fact there is no such single narrative that can represent the truth. Since there are multiple truths in the history the Truth of power is interrogated at the hands of New Historicism.

Poststructuralists believe that the world is more than a galaxy of texts, and that some theories of textuality ignore the fact that discourse is involved in power. They reduce political and economical forces, and ideological and social control, to aspects of signifying process. All knowledge is an expression of the 'Will to Power'. That is to say we cannot speak of any absolute truths or of objective knowledge. People recognize a particular piece of philosophy or scientific theory as 'true' only if it fits the descriptions of truth laid down by the intellectual or political authorities of

the day, by the members of the ruling elite, or by the prevailing ideologies of knowledge (Selden 100).

Poststructuralists assume that discourse is created by the use of power.

Knowledge is utilized to create power and post. People take the particular things as true only if that fits to their intellectual, political, ideological level of a given time.

Thapa writes:

‘They’re just pretending Dipendra is alive so that it won’t look obvious that is a coup,’ one conspiracy theorist said to me over the phone.

‘Gyanendra’s using him a buffer so that it looks like he was unwillingly thrust into power.’ This person even thought that rumours about Dipendra’s inauspicious marriage charts had been spread years before, in order to frame Dipendra for this massacre: ‘This coup was years in the planning. He’s very, very shrewd, that Gyanendra.’ (21)

To make the royal coup happen, Gyanendra Shah was constantly conspirating against the king Birendra Shah to be the king by massacring the king’s lineage. Later, after having successfully committed the crime, Gyanendra Shah and his helpers continued their attempts to hide the reality and show the falsity. They pretended that Dipendra Shah is alive even after his death. They did so because they wanted to show that they didn’t make that coup happen. Likewise, they had been spread superfluous rumors about Dipendra Shah’s inauspicious marriage charts year ago so as to prepare the people’s mindset to believe that Dipendra Shah might be the real murderer not Gyanendra Shah and his helpers. After being the king, Gyanendra Shah appointed a three members committee to investigate the massacre and submit a report on within three days. But in fact, to conduct the investigation within the three days’ period was almost impossible and moreover he had already destroyed the evidences of the

massacre. This clearly shows how impatient was Gyanendra Shah to hide the reality. As he was the holder of the power at that time, he could do so outwardly. But the reality resides in the hearsay rather than in the written documents. Thapa clearly remarks further:

Someone phoned the apartment and said that Prince Gyanendra was being brought back from Pokhara in a helicopter. 'Why wasn't he at the family gathering?' the caller asked. 'If it was a family dinner, why was he away in Pokhara? He did it, I tell you, he did it. He killed his brother.' (14)

Thapa indirectly says that the then crown prince Gyanendra Shah was the real conspirator of the horrible royal massacre. She mentions in a third person narrative. Yet it was quite a courageous step to speak evidently against the king when he was in power.

The ministry for information and communication banned the media to publish news about royal massacre which harms the 'national unity'. In the name of National Unity the minister tried to put the people under illusion which is practiced by the official discourses too. Police raided some newspaper offices and ministry for home affair vetted newspaper before they went to press. The books which were against their favor were seized from the street. Many teenage boys were sent to prison for only loitering about looking thuggish. The editor of the 'Kantipur' national daily, Yuba Raj Ghimire was arrested along with the paper's publisher and managing director for publishing an article by a Maoist leader urging the army not to support the monarch. The government banned the people's freedom for writing and speaking. It was quite injustice. In fact it was use of power to hide the reality and foreground the falsity. But his use of excessive power became counterproductive as the people believed it as his

attempt of hiding his crime and fulfilling his passion for power. Actually in history some people (Yub Raj Ghimire) wanted to record the actual history by disobeying the authority but they couldn't escape from the fist of the power holders. The report on royal massacre was the product of power and the presentation of preplanned and pre-prepared scheme, not the sudden explosion of gun as Gyanendra Shah said. Whatever drama were created by the actors that could not make the public believe. So whatever drama is documented in history about the royal massacre is not actual history. Hence the actual history was sidelined by the official history.

New Historicism advocates the 'suppressed historical narratives' of the marginalized groups-such as women, people of color, the poor, the working class, gay men and lesbians, prisoners, the inhabitants of mental institutions and deconstructs the white, male, Anglo-European historical narrative to reveal its disturbing hidden subtext. "Factual" context of historical accounts is foregrounded. History is a text that is interpreted by different cultures to fit the ideological needs of people's own power structures. New historicism can be defined as the history of lies cultures tell themselves. It assumes that there is no history. There are only representations of history. New Historicism is concerned not with historical events as event, but with the ways of seeing the world and modes of meaning (Tyson 287-88). In this context Nepalese 'history' is dominated by the Kings from the beginning. The Kings represented the feudal aristocrats who stood in contrast to the common Nepalese people often economically and culturally deprived. The ideological construction of the king was thought to be the real portrait of the country. It always valorized their activities and established as the prestigious, brave, moral, humane, emulative, patriotic, prudent and caring for the people. But the established history constructed by the powerfuls never paid the attention towards the loopholes that they bore. For

example, in Nepalese history what has been shown is that the great king Prithvi Narayan Shah unified the nation himself. But it has never shown the other negative side of his action and otherwise history. The history is interpreted only from what happened on the part of powerfult. In history there is no mention of other people who were participated, contributed and lost their life at the unification time. Only the great king Prithvi Narayan Shah's contribution has been shown. Other people's contribution is neglected and forgotten by the official history. It is just the representation of the monumental history. It is reductive history. How he was inhumane and immoral has never been shown. In this connection Thapa writes:

Prithvi Narayan Shah launched his final battle on the day of Indra Jatra, a festival that had been celebrated in the valley since the 10<sup>th</sup> century (and is still celebrated). A Newar friend of mine sometimes laughs, a little bitterly and in earnest, that his urbane people were vanquished by us- coarse hill folk- through unfair means: 'We were so drunk at the festival, all we could do was flick peas at you guys.' The more zealous of Prithvi Narayan Shah's soldiers cut off the noses of the local inhabitants after their victory. (57)

By this work of attacking at the time of festival celebration, cutting noses of people after defeating, can we call Prithvi Narayan Shah brave, moral and humane? No obviously he was not moral and humane. Prithvi Narayan Shah has long been (falsely) known as the great unifier of Nepal but when we see him through the new historicist eyes he proves to be a divider rather. Geographically he added the different territories and made a single country to prove him brave. But he could not unify the people rather divided them into various identities. His act of division of the people into four castes strengthened the inhuman system of untouchability and his division of 36

varnas helped the people to have the feeling of disparity, not the unity. Pertaining to it, Thapa's writes:

The Chhetri caste, including the Shah's Thakuri sub-caste and the Ranas, controlled the palace, the court, and the military. The Bahun caste as royal priests and preceptors held religious authority. The Newars –the ethnic group indigenous to Kathmandu –held key posts in administration. Everywhere in power were the Chhetris, Bahuns and Newars, and few rare members of the remaining 90-odd caste and ethnic nationalities. Women, too, were almost invisible in the government. More than 90 per cent of the country's population, therefore, found no representation at all. (52)

Though Nepal had been said a garden of four castes and 36 ethnic nationalities. It wasn't materialized into practice. In practice just three groups ruled the country since so long. The Chhetri caste (the Thakuri, the Basnet, the Rana, the Thapa) had dominated the palace, the court, and the military. The Bahun caste had held the religious authority. Likewise, the Newars caste held the key posts in administration. In this way, Chhetri, Bahun, and Newar were only the castes who had dominant role in the nation rule. Many of other ethnic groups and the women hadn't got any place to represent. So history was just representative not inclusive. Actually general people's history was neglected and they were sidelined from the mainstream of the nation. They were deprived of their right. Only limited people of the three castes had hegemonized the national post, power, properties and politics. These so called higher castes had taken the national politics, culture, economy, as their forefather's properties. Other marginalized people couldn't taste the taste of national sovereignty as the then contemporaries had tasted. Hence the so called official history is the

suppressed historical narrative. What has been shown in the history is the untenable truth of the days. There was complete representation of falsity. The official history has never shown that how royal family members overindulged in drugs and drink, it has not also shown how royal members were brawled at discos, has not recorded the murderer of Prabin Gurung (a singer), the smugglers of idols. Such dark sides of the royal members have been never shown by the official history rather only some of their limited good deeds are shown. The king was worshiped as an incarnation of Vishnu (god). So the king used to be behaved someone who is over the law.

Similarly, the age of the regent queens as well as Maharaja-cum-prime minister was fully filled by the stories of the criminal minded conspirators, the lustful kings and sergeants, and the illegal relationship between the queen and the minister as well as the courtiers just as Friedrich Nietzsche in his essay *The Use and Abuse of History* argues that history is not only the record of 'great' events and incidents rather it is the record of crimes, passion, and follies too (392). During the period of the regent queens there was unending power games among the Chhetri caste courtiers of the Thapa, Pandey, Basnet and Rana clans. When the second Shah King of Nepal Pratap Singh Shah died with natural cause the rivalry between queen Rajendra Laxmi (Queen of Pratap Singh Shah) and Bahadur Shah (brother of Pratap Singh Shah) began. The son of Rajendra Laxmi, Rana Bahadur Shah was child, therefore, she worked as the regent of the baby king. Thapa writes:

The boy-King's mother served as the regent Queen for eight years- till the boy- King's uncle imprisoned her on charges of having sexual relations with her minister. He killed the minister for good measure, and went on to serve as regent prince himself for the next nine years.

When the Regent Queen was accused of the immoral relationship with one of her minister, Bahadur Shah took the responsibility to run the nation. Bahadur Shah sent away the queen blaming her having immoral sexual relationship with the minister and killed him for the good measure. Likewise when the crown prince Rana Bahadur Shah wrested sovereignty from his unwilling uncle then he imprisoned his uncle. Then he started to rule himself. Rana Bahadur Shah had three wives. He had an illegitimate son of Bahun caste concubine named Kantivati that the king wanted as his successor. He abdicated in favor of his illegitimate son Girwanyuddha Shah. His beloved concubine wife died soon. When the abdicated king Rana Bahadur Shah exiled in Banaras his first and second wife started rivalry to rule the nation. The first wife favored courtiers of Thapa clan while the second wife favored Pandey clan courtiers. When the king returned from exile he killed his second wife's head minister Damodar Pandey and again reinstated his first wife as a regent queen. But he found her first wife disloyal then he made a third wife Lalita Tripurasundari as a regent queen and exiled the first queen. Lalita Tripurasundari ruled for 26 years. The king Girwanyuddha never got the chance to rule directly. By this we can infer one matter that is in the past the king used to have many queens and concubines it was really immoral and injustice to the women. Women were used as the means of entertainment by the kings. If the king liked someone girl she had to be either queen or concubine. So, the appearance smooth history of the powerfults consists of numerous underpinnings that subvert the established notion and hence deconstructs the official history by digging out the hidden narratives. It shows the internal conflicts, conspirations, murders, and the dirty games of the power politics.

According to Thapa, when the king Girwanyuddha Shah died then Rajendra Bikram Shah became king and in 1843 he made his younger wife, Rajyalaxmi Shah,

his own regent queen. She favored Thapas into court and made Mathabar Singh Thapa as Mukhtiyars (chief minister) but later when she knew that her Mukhtiyar is plotting against her then she decided to kill him. The Mukhtiyar's own nephew, General Jung Bahadur Kunwar, killed him. After that she made Gagan Singh as Mukhtiyar. He was favorite to her. Some used to say that he was a purported lover of Rajyalaxmi Shah. Later he was also assassinated unknowingly. To find out the murderer of Gagan Singh, Rajyalaxmi Shah called meeting at Kot. General Jung Bahadur Kunwar reached there with his five brothers and committed Kot Parba killing many courtiers and rised to the power. When Jung Bahadur came into power he vested both prime minister and commander-in-chief of Army himself. He was the first Hindu of high caste to visit England. That visit is still popularly known as 'Jung Bahadur Ko Belaayat Yatra' (the journey of Jung Bahadur to the United Kingdom). Thapa writes:

In 1854 he convinced the king (who was, remember, mad) to declare himself the 'Maharaja' of Kaski and Lamjung Districts, and to grant him the power to overrule even the king in politics and diplomacy. The 'Maharaja' title was an entirely new concoction. The Shah kings were considered sri panch, or five-titled- as in Sri Sri Sri Sri Sri Surendra Bikram Shah [...]. The Maharajas were given sri teen, or three-titled status as sri sri sri. The new title gave Jung Bahadur Kunwar Rana a personal income of 200,000 rupees in a year. (69)

By this we can easily deduce that how the Raja-Maharaja used to use national properties, post and power for the personal benefit and welfare. To consolidate Rana dynasty's power, Jung Bahadur Kuwar also married his two daughters and a niece to the then crown princes and his son to a princess. Jung Bahadur had five brothers

among them Dhir Sumshere was the youngest brother. He had 17 sons who murdered their uncle and started the second generation of Rana rule.

If we glance the whole Rana regime it was really gloomy wrong. Nepal couldn't proceed ahead in development. As New Historicism puts forth the idea the official history always speaks in favor of the powerfuls and never speaks about the ugly aspects, shameful and disgraceful aspects of the status quo. The power of the status quo is so pervasive that it always tries to continue its legacy and strengthen its dictatorial policy. In the official history their power politics is positively recorded while the subversive history undercuts their selfish and monopolistic nature. The Rana rulers were extremely cruel and power oriented. To reach to the power they killed even their own brothers and relatives mysteriously. They didn't want to see other people's progress. They had banned to open school. If they saw anyone Rana ruler progressive they immediately used to call him back. The Rana had really hegemonized the nation and had established a monopolistic regime during their period. People didn't have freedom to write. In this connection Thapa writes:

Krishna Lal Adhikari had authored a book on farming, *The cultivation of Maize*, containing an allusion to foreign dogs, implying that the Ranas were pets kept by the British; the book had been burned and the author jailed for six years. (84)

In *The Cultivation of Maize* the Ranas were addressed as pets kept by British People; and that book had burnt and the author was jailed for six months. Some intellectual of Kathamandu valley started to open public library but they were sent to prison. Those who went against the Rana rule they would be victim of Ranas. They would get either life imprisoned or exiled with property confiscation or killed and so on. Hence if we turn back to the regent queen period and Rana period it was full of crime, murdering,

passion, conflict, dispute, injustice and follies to reach to the power and impose their ideology.

According to Thapa, in 1950 the late king Tribhuvan and the political parties being united they overthrew the Rana regime. At that time, to overthrow the Rana regime the late king Tribhuvan had played crucial role. He went to India where political parties were gathering in opposition to Rana regime. With the collaboration of the king and political parties they succeeded to overthrow the long deep rooted Rana regime and established the multiparty democracy. In course of revolution against the Rana regime Shukra Raj Shatri, Ganga Lal Shrestha, Dharma Bhakta Mathema and Dasarath Chand became martyr. During the opposition and revolution time many people were inhumanely killed, exiled from the country, imprisoned for whole life and confiscated their properties. The power of the Ranas was so cruel and violent that it brutally treated the people and even did not hesitate to kill them. Several people were made martyrs, many were banished and many were made to lose their dignity.

When the multiparty democracy was established in 1950 (2007 B. S.) most of the leaders of the political parties were immatured and unprepared to rule the nation. They were like crow in the haze. Due to the political parties' unpreparedness the period from 1951 to 1960 there were nine short-lived governments. After the multiparty democracy established there started rivalry between political parties. The political instability too was the cause of the political parties' eagerness in reaching to the power. They were influenced by the benefits of the power position so the leaders of the political parties too were hurried to grab the power and rule others which remained the sole cause of the then political instability.

Though the founder member of Nepali congress Bisheswor Prasad Koirala (henceforth B. P.) is esteemed and followed to his roadmap and principle till today he was also from a well-to-do bourgeois family. Even he was selfish and self-centered. When his half brother Matrika Prasad Koirala (henceforth M. P.) was both the party president and prime minister he had opposed that the same person shouldn't be both prime minister and party president he suspended the M. P. from the Nepali Congress and opened his own party. In this connection Thapa writes:

BP, unfortunately, was now the president of his party in addition to being the prime minister, exactly what he had once opposed his half-brother M.P. Koirala for being. (102)

Hence B. P. also seemed self centered and contradictory because once he had opposed to his half-brother M. P. Koirala being prime minister as well as party president but later on he himself took the both posts. The party itself and its leaders were not democratic in its working style. His behaviors prove that the government, law and the constitutions are made in the favors of the power. When somebody is in power he shapes the laws in his favor and rules the others. The new Historical notion of power which constructs the truth is rightly applied here.

On 15 December 1960 the then king, Mahendra stabbed at democracy. Emboldened by receiving the information from political parties and his own vested power, Mahendra took the step to murder the just growing democracy by sacking out B. P. from the post of Prime Minister and relegating the nation into the dark Panchayat system. Though the discourses so far have positively portrayed the step blaming the parties for corruption and instability, it was the outcome of the king's desire to hold the power and his jealousy towards the fame of the political leaders like B. P. Pertaining to it Thapa writes:

He dissolved BP's government on 15 December 1960, explaining in a radio address that he had been forced to do so to stop corruption. Army troops arrested BP at open-air meeting at Tundikhel in the heart of Kathmandu. (102)

By arresting political parties the king used his power to construct his political and ideological notions in his favor. How power controlled the whole society can be implicitly seen in his activities. He started to rule the nation directly establishing his own vested power. He sacked the people's elected government out by using power. During the Panchayat era the king Mahendra opened the Royal Nepal Academy and invited many ethnic Nepali singers and writers from different places such as from Darjeeling, Sikkim and Assam in India to infuse his ideological construct. The Nepali language canon was invented and the poet Bhanubhakta was falsely heralded as the first poet of Nepal. In fact, it was him who could create the discourses so he became the first poet (adikabi) of Nepal. But there had been several poets equally talented who were deprived of the essential facilities to create the discourses so became unknown, marginalized and forgotten. Bhanubhakta is a good evidence of the new historicist notion that power creates the discourses and the discourses shape the reality or truth. But, meanwhile, the created discourses do not have absolute truth rather they are just representation. So there is no single truth but there are multiple truths. Hence, we can rightly claim that before him too there had been several Nepali poets who didn't have access to the discourse construction. Their innate qualities remained forgotten in course of the history.

In the same way the king Mahendra wrote some songs and poem and broadcasted over Radio Nepal and became a renowned poet too. But at the same time,

B. P. had written novels with innovative style and new trend but they were banned by the then government. In this connection Thapa writes:

The king himself wrote songs under the pseudonym M.B. B. Shah, and these songs were broadcast ad nauseum over Radio Nepal.

(Meanwhile, BP's novels, some of which rank among the best of Nepali literature, were banned). (106)

This is a bare form of the repressive power which could not only sideline the skillful writers but also tried to kill their genius. On the one hand the powerful people created the discourses praising ownself while banned the other writers like B P. Here, we can see the politics of the power which always tried to hegemonize the people and establish ownself at the prestigious level. Many reforms were brought during the king Mahendra's regime such as abolishment of caste discrimination, the land reform acts, the revised Muluki Ain or law of the country. The king also encouraged games and sports for the national unity. He also brought the 'Gaun Farka Rastriya Abhiyan (Return to the Village National Campaign) in 1967 (2024 B. S.) to enforce Panchayat philosophy. Whatever reforms and campaigns had been brought they were only limited in their speech and paper but they couldn't be effectively materialized into practice. Though the caste system was abolished during the regime of the late king Mahendra on paper and law but it is not fully practiced yet. It is just historically recorded.

When the king Mahendra died in 1972 Birendra Bir Bikram Shah became the king of Nepal. At the beginning of the 70's B.P. had been released from the prison and he had been to India where he led an exile movement to restore the democracy. In August 1972 under B. P.'s leadership, the students of Tribhuvan University in the eastern Terai killed a policeman. The Nepali congress activist Duraga Prasad Subedi

and other activists hijacked a Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation plane with 30 million Indian rupees. As per Nietzsche, there is no single history but there are often contradictory narratives in the history. During that period in Nepal there was a struggle between the king ruled power and the power of the people led by the political parties. So, the events described above present the multiple power relations often contradictory to each other.

In 1978 B. P. was charged as treason by the then government. He was imprisoned many times but it was quite astonishing that when he was severely suffered from cancer; he was sent to the United States for treatment by the king's order. It extended a kind of suspicion among the people. People started to talk suspecting there could be some give and take between them. Whatever facts we collect from history and whatever judgement we make all are partially real. All beliefs are tentative, which is the true nature of New Historicist finding that nothing is absolute.

If we look back to Nepalese history of jail treatment behavior to the detainees there is no access of lawyers for the most of the prisoners. During the Panchayat era many detainees were severely tortured in the prison. Those people who were against the Panchayat system were inhumanely treated by police. Thapa writes:

In Panchayat times, it was a matter of course for the police to lash detainees with wet stinging nettles (the sting being more potent when wet): to cake them in sugar and release red ants on them; to make them inhale burned chilies; to constrain them in wooden leg stocks; to beat them with heated bamboo or plastic pipes [...]. This was in addition to the more common methods that the police used: beating, raping, threatening, strangling, near-drowning, ripping out nails or pushing

pins under them, forcing detainees to perform impossible physical tasks, or hanging them upside down, subjecting them to sodomy. (109-10)

Manjushree Thapa appropriately explores into the stories of jails which often are neglected by the discourses since they are thought to be against the national law and order. But who knows, the so called legal discourses too are unbiased and free of faults. By exploiting the legal discourses made by the power itself the so called criminals and traitors are badly victimized and deliberately sidelined in the mainstream discourses. But, the book *Forget Kathmandu* proves to be a problematized history of the Nepalese society and interrogates the status quo.

In 1979 (2036) the late king Birendra announced referendum to know for whether people want multiparty system or not. Though it was quite hopeful for the political parties unfortunately the king began to campaigns in favor of Panchayat. So the Panchas won the election by foul. Reality is attenuated by the power. It was the power which made the Panchas won the election not by the vote of the people. Surya Bahadur Thapa was credited for victory of Panchayat system over multiparty democracy.

When the people's leader B. P. died in 1982 the Nepali Congress leadership passed on Ganesh Man Singh, K. P. Bhattari and G.P.Koirala. All of them were also against the monarch's absolute power. They continued their agitation and protest time to time. Later on the democrats and progressive joined hand to overthrow Panchayat system. As a result, on 9 April 1990, the then king Birendra bowed down in front of the political leaders and announced for the re-establishment of multiparty democracy. True to Foucault's notion the dispersive power sometimes gets raised while sometimes is inert. Since there is no single linear power, the forms of power get

changed in course of time. The multiplicity of power positions can be rightly witnessed when the power of kingship and the power of the political parties are in a balanced state. But, when the people's voice was rapidly raised the rulers' power became inactive and the people's power got the true legacy.

During the Panchayat era the whole economic power was held by the royal family members and relatives. In this connection Thapa writes:

The private sector operated under tight restrictions, with the king's relatives owning shares in the country's most lucrative industries and businesses. Queen Aishwarya Rajyalaksmi Shah headed the social Services National Coordination Council, which controlled all foreign funds that came to non-government organizations. The king's brothers headed semi-government trusts and the king's sisters controlled much charity work. (114)

The whole economic sectors were captured by the royal members and relatives. They didn't provide any economic access to the general public. But in out side they used to seem very ideal and used to be worry very much seeing the people's poor condition. Moreover what they used to say is that they had always tried their best for the people's all round development. But in reality they were sucking people's labor as the vampire.

When multiparty democracy was reestablished in 1990, the postmodern democracy, the perils of bad politics grew up unexpectedly. It was full of corruption, violence of human rights, strikes, abducting, and so on. In 1990 people-workers, Dalits, women, the landless, bonded labors, and ethnic nationalities were participated in strikes, rallies, and demonstration hoping to get liberty, equality and equity for the better life but unfortunately they didn't get what they had expected. Before the

reestablishment of democracy the political party leaders had promised to people that they would provide law and order, justice, liberty, education, better health facilities, electricity, effective road and communication and so on. But opposite to their promise, they couldn't provide facilities what they had assured. Women were still discriminated in comparison to men. Dalits people couldn't be satisfied with them. Likewise ethnic nationalities were extremely dissatisfied and angry with the then government living desperate lives. People compelled to go foreign country for employment. The political parties couldn't deliver services as the people needs and demands. All promises only remained in words not in action. They couldn't develop the nation as it had to be. They defined Nepal as Hindu Kingdom as Panchayat government while the ethnic nationalities were demanding secular kingdom. Again political leaders provided the king full discretionary power in case of constitutional crisis, under the Article 127. Political parties couldn't make the effective constitution. Democracy couldn't be democratic in practice. In this connection Thapa writes:

What resulted was a democracy that looked like a democracy, but that functioned as an elite class and caste cartel, a democracy lacking democracy, a postmodern democracy. All ethnical issues were conceded to power struggles and realpolitik. (124)

Democracy appeared as democracy only in words not in action. Again higher status people and higher caste people got the opportunity in the every sector. Democracy couldn't fulfill people's needs, aspirations, desires, and solve people's genuine problems. It only became as the weapon of the already established groups and was in limited in the grip of elite people. All ethnic issues regarding to ethnics couldn't be addressed, leaving behind. Hence what we can infer that whatever changes bring in the country the real people do not get opportunity they couldn't go ahead unless the

marginalized people reach to the power and policy making position. The elite never consider seriously over the marginalized and poor they always want to move according their interest and ideology. So to uplift the minorities and the marginalized groups they themselves should get their own participation in the respective sectors. The expected reformation was not seen in the country even if the new faces were seen in the power holding position. The people in the power position got changed but the nature of power did not change. It proves the fact that in the past power was absolute.

According to Thapa, in 1991 parliamentary election was held and Nepali Congress won the election with the majority. Then the congress leader G. P. Koirala became the prime minister. At that time there was Mallik Commission report – a report of those people who were actively participated to dominate people’s movement in 1990. G. P. Koirala instead of proceeding them for penalty he buried the commission’s report and invited the Panchayat-era hardliners in the party. Not only Nepali Congress party but also the CPN (UML) also invited the Panchayat-era hardliners. The same old face again came into power. Then the development of corruption started just opposite to the people expectation. In this connection Thapa writes:

The small but ambitious business community- under a suddenly liberalized economy- wasted no time to buy influence. Whispers of corruption started up, and grew louder as government members accepted 'ideologically driven' bribes to stock their parties' coffers. Then some ministers began to trade favours for personal gain, and members of Parliament and district official began to hobnob, very visibly, with contractors and commission agents...(125)

The political leaders began to take bribes and involved in trade and in the game of commission making relation with the contractors. They misused power and democracy. Actually, for them democracy became ladder to reach to the power position and made the democracy –a begging pot to eat. Intellectual people were also divided into groups of ‘democrats’ and ‘progressive’. They were faultily involved to criticize opposite political party vociferously, while defending their own parties.

In 1994 the then prime minister G. P. Koirala announced mid-term election when he faced no-confidence motion against his government. Hence, though G. P. Koirala in his later life respected as towering leader he had done great mistake previously. The one is that he buried the Mallik Commission report and invited and made the hardliners Panchas enter in the party. The next one is that he announced snap (mid-term) election unilaterally dissolving Parliament of his government of majority. At that time he became failure to run the government. During this period, we could see the rivalry between Nepali Congress leaders. K. P. Bhattarai and Ganesh Man Singh were blaming to Koirala monopolizing power. At this juncture of the history we can also see the intra-party as well as inter-party rivalry to reach to the power. Whatever the political leaders did at this time was to maintain their position in the power and to grab the national property for themselves. Instead of thinking about the general people’s welfare and the national building, their attention went just to the power, post and property. They misused the power i.e. authority and build themselves forgetting their commitments to the people and the nation. The whole scenario rightly presents the fact that if power is not used properly; every change in the system turns out to be vain.

In the mid-term election the CPN (UML) became the largest party but couldn’t score the seats for majority government. Then Man Mohan Adhikari became the

prime minister of Nepal. He was the first communist prime minister in the world to win a democratic election. The democracy was just look like a democracy but actually couldn't be democratic in practice. In fact it was the democracy only for the political leaders who had forgotten their promises and responsibilities. Democracy was failing. The majority of the people got nothing from democracy. So people were started to be dissatisfied with the political leaders. The political parties, especially Nepali Congress and CPM (UML) have never said that their democracy was failure rather they are blaming for others obstacling to them. Here what we can see is that the people who got power position they never realize honestly that they were wrong in the past rather they always blame other saying this and that. In the Nepalese context several political parties went in power position but they couldn't address and solve even people's basic needs. Whether they are in power or out of the power they always want to show themselves in the right tract with the help of discourse. Hence they always take the help of discourse to show them in the right path and blaming to the opposite. The power always tries to veil its darker sides with the help of discourse and media. Whatever it does become right for itself irrespective of the others' concern.

In 1995, when Parchanda's CPN (Unity center) and Babu Ram Bhattarai's United People's Front became united and renamed Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) then the party decided to take up arms in the name of 'People's War' against the monarchy and bourgeois parliamentary democracy. Before this Maoist had handed a list of 40 demands to the then government of Sher Bahadur Deuba. But, the government of Sher Bahadur Deuba didn't show any willingness to fulfill the party's demands. Thapa writes:

Whether it was in relation to women's rights or the rights of ethnic nationalities or the rights of the Dalits- or any variety of social

movements that were gathering force- the government made only late, hollow gestures. Those in power would do something for people, and that too half-heartedly, only if they formed unions, staged protests, went on strike, took to the streets. Even after Maoists insurgency began, this remained the case. (131-32)

The government of Sher Bahadur Deuba turned out deaf ear regarding to women's rights, ethnic's rights, Dalits' rights. The government did not listen people's voices without unions and staged protests, went on strike and took to the streets. As a result on 16 February 1996, the communist party of Nepal launched homefight articulating 'People's War'. The Maoist party was underground party. So at first they started their 'People's War' from remote places. The Maoist leaders seem to be aware of the right strategies to accumulate the power. Initially they motivated the people of margin who were deprived of any national facilities and rights. The government had not paid any attention towards them and they were away from any sort of development works. In such situation the people of lower class could be easily motivated if they are made aware about their rights. Hence, initiating from the people and places of margin, the Maoist could rise in power with the help of the people's support. With the growth of their mass and power they began attacking at different government offices and killed mostly Nepali Congress activists and leaders. In one side they were motivating the people towards their rights and had shown a dream of beautiful country while on the other side they were forcing the people to support them by the means of power of the gun. Initially that 'People's war' didn't affect the city people but later on when the Maoist party became able to accumulate marginalized people's support and their help and then they started to attack at police headquarter and army camp serially one after another. They announced strike and bandha national wide and sometimes some part of

the country. In turn the then government ordered the Nepal Police to crack down even more brutally against the Maoists in an operation. Similarly, the Maoist in different places also started to attack, kidnap and kill brutally and barbarically. Then strike became increasingly common. To combat with the Maoist on Mid-January, 2000 the then prime minister G. P. Koirala got approval informally of king to create Armed Police Force. But the Maoist party didn't go back instead it went on attacking the government offices, kidnapping, and killing people. They went against the status quo. They went to the villagers with the slogan that they wanted to reform the present bourgeois structure and to maintain equality, equity, justice, law and order. They started to run government parallelly by establishing Jan Sarkar (people's government) in different rural areas where they had stronghold and far from the government access. Thapa further writes:

We in Kathmandu could not grasp the sheer appeal of Maoists ideology in the poverty-stricken countryside. Those joining the Maoists insurgency were often young men-and many women- of little or no education, enjoying power for the first time through firearms. They 'liberated' the poor by forgiving loans, scrapping deeds and promising 'land to the tiller'. Setting up 'people's courts', they executed rough justice, killing or 'disciplining' there 'class enemies'. (134)

As the prominent new historicist Michael Foucault says power is pervasive that occurs in all social forms in diverse forms; the government couldn't suppress the Maoist rather it was accelerating its own power in its pace. The Maoist party was able to unify the marginalized people. It was collecting its energy from different ethnic nationalities.

According to Foucault, there is always check and balance in power. In terms of power Marx has created hierarchy but Foucault has ruptured the hierarchy. That is to say there is equality in terms of power distribution. The power keeps on changing. This could be evidently seen at the historical juncture towards the end of the century. There were dual governance in the single country and the general public had to face several difficulties. When somebody had to go to the village areas the Maoist cadres would check the luggages whereas when somebody had to go to the city areas the government police and the security forces would search the luggages and give unnecessary trouble to the people. This type of duality of power and government had brutally pressurized the people in between. Though both the government and the Maoist proved themselves that they were right in their own way but in reality they had violated human rights. They also killed many innocent people. What they were trying to establish themselves was that whatever they had done was for the people's betterment and to maintain law and order. Still they want to hide their darker sides to others. Whatever they are trying to show is fake and it is the ideology of their. From the both sides had committed nightmarish mistake. During the conflict tenure the innocent people were unnecessarily tortured and faced many heart rendering events and incidents.

If we turn back to the history of Nepali Congress after the 1990 to date it is like the private den of the Koirala clan. Though congress was a democratic in its principle but in practice it couldn't be democratic. It became the party of relatives rather than public's. The Koirala family wanted to establish their stronghold so that they can fit their ideology and hold power to hegemonize the party. As a result G. P. Koirala became the prime minister for five times after the reestablishment of democracy in 1990. The political parties (Congress, UML) didn't involve for

people's welfare rather they involved for their own benefit. They sent their children abroad for study. They didn't join their children in local government schools and colleges. And the student activist acted robotically on in favor of the parties leaders' orders. On the one hand political parties were fighting each other for their own benefit, on the other hand people were suffering from starvation, epidemic diseases and war in different remote districts such as Kalikot, Humla, Jumla and so on. The political parties never gave priority for the betterment of the people rather they were engaged for demanding resignation of the prime minister and exercising to step up to the government. They always looked for power. If we observe the present scenario of Nepal's political parties we can explicitly see what drama they are performing to reach to the government.

Seemingly the Maoist insurgency was an outbreak of the marginalized fields but it had its darker sides too. The Maoist leaders always take pride for having raising the voices of the marginalized people and the proletariats but in their own practice we can see them neo bourgeoisie. The discourses about the people's war made by them present the positive sides of them especially their sacrifice and their act of awakening the people for their rights. But those discourses deliberately exclude their darker sides. If we look to their activities being a New Historicist explorer we can see their real motives and behavior. During the time of Maoists' people war, the Maoists demanded that to close all the private schools blaming that they were doing business in the name of providing quality education. Thapa further writes:

On 8 May, scores of members of a Maoist-affiliated student body, the All- Nepal National Federation of Student Unions (Revolutionary)- ANNFSU (Revolutionary)- attacked to 'bourgeois' private schools in

Kathmandu, destroying their computers and photocopy machines and setting the furniture on fire. (150)

They attacked in different schools and destroyed school buildings. And many private schools were closed due to their threatening. But it is quite astonishing that when they went to government / regime they themselves started to open private school and are sending their children in highly expensive private schools. Look how they are double standers! Here we can see true nature of them. When something which fits to their ideology and necessity that would be right and in turn when something which doesn't fit to their ideology and needs that would be wrong and matter of dispute.

Likewise, if we look back the history of Nepal Army since Nepal's unification in 1768, the army chiefs have been from five clans of the ruling Chhettri caste: 26 Ranas, 4 Pandeys, 4 Thapas, 2 Basnyats, 2 Shahs, 1 Katwal and currently just one Gurung from marginalized caste. By this we can easily understand that how the Chhettri caste had hegemonised Nepal Army as their father's property. The other caste couldn't get any chance to be an army chief. All the higher rank army posts were held by the Chhettries. They used to wrongly assume that other caste couldn't be an army chief and can not hold the upper rank posts also.

During the insurgency period, those people to whom the government/army had killed were placed as Maoist. The official history recorded that the Army had killed Maoists but all the people who were killed by Army were not Maoists. It is the undiscovered side of the history. The government by using power, discourse and the media wanted to establish itself right in their track. At that time many innocent people were killed by Army blaming as Maoist just in the name of providing food to the Maoists. The general and innocent people of the village area were entrapped in between the two guns. If they did not provide food and shelter to the Maoist they

would be threatened and even killed by them in the name of spy against them.

Whereas, if they provided those things to them later the government armies would go to them and arrest or kill them in the name of Maoist terrorists. Likewise at that time if somebody said he is Maoist the army used to kill them without investigating whether he is a Maoist or not. In this connection Thapa writes:

He sat down besides us, and began to talk in a low, intent voice: 'Last year they shot the ward chairman, Dilli Prasad Acharya,' he told us.

'He wasn't even a Maoist. He was in the UML. It was about three in the afternoon, and he was washing his hands at a house before having a snack. It was this kind of courtyard. The boy pointed around him. The other men had fallen silent to listen to him. 'The army shot him,' the boy said. 'He died on the spot.' 'His wife was pregnant,' one of the older men added. 'She gave birth to their son three days later.' (208-9)

At the time of war, the government fed media was wrongly reporting that not a single civilian was ever killed, even by mistake. But it was not true. The media were creating the false discourse to hide their ugly aspects. Those journalists who brought first-hand accounts from the war torn hinterlands, they were jailed during the state of emergency making Nepal the most repressive and regressive state against media. Actually it was all the game of power. By the use of power the government wanted to diverge the true account of war torn hinterlands report. The stakeholders of power wanted to show themselves accurate in their report. They banned the journalists who brought first hand account about the war torn field. On 10 April, 2002, the then government re-enacted the expired Terrorist and Disruptive Ordinance, which severely restricted people's liberties. Whatever the political parties were doing was that they were submitting people's liberties to the government armies.

## Conclusion

By going through the book *Forget Kathmandu* in the light of the methodology New Historicism and the power politics, we can rightly make a declaration that Manjushree Thapa's *Forget Kathmandu* is a historical prosework which redraws the boundaries of the Nepalese conventional history and establishes a new history of the country. In the act of her reconstruction of the history she mentions the things that were forgotten, sidelined or overlooked since long. Along with the development of the new theories like New Historicism, Deconstrucion, and Poststructuralism, the overlooked aspects of everything i.e. the marginalized sides have been given more prominence. The trend was evolved in the western academia mainly from the eighties but such trend can be seen at the present in our country. In addition to it, Manjushree Thapa, a student of the western universities, developed the sense of margin within herself and began digging out the hidden narratives to foreground the marginalized things and events.

Nepalese history, until Nepal became a republic country in 2008, had been dominated by the Shah dynasty. The history text books and other historical documents used to be constructed in the favor of the kings and queens who were the power holder people of the country. As Foucault says the power dominates discourse and the truth is constructed in the favor to the power, the Nepalese history which was thought to be objective, was dominated by the kingly power. At the period when history was thought to be objective and truthful what the discourses claimed would be the reality. But with the change in the perspective along with the development of the new methodologies like New Historicism, the writers who had the knowledge of the power, structure, discourse, and truth began creating the discourses valorizing the sidelined aspect of the history. Manjushree Thapa, a learned writer also realized the

monopoly of the discourses of the power and began writing anti-conventionally. In the book *Forget Kathmandu* she begins the story from the event of the Royal Massacre happened in 2001 and claims that what the history had established was wrong but what the hearsay claimed is right, giving several evidences. She mentions that the royal massacre was committed by the national and international conspirators through years' plan to reach to the power. Actually that massacre had not been made by the then crown prince Dipendra, as recorded by the official history; it is just the foregrounded record of the powerfult. Then she retrospectively goes back to the beginning of the Shah Dynasty and begins narrating the tales that were not included in the mainstream history. Doing so, she includes the critical stories of the powerful people like the kings, the ugly aspects of their lives, and as a whole, the darker sides of the power. Narrating such stories from the beginning of the Shah dynasty i.e. the period of unification by the king Prithvi Narayan Shah to the Rana regime, establishment of the democracy in 1950, the Panchayat Era, the restoration of Democracy, the Maoist insurgency, the Royal Coup, the consensus of conducting the Constitution Assembly Election following the 12-points agreement between the Seven Political Parties and the Maoists, and the whole postmodern democratic era, she goes on showing the emergence of the margin and the widespread awareness in the downtrodden areas during the period of Maoist insurgency especially in the west Nepal.

After completing this research, the researcher has realized that the Nepalese documented history till at present is almost fake. As interpreted by Nietzsche, it is full of lies and illusions, crimes, passion, follies, impunity and injustice produced by the powerfult according to their vested interest to maintain their status quo, leaving reality behind. Hence, the researcher suggests that we should not believe in the

Nepalese official history, if we really want to reach near to the reality we should listen the hearsay matter of the general public and read the texts beyond the documented historical texts. Reality resides on the hearsay matter of the general public not to the power holders. Furthermore, it also suggests that the hegemonization of the certain handful people over the national power, post, property and politics should be stopped and all the people should have equal access in the all sectors of the nation.

Similarly, the researcher has also found out the pedagogical implication of the research and suggests that the curriculum and syllabus designers should include like Manjushree Thapa's *Forget Kathmandu* text books which interrogate authenticity of the documented history of Nepal and advocate in favor of the marginalized and underprivileged people. From the past to date, in the name of providing education we have done great educational crime by imposing fake history on the students. So, the researcher suggests that the texts which make aware and give true account of the history to the students should be included in the syllabi so that they could be familiar with the true nature of the Nepalese history.

Manjushree Thapa published the book *Forget Kathmandu* in 2005 when the Shah dynasty was not ended. The king was still in power. But, she dared to deconstruct the established history and reconstruct the history of the margin. She has rightly explored the darker sides of the powerfals and advocated in favor of the underprivileged. Thapa, being a Nepali woman, by writing this text book *Forget Kathmandu* about Nepalese history in international Standard English language, the Nepalese history is globalized in the world. It is a matter of pride to us. So she deserves our sincere gratitude for such a courageous step and the unprecedented seminal work in the history of the Nepalese literature.

The then prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba in June 2002, called a meeting to extend the state of emergency for the third time, but his party president G. P. Koirala refused to extend emergency and convinced his party member to vote against the extension. Then Sher Bahadur Deuba dissolved Parliament announcing a mid-term election for 13 November. But due to the Maoist party's threatening the government could not hold the election in the stipulated time. Then the prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba went to the king with request for postponement of election for six months. Unexpectedly, the then king Gyanendra dismissed Sher Bahadur Deuba blaming his government incompetent and took power himself. And five days later he appointed prime minister, the Panchayat-era politician Lokendra Bahadur Chand by hand-picking.

By Manjushree Thapa's travel to the west Nepal she found the majority of the people were continued to live in poverty, human right abuses, caste discrimination, inequality, injustice, feudal society. During insurgency time Maoists even took school children as motivators and fighters. Many school children left their study. They violated human rights. On the way to Manma the Thapa's team met to one of victim of insurgency Surya Bahadur Shahi and he told that he was in pressure from the both sides Army and Maoist. He wasn't allowed to go to his village because the Maoist didn't like him and on the other hand the state security forces thought that he was a Maoist. By this what we can easily infer is that there was complete absence of justice. The general people were really in difficult situation. They didn't have freedom of speech, freedom of work, freedom of walk, freedom of living. This is just one example of Surya Bahadur but actually there had to be many Surya Bahadurs who were severely in pressure and victimized from the both sides Maoist and Army Forces during the insurgency time. Even the basic living right was not there. Many innocent

people got unnecessary torture from the both sides. Due to this reason many villagers from school level children to old people left their home and went to the cities and even to India. During that period teachers were also badly affected by the both sides.

Thapa writes:

Raj Bahadur Budha was the head of the Teachers' Union in Dailekh District. 'The teachers have it the worst,' he said to us. 'The Maoists force to us to join their party and donate five per cent of our salaries to them. They kill us if we don't agree.' The Maoists had in fact killed a disproportionate number of teachers throughout the country, teachers who had refused to go along with their agenda. But teachers also fell victim to government reprisal. When district education office found out that they were donating part of their earnings to the Maoist, it froze their salaries. 'Now we can't even support our families,' Budha said.(182)

The media was forbidden to report on the insurgency, people had lost ability to ascertain the truth of what was happening in the country. The official media were forced to publish government's fabricated fictitious news as facts. For a New Historicist eye, during the insurgency period the government offices and the media are seen to construct the fictions and publicize it as the facts. The very act of making the fiction as fact by the use of power of the discourse is quite evident here. Due to the practice of hiding the reality and foregrounding the false fictions as facts people had been losing faith in justice and democracy. Pertaining to it Thapa writes:

In one settlement in west Nepal, I met an old widow who said, in a daze, 'My truth has been destroyed.' Her elder son and daughter-in-law had been shot dead by the security forces after some neighbours

reported them as Maoists, on a personal grudge [...]. Her entire world had fallen apart, in old age, she had lost all her certainties and comforts. After telling me her story she chanted, over and over. 'My truth has been destroyed. My truth, my life have been destroyed. My truth has been destroyed.'(260)

The people who had no role in the war were killed inhumanely from the both sides. On the information of tittle-tattle many innocent people were killed. The matter of democracy and human right had become the unknown bird's name to the people.

When the then king Gyanendra did military coup having direct rule on February 1, 2005 and then the Nepali political parties opened their offices in exile in New Delhi. And made alliance of seven parties to go against the king's step. They also made 12 points agreement with the underground Maoist Party. And again as in the 1950 and 1990 they called the people to go against the king's step. Then people came to their revolution. Millions of people came onto streets in towns and villages all over the country, defying clampdowns and curfew orders of government with the unprecedented show of people's power. Ultimately, the king Gyanendra bowed down knee in front of the people's power and reinstated parliament on April 24, 2006. After that all parties including Maoist Party came to the common consensus to draft a new constitution through the election of Constitution Assembly. They also held Constitution Assembly in 2008. But yet we people haven't got new constitution. The elected Constitution Assembly members couldn't draft new constitution in the stipulated time rather they have added one year tenure to draft the constitution. Still the political parties are fighting for their chair. They are not working honestly as they should have. People are facing unexpectedly impunity. In this way, the postmodern democracy turned out with the full of sorrow, war, conflict, starvation, strikes, bleak,

frustration, injustice, impunity and so on. So the hitherto history of Nepal does have its ugly aspects more rather than the positive sides constructed by the grand narratives. In a true new historicist fashion Thapa has deconstructed the official history and has reconstructed the new history of the margin.

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