

2018

– Hira Maya Awal

Tribhuvan University

**Biopolitics in Patrick Modiano's *The Search Warrant***

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English, T.U.  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in English**

**By**

**Hira Maya Awal**

**Roll No.: 235/2069/070**

**T.U. Regd. No.: 9-1-21-107-2005**

**Central Department of English**

**Kirtipur, Kathmandu**

**March 2018**

**Biopolitics in Patrick Modiano's *The Search Warrant***

Tribhuvan University

Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Hira Maya Awal has completed her thesis entitled “Biopolitics in Patrick Modiano’s *The Search Warrant*” under my supervisor. She carried out her research from February 2017 to March 2018 and completed with successfully. I hereby recommended her thesis be submitted for the final viva voce.

---

Khem Raj Khanal

(Supervisor)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tribhuvan University  
Central Department of English

Letter of Approval

The thesis entitled “Biopolitics in Patrick Modiano’s *The Search Warrant*” submitted to the Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Hira Maya Awal has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee:

Members of the Research Committee:

Members of the Research Committee

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Internal Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

External Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Head

\_\_\_\_\_

Central Department of English

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my thanks to my thesis supervisor Khem Raj Khanal for his scholarly suggestion, advice and guidance. This research would have been incomplete without his help, encouragement and scholarly guidance.

I would also like to thank to Professor Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head, Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University for the approval of this work in its present shape.

I would like to thank to all my respected teachers who inspired me to fulfill my hope of completing Master of Arts in English.

I am thankful to my husband Kiran Dangol for providing me the appropriate environment to complete my study at home.

At last, I would like to heartily remember and share my thanks to my family members who helped me to accomplish my studies because of their support, inspiration and encouragement in every step of my life.

March 2018

Hira Maya Awal

## Biopolitics in Patrick Modiano's *The Search Warrant*

### Abstract

*Patrick Modiano's The Search Warrant (1997 AD) is a novel with significant political overtones during occupation in France ( 1940-1944 AD). It alludes to the political maneuvering of the Nazi and Vichy governments towards Jews. The physical existence of individual like Dora Bruder is always in crisis and doubt because of Nazism. The objective of the study is to access how the oppressive life of Dora becomes as A Homo Sacer inside the concentration camps and barracks. The repressive, brutal and barbaric mentality of the authority ruined the existence of Dora from one to other camps and makes her life like hell and is finally killed to Auschwitz. Based on the great archive of war, the novel gives the glimpse of the so- called revolution led by Nazis. It also appears a documentary account of Dora which is often regulated through biopolitics to her physical existence. As a methodology, the research adopts the narrative review of literature through analytical perspective of power politics and critics who have acknowledged the biopolitics by highlighting Dora's existence as it emerge in the novel. The thesis concludes that a fifteen year old Jewish girl Dora is victimized by Nazism in the camps during occupation. This indicates she has been taken as a Homo Sacer. In legal terms Homo Sacer as someone who can be killed without the killer being regarded as a murderer; and a person who cannot be sacrificed. The sacred human may thus be understood as someone outside the law, or beyond it.*

Key words: Biopolitics, bare life, Nazism, totalitarian politics, holocaust victim, Homo Sacer, concentration camp, barracks.

## Introduction

This study offers a critical discussion of Patrick Modiano's *The Search Warrant*, originally published in France under the title *Dora Bruder* (1997). This research tries to reveal the then pathetic condition of Jews by bringing the subject of war and the occupation. It mirrors the contemporary relationship between human life and the state power. This scenario of war appears how natural and biological life of human beings ruined by the authority under biopolitics. It depicts through the title character of novel named Dora Bruder. This research also focuses on how Dora has been represented as a Homo Sacer through Nazi's politics that leads towards the abuse of power by totalitarian government during the Second World War. The novel is a literary hybrid, fusing together several genres such as biography, autobiography, detective novel that tells the history of its title character, a 15 year-old daughter of Eastern European Jewish immigrants, who, after running away from the safety of the convent that was hiding her, ends up being deported to Auschwitz. The novel, *The Search Warrant* exposes overall scenario of war and dehumanizing behavior of the state power towards people.

The story begins from a published description of a missing fifteen year old girl that Modiano found a passage from the *Paris Soir* newspaper in 1941. The published information is about a young Jewish girl named Dora Bruder who escapes from convent and disappears during the time of strict rules and curfew. It explores the protest of Dora who is victimized by the occupation authorities in the barracks and concentration camps like Tourelles, Drancy till Auschwitz under the Nazis and Vichy regimes. Dora has been victimized as a holocaust victim with such brutality. The novel appears a documentary account of Dora and continuously involves the search of her physical existence. Dora is deported from Paris. Throughout the story, Modiano is

trying to search for clues of her existence for surviving from beginning as Boulevard Ornano Hotel to till Auschwitz. But, Modiano does not know anything about Dora's existence and cannot find any living traces in hotel and camps during his investigation. Finally, the innocent Dora gets death penalty at Auschwitz. Thus, describing the image of Dora, Modiano tries to rediscover the dark memories of his troubled youth and his father's past. Because, they also belong to Jewish community who were oppressed during the Second World War under Nazism. Throughout the novel, Modiano reveals a glimpse of Dora that demonstrates his past when his own identity was erased. He expresses his own experience through Dora to reveal how Jews were victimized and crushed under massacring by Nazi soldiers as holocaust victim. This study tries to explore the vivid picture of dehumanization, subjugation, suppression, oppression and exploitation of Jews along Dora by the Nazis authority during war. Dora is a representative character for showing the history of all holocaust victims. Modiano belongs this community. It reveals through in his life narrative too.

The author of the novel, a French novelist Jean Patrick Modiano was born in Boulogne Billancourt known as a Commune in the Western Suburbs of Paris, France. His date of birth is on July 30, 1945. He was the son of Albert Modiano, an Italian Jewish origin and Mother Louis Colpin is a Belgian actress. He is a recipient of the Australian State prize for European literature in 2012, and Nobel Prize in literature in 2014. His works are praise worthy with common tone of obsessed, dark, tragic and troubled period of the occupation. The novel *The Search Warrant* is an investigation into the disappearance of Dora for her existence. The narrator of the novel eludes the memory of his own life through the protagonist of the novel, Dora.

The discussion of this study covers how the natural life of Dora is determined and directly crushed by the politics of state power without leaving any official records

during the time of deportation. Modiano's *The Search Warrant* presents Dora through biopolitics to the theme of her physical existence. Dora's right to free alive has been snatched by totalitarian state authority. It clearly shows the racial dispute of Jews and Nazis. Modiano remembers the Tourelles barracks as the symbol of punishment and fear. The words like 'military zone', 'filming and photography', a 'no-man's land' and a 'zone of emptiness' are the sign for commoners to create fear in their mind. These sign had been put up of suspicion. There is no legitimacy of power except then monopoly of Nazi ruler. They hold absolute power to exploit the Jewish people. Through these remarks, researcher successfully able to capture the tragic life of Dora and also able to portray the desperate condition of her life along with Jewish people during occupation. During the period of occupation, Dora picked up from the street, imprisoned in different barracks and finally transferred to Auschwitz. She was killed by Nazi authority without committing her any crime. But, killer has not being regarded as a murderer. In this manner, she was excluded from the laws protection and killed by the state authority without any consequence. So, this indicates that Dora has been taken as a Homo Sacer.

Commonly, biopolitics is an intersectional field between biology and politics. In particular, biology has got deep relation to the existence of human beings. So, education, treatment, sovereignty and independency are some of the fundamental rights of human beings which have been their fundamental rights. It shows that every human endeavor right to live independently and freely travel from one place to another are necessarily given without doing any interference. But the politics is closely rooted to the state power. It is also a kind of organization that shows the rigidity and control over the people. Political power can be used against the right of people for power and personal benefit of the leader. It tries to show the unnecessary



political intervention and makes the valueless life of individuals by the leaders for their wish of holding long lasting power themselves. So, the production of a biopolitical body is the original activity of sovereign power. Many scholars have given definition on biopolitics.

Giorgio Agamben, an Italian political philosopher defines biopolitics in introductory section of his book *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* that natural life of individuals is dominated through biopolitics which is calculated and estimated by the state power and politics. Such power hunger leader also collapses the natural life of human body and their individual existence for survival. Agamben clearly mentions Michel Foucault's concept of biopolitics and Aristotle quotation as follows:

Michel Foucault refers to his very first definition when, at the end of the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*, he summarizes the process by which, at the threshold of the modern era, natural life begins to be included in the mechanisms and calculations of state power, and politics turns into biopolitics, 'For millennia,' he writes, 'man remained what he was for Aristotle: a living animal with the additional capacity for political existence; modern man is an animal whose politics calls his existence as a living being into question'. (5)

Heiner Flohr defines biopolitics that, there is no room in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) for biopolitics in the sense of an unbiased inquiry into and consideration of biological influences on political behavior. It is true that the basic materialist conception of Marxism does in fact offer, more than any other influential intellectual position, better chances for a realistic (i.e., evolutionary) perspective of humanity. However, according to the well-known Marxist conception, humanity

entered its own “true” history when humans first began to work. Thus the emergence of “labor” marks the beginning of human history, in which natural laws are replaced by societal ones. With this brusque and radical confrontation between and human history, biological contributions to the explanation of human behavior have been ruled out by definition. There are some attempts to explain human behavior on a biological basis, but they do not focus explicitly on political behavior, and as far as such approaches in other countries are registered at all, "they are criticized as empirically unfounded, ideologically reactionary, and politically dangerous" (Flohr 104). Flohr states his views that GDR has not any space for biopolitics. He also mentions Marxist conception to further elaborate the notions of biopolitics. In this sense, humanity has its own true history to work and to replace the natural law by social ones. Biopolitics abrupt and create confrontation between natural and human history that shows the biological contribution which defines and explains the human behavior. Some of the human behaviors do not focus clearly and easily on political behavior but criticized as empirically unfolded, ideologically reactionary, and politically dangerous.

Mentioning the Foucaudian concept of biopolitics and Aristotle’s very short but highly influential opinion on biopolitics, Agamben states that natural life of human beings is basically calculated by state power. It comes from politics. Therefore, the combination between biological life or natural life and politics makes biopolitics. It can be seen from the vivid picture of concentration camps and the structure of the totalitarian states during occupation period. Aristotelian definition also clarifies that human being is a living animal but it takes addition capacity about his life. Human also places their biological life at the center of its political existence. So, Agamben quoted Aristotle’s phrase like “born with regard to life, but existing essentially with regard to the good life” (7). Biopolitics denotes how political power is

used to control human lives and their concept during occupation. It also examines the power of the state on individual's existence too.

In this way, Laurette T. Liesen and Mary Barbara Walsh opine by taking the reference of Foucauldian concept. For Foucault, biopolitics is a kind of technique of power which pass through many stages of development. It is known as strategies of power. In modern time, political power has taken as a positive force for shaping and forming human behavior and desires. Biopolitics is expressed along the following lines:

Biopolitics designates strategies of power which are Pervasive in modern society, political power becomes a positive (i.e., constituting) force in society-not merely prohibiting, disciplining and punishing but aggressively molding, shaping and forming human behavior, personalities and desires. More broadly, modernity is marked by biopower, an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations. (5)

Brett Levinson reflects on biopolitics entitled to "Biopolitics in Balance: Esposito's Response to Foucault" quoted as "The maintenance and expansion of life reduced to biological life is" (240). Likewise, he further argues that

Bio's conclusion clarifies the point by outlining two possible paths: the present biopolitical model, negative and lethal, and a future one, productive and sanguine: whether its [biopolitics] meaning will again be disowned in a politics of death or affirmed in a politics in which contemporary thought will follow its traces. (241)

Levinson focuses on biopolitics which deduct the biological life of humans. He points out two different paths like negatively and deadly, and productive as optimistic. But

the ultimate meaning of biopolitics is political death of individuals. The life of individuals is affected by power politics. It also depends on the mechanism of the state power. Political leaders killed people in the name of politics and natural life of people was destroyed.

As well as, Liesen and Walsh argue that “biopower operates in two domains: 1. It seeks power over the human body and 2. power over the population as a whole” (6). It shows that biopower has two types of area of knowledge. That can be used individually as well as including the mass of people. Bare Life is a kind of racist confines of the political power. It comes up to the form of violence. Under the bare life, the biological existence of the people is always dominated by politics through state authority. Bare life is synonymously attached with illegal activities as no man’s land which is known as concentration camps. It is in the camp that we encounter the people who can be killed there. In this way, Dora bears the bare life during occupation. Modiano explains Dora’s life through the perspective of her natural existence.

Although, Modiano's *The Search Warrant* captures and controls the entire natural system of Dora's physical existence through the lens of biopolitics to the theme of her biological existence by authority during occupation. Throughout the novel, Dora's natural life is determined by the state power. So, her biological right to live freely and independently is ruined under the occupation authority. The narrator of the novel clearly tells that Dora's parents lose all traces of their daughter and her existence is in doubt. The local police stations destroyed the registered documents of Dora. But, the narrator of the novel is able to discover the last mark of her existence in a list of Jews deportees deported from Tourelles to Drancy to Auschwitz in September 1942. But, after that not any further clue can be found about her existence.

It reveals the brutality of Nazism inside the concentration camps. The Nazi easily destroyed the life of individuals without leaving any traces of surviving. Their totalitarian nature victimized many other Jews during the war.

The novel presents Dora as a victimized and subjugated Jew under biopolitics of contemporary totalitarian authority of the Nazis. Dora is always haunted by brutal behavior of the Nazis but she cannot take any action against the state power. She is compelled to tolerate anguish, brutality and barbaric behaviors in the camps. She has no way to defend them. The power of the sovereigns over 'bare life' creates a kind of violence in the society. This kind of violence moves towards the mass murder. So, sovereign power is not a skill of the rights to violence over the individuals. The biopolitics is based on the personal thoughts and practiced by them for subjecting the power over people. Such system of state power and politics basically turns into the biopolitics. In this way, Modiano's journey takes him to his father's past with his own running away like Dora. He wants to remember his by-gone days through the title character Dora. So, he has been searching her existence from one to another camp. But, finally finds a little bit trace for her existence to Auschwitz. This trace also does not remain a long time because she was killed there. This shows that the lost biology of Jews and also lost history in Paris under occupation. Thus, in order to justify the "Biopolitics" during occupation in France, this research makes a significant preview of critics of critical analysis.

Different crisis have given different interpretations about the biopolitics and the novel. Michel Foucault, a French philosopher and social theorist explores and explains how power diffuses itself in system of authority and how effect of truth is produced within discourses which themselves are neither true nor false. Truth, then, is itself a product of relation of power and of the system it flows, and it changes as

system changes. Though, the power holds by executive body to control and rule all over the world. Therefore, the politicians or the leaders use their political power to manipulate the people. Political leader creates discourse to hold power. Thus, the discourse creates power and power justifies the truth which gives more power to rule forever. For Foucault, power is the aptitude and authority to influence the behaviors of others in order to gain additional desires to control them. Generally, the concept of power centralizes towards politics and political authorities. Through power politicians controlled and ruled over the nations. Then, they repressed and made more troubled people. Independence existence of individuals also effect through power. Power is predicated as negative force but there is another way of exercising power which is to liberate towards the people. Power is a creative, formative and productive. So, it can be exercised between mutual understanding of the subject as well as object.

According to Foucault, the difference good and bad use of power results differently. Foucault explains that:

I was positing the existence of a sort of living, voluble and anxious madness which the mechanisms of power and psychiatry were supposed to have come to repress and reduce silence. But it seems to me now that the notion of repression is quite inadequate for capturing what is precisely the productive aspect of power. In defining the effects of power as repression, one adopts a purely juridical conception of such power; one identifies power with a law which says no power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition. (1139)

Foucault says that the notion of repression is harmful for the people. It creates troubled relationship in society and arouses negative feeling against the state power. The repression always discarded the existence of human being through the

mechanism of power. To define the effect of power Foucault claims that power comes with law and power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition against people. He is against of such implementation part of law. Because this system is negative and narrow conception of power. He argues that there are different forms of knowledge to produce discourse for running the social bodies. Modiano narrates in his novel as:

A great many children and adolescents of Dora's age in hiding at the Rothschild Orphanage, Rue Lamblardie, the first street on the right after the Rue de la Gare-de-Reuilly, were arrested there. And on the Rue de la Gare- de- Reuilly itself, at no. 48*bis*, exactly opposite the convent wall, nine boys and girls of Dora's age or, in some cases younger, were arrested with their families. Indeed, the garden and courtyard of the Convent of The Holy Heart of Mary was the sole enclave in this entire block of houses to remain in violate. (44)

Peter Hamilton interpret that the relationship between French humanist photography and its historical context. It shows suffering, agonies and division of war during occupation. He further argues that Vichy and Nazi regimes reinforced and exploited by creating fear in people's mind against racism in France. His interpretation focuses that how French society affected during the war. The country is suffering like inflation, increased the black market activities and human life become harder day to day during occupation. There can be seen poor health condition and also wounds of political and social division has been easily noticed in French society during occupation. Hamilton expresses his views in the following lines:

Vichy also reinforced and exploited the xenophobia of the French, its anti- Semitic laws enacted in October 1940 owing less to Nazism than

to the fear of the foreigner which since the 1930s had afflicted much of French society. By contrast, in the emergent Resistance (and particularly after the German invasion of Russia in 1941), the role of former unionists and the working class generally became determinant. Few products were available, whilst the money in circulation had increased during the war: classic conditions for runaway inflation. As prices were controlled, the black markets which had appeared during the occupation simply got larger. Everyday life, difficult enough between 1940 and 1944, became even harder. To make matters worse, the *epuration* (purges) which followed the liberation made it harder initially to heal the wounds of political and social division which the occupation had opened up in French society. (89)

For Hamilton, Nazi and Vichy regimes reinforced the French people and exploited them. Under the Nazism, Nazi creates the fear against the French society by enacting the laws. For Hamilton, there were only available few products with the circulation of money during war. During the occupation period, there can be seen black market activities but somehow controlled the price of goods. The French society is suffering through political wounds and social division during war. His analysis is clearly reflects the brutal picture of Nazism in France. How Jews are killed and suffered at that time. The time of Nazism, Jews are killed as animal not like human. Because of this inhumanity economic condition of the French society affected badly. In this way Modiano's text on his novel represents:

At Drancy, among the milling crowds, Dora found her father. He had been interned there since March. That particular August, as at the Depot at the Prefecture of Police, as at Tourelles, the camp filled up



day by day with an increasing flood of men and women. Some came in their thousands by goods trains from the Free Zone. Many hundreds of women, forcibly separated from their children, came from the camps at Beaune-la-Rolande and Pithiviers. And, from 15 August onwards, after their turn, 4,000 of them. In many cases, their names, hastily scribbled on their clothes before they left Pithiviers and Beaune-la-Rolande, were no longer legible. Unidentified child no. 122. Unidentified child no. 146. Girl aged three. First name Monique. Unidentified. (135)

Jean Charbonneau mirrors the clear vision over Modiano's creation. Though the investigation of Dora composes the existence and identity of title character and her fate with his own identity. But Modiano's investigation remains incomplete which is beautifully expressed in this way:

Through his quest of Dora's fate, he gives meaning to his own identity. The investigation is also a way of bringing back one of history's missing persons, of reviving the past. Patrick Modiano will find out if the girl in the police van alongside his father was Dora, but the investigation remains incomplete. Many questions about her life could never be answered. Still, Modiano's Compelling book extricates Dora from darkness 'where I not here to write about it,' he notes, 'there wouldn't be any trace of this inconnue.' By sketching the life of one victim of Nazism, Modiano gives back an identity to millions of others lost in the Holocaust. (227-28)

Modiano once find out Dora along her father in the police van. He takes on the role of guardian but many questions have raising for her existence. He was frequently raising

his voice towards Dora and tries to reflect upon her dark life. It focuses the identity to millions of other Jewish people.

In this way, Richard J. Golsan and Lynn A. Higgins relate to narrator's nostalgic event. It is the memory of the children including Dora who were deported from convent during 1940s because they were born in Jewish community. They were innocent but victimized by Nazis barbarity. They express this view as follows:

The book tells the story of the writers search, in the present, for the traces of a real adolescent Jewish girl, Dora Bruder, who was deported from Paris to her death at Auschwitz during the Nazi occupation of France. In *Dora Bruder*, Modiano gives new context and influence to his fascination with the problems of memory and his obsession with the occupation. *Dora Bruder* is a factual account, a book dealing with memory and terrible historical events. But it is also hybrid text, characterized by what Susan Suleiman here calls "heterogeneous discourses." As autobiographical writing, it explores the writer troubled relations with his father, but it also deals more generally with individual identity and the need to understand the fate and experience of others in order to understand the self. (321-22)

Golsan and Higgins express their expression towards Jews through *Dora Bruder*. They opine about the novel of Modiano as a realistic story of Dora related to historical events with individualism that shows the fate of all Jews during the Nazi occupation in France. Through Dora's existence, he also wants to search his own individual existence and identity too.

Herve Allet focuses his vision towards the Jewish people of the dark years as a narrative and Holocaust testimonies. He argues that the poor and innocent lives do not

exist by the so-called occupation authorities. Allet further explains that Modiano pay close attention for the topographic details to find those who lived there before they suddenly disappeared. He raises his voice in favor of those who is unable to speak against the power. It shows the exploitation and suppression of Jewish people. It clarifies along with these lines:

The poor and precious secrets' of the innocent lives that 'the so-called occupation authorities' applied themselves to seeking out, only to send them to death. According to Modiano, it is the novelist's mission to pay close attention to the topographic details that reveal 'the faint imprint' left by those who lived before they suddenly disappeared. Onomastics, the listing of their names and biographies on the blanks of national memory, are his most convincing weapons against the unspeakable.(334)

Allet reveals the predicament of Nazism during Second World War where poor and innocent Jewish people victimized by the so-called occupation authorities. Jews do not get any freedom during war. They might kill any time by Nazi authority.

Ora Avni explains about author of *The Search Warrant* that his work is praise worthy for his depiction of the then Nazi brutality in France. Modiano's novel raised the marginal or Jewish people's voice against Nazi rule. He always focuses identity and existence of Jews in his work. He opines in such a way:

The work of Patrick Modiano is of exemplary interest: not because major French literary awards were lavished on his work, not because each of his books in media events, not even because his novels invariably focus on the question of identity, but because his literary debut masterfully tackled one of the thorniest collective identities of

our times: Jewish identity. What I find perhaps most exemplary about him is, paradoxically, that he deviates radically from the picture I have just sketched: his personal journey takes him up stream, from an early agonizing and frenetic search for a suitable collective identity to a resigned and sober egotistic quest, seasoned with just the right touch of romantic melancholia. (230)

According to Avni, Modiano is a literary figure, recipient of a Nobel Prize, a good novelist and his works are really praiseworthy not only for Jews but for all academics. He further argues that Modiano is highly praised for his creation but more than that he is respected and appreciated for the collective identity of Jews. It is reflected through the protagonist of novel, Dora Bruder. Her identity, anguish and existence also reflect the whole Jews during the German occupation in France.

A Jewish girl Dora Bruder enrolled in the boarding school of the convent of the Holy Heart of Mary which was run by the sisters of the Christian Schools of Divine Mary. Her parents Earnest and Cecile Bruder admitted her on 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1940, at the age of fourteen in that school. Later on, a newspaper, *Paris Soir* published an advertisement about the missing girl Dora Bruder dated on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1941. After escaping from the convent, there were no leaving traces of surviving her in Police register. But the narrator of the novel gets tiny clues that she had been deported from one camp to another like from Tourelles to Drancy to Auschwitz on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1942. Disappearance of Dora made her loneliness and she has always been badly treated inside the concentration camps and barracks by Nazi authority during occupation. The picture of Dora's mistreatment in Nazis' camps and barracks can be seen in the novel. "On 13 August 1942, she had been interned in the camp at Drancy. On the file, it stated that she had come from Tour less camp" (55).

Likewise, novelist mentions how the police omitted the identity of Dora during transferring from one to another barracks. He writes like:

The Jewish Affairs police having destroyed their own files, there are no records of arrest made during a round-up, nor of individuals picked up on the street. Were I not here to record it, there would be no trace of this unidentified girl's presence, nor of my father's, in a Black Maria on the Champs Elysees in February 1942. Nothing but those individuals –living or dead- officially classed as person unknown. (59)

The narrator of the novel focuses on the negligence of Nazi police towards Dora. Because her father himself went to register his complain in police station by inserting missing notice of newspaper as evidence. But it is not possible and that points Dora's existence is also in doubt with other Jews. Modiano presents it in this way:

A father tries to find his daughter, notifies her disappearance at a police station, and a missing notice is inserted in an evening newspaper. The parents lose all traces of their daughter and, on 19 March, one of them disappears in their turn, as if the winter that year was cutting people off from one another, muddying and wiping out there tracks to the point where their existence is in doubt. (76)

During the investigation of Dora, Modiano narrates how the parents of Dora has been suffering different police station to register a missing notice. Their pain cannot be addressed by the Nazi ruler. Because they do not serious about Dora's existence and do not want to co-operate her parents. As a proof, her father inserted a missing notice of Dora along the newspaper at a police station. It shows that the existence of Dora is in doubt inside the camp.

Along with Dora, many Jews were caught from street, imprisoned in Drancy, and finally destroyed them in Auschwitz. Modiano further writes as “Hundreds of adolescents like Dora were arrested on the street in accordance with Tanguy’s Hennequin’s precise and detailed instructions. They passed through the Depot and then Drancy on their way to Auschwitz” (98).

Disappeared from convent, Dora was taken from Clignancourt police station to the Depot at police headquarters. She was kept in huge windowless basement with prostitutes, criminals and political prisoners. Dora was imprisoned there as a common criminal. Modiano himself did not know the actual condition of Dora. He reflects his vision towards Dora. After leaving the convent, she had faced many tortures and problems inside the camp under Nazism. Auschwitz is mentioned as the last mark for Dora’s existence because after that her presence was not found at all. In the final section of the novel, Modiano expresses his expression like this:

I shall never know how she spent her days, where she hid, in whose company she passed the winter months of her first escape, or the few weeks of spring when she escaped for the second time. That is her secret. A poor and precious secret which not even the executioners, the decreed, the occupying authorities, the Depot, the barracks, the camps, history, time-everything that corrupts and destroys you- have been able to take away from her. (137)

Modiano explains Dora’s pain and darkness of life in the period of occupation. He argues that Dora has difficult to pass winter months after escaping from Convent. The narrator is unable to find out her secret till Dora’s death.

Regarding the census registration of Dora, state power mistreats her. The advertisement published on second October 1940 in Paris newspaper. The published

information is that all Jews to register their personal information at police station for census. There was a long queue to fill up form accordingly. Modiano presents it in the following manner:

The letter B fell on 4 October. On the day, Ernest Bruder went to Clignancourt police station to fill in the census form. But he failed to register his daughter. Everybody reporting for the census was allotted a number, which would later be attached to one's family life. This was known as the Jewish dossier number. Ernest and Cecile Bruder had the Jewish dossier number 49091. But Dora had no number of any sort.

(42)

Follows the given information, Ernest Bruder goes to Clignancourt police station on fourth of October in 1942 to fill the census form. Ernest able to register his name and his wife's name at police station. But unfortunately Ernest fails to register Dora at that police station for a census. Every Jew needs to report his/her allotted and later on it would be attached to their family file. That is also known as the Jewish identity. Dora's parents have got the Jewish dossier number which is 49091. But Dora fails to get any number at all. It shows the mistreatment of Dora that is mistreated by the state power because she loses her identity without providing Jewish dossier number. Her right to register for census is also snatched by the state authority. It clarifies that her identity is in crisis and her existence is in doubt.

This research seeks not only to illuminate the human existence through biopolitics during Second World War in France but also to depict the overall scenario of dehumanizing behavior of occupation authority. How the state power and politics exploits, dictate, mistreat and destroy the natural life of individuals can be seen through a central character Dora Bruder. To prove her as a Home Sacer, this paper

takes a political critical perspective by highlighting the individual human existence. I follow the lead of the Italian political philosopher Giorgio Agamben's notion of Homo Sacer to analyze the representation of Dora as a symbol of Holocaust victim. The primary objective of the study brings political discourse to prove Dora as a Homo Sacer.

Generally, the term "Homo Sacer" is defined as a person whose life is erased from society and deprived of all rights that functions in civil religion. But, "Homo Sacer" means somebody who can be killed without charging the killer regarded as a murder. In this sense, a person killed forcefully by state authority but not be sacrificed for the nation. Giorgio Agamben presented his views on Homo Sacer as:

Homo Sacer presents the originary figure of life taken into the sovereign ban and preserves the memory of the originary exclusion through which the political dimension was first constituted. The political sphere of sovereignty was thus constituted through a double exclusion, as an excrescence of the profane in the religious and of the religious in the profane, which takes the form of a zone of indistinction between sacrifice and homicide. The sovereign sphere is the sphere in which it is permitted to kill without committing homicide and without celebrating a sacrifice, and sacred life- that is, life - that may be killed but not sacrificed - is the life that has been captured in this sphere. (55)

Agamben clearly states that Homo Sacer is taken as the original or natural form of life that is constituted through political domain of sovereignty. It is ugly and secular as vice versa. Under it, a person permitted to kill without committing homicide or murder and sacrifice. Thus, human life is destroyed by political power of state but not sacrificed towards the nation or god. He further associates Homo Sacer as "who may



be killed but not be sacrificed” (73), and “Every man is born with inalienable and indefeasible rights” (82). It shows that everyone is born with a specific attachment on those who cannot take away from you and cannot defend from personal rights.

Agamben also further defines about life and death which are only signs for using conversation. Both of the words have scientific as well as political concept. But political concept has got heavy meaningful decision to explain them. Because there can be seen deep relationship between the life and death towards biopolitical borders. He states:

In biology, discussion on the meaning of the words ‘life’ and ‘death’ are signs of a low level conversation -life and death are not properly scientific concepts but rather political concepts, which as such acquire a political meaning precisely only through a decision. The frightful and incessantly deferred borders of which Mollaret and Goulon spoke are moving borders because they are biopolitical borders. (105)

Agamben reveals the relationship between Jews and Nazi in Germany that how Jews were exterminating by Nazi within political scene. It creates the intolerable condition for Jews people and finally creates rhetoric as original biopolitical fracture. In this way, Agamben explains more:

The extermination of the Jews in Nazi Germany acquires a radically new significance in this light.... Nazism darkly and futilely sought to liberate the political scene of the west from this intolerable shadow in order to produce the German Volks as the people that finally overcame the original biopolitical fracture. This is why the Nazi leaders so obstinately repeated that is eliminating Jews. (115)

During the war, Nazism of Germany radically comes up with new significance to destroy the Jewish people. But in beginning strategically they have point less purpose of political scene of the west. Later on they create intolerable shadow for eliminating Jews through biopolitics.

Homo Sacer can be considered to be an outlaw or bandit who lives in a state of exception; someone who is not simply outside the law and indifferent to it, but who has instead been abandoned by the law. Dora has passed similar situation within her life time by Nazi government during occupation in France. She is also captured, imprisoned and finally killed for no crime. It means Dora is banned, and then killed by Nazi authority as insignificant creature. She is given no value in the state power. Hence, Dora becomes Homo Sacer. Modiano's following lines mirrors clear views on it:

Dora at Tourelles, one Thursday or Sunday, during that summer of 1942, on 9 January 1943, she was once again interned in Drancy camp and , on 11 February 1943, she was put on a Convoy for Auschwitz. On Saturday 19 September, the occupying authorities imposed a curfew in relation for a bomb placed in the Cinema Rex. Nobody was allowed out from three o'clock that afternoon till the following morning. The city was deserted, as if to mark Dora's absence. (137)

Disappearance of Dora means that she is imprisoned in Tourelles barracks by Nazi police. After sometimes she is transferred in Drancy camp. In that camp, she was put on a Convoy for Auschwitz. In nineteenth September 1942, Nazi authority imposed a curfew and nobody was allowed out from their homes. During that time, Dora was killed by Nazi ruler.

'Given evidences prove that Dora was caught from the street and imprisoned in Clignancourt barracks. Transferred from there to Tourelles to Drancy and finally nineteenth September 1942, nobody was alive there including Dora. It reveals that Dora's life ruined through state power politics during occupation. Thus, Dora can be defined as a Homer Sacer. *The Search Warrant* is a text that is based on the theme of human existence along political and historical events. The novel revolves around Dora's mistreatment in Nazi camps from beginning to end like her escaping from convent to Auschwitz. It also appears documentary of Dora that involves the search of her existence during occupation. The totalitarian government crushes her natural and biological life through power politics. Nazi authority not only mistreats Dora but it shows barbaric and brutal behavior towards her without leaving any official records during deportation.

Dora was enrolled in the convent on ninth of May 1940, at the age of fourteen. Later on, she escapes from convent that was dated on thirty first December 1941. After escaping from the convent, Nazi police caught her from street and imprisoned in Clignancourt barracks. After that, she was deported at Tourelles and Drancy. Finally, she was put on Convey of eighteenth September 1942, for Auschwitz. Throughout the novel, Modiano is trying to track evidence of her existence with the troubled and obsessed period of the occupation. In the novel, Modiano uses newspaper notice, birth register, registration of Jews, police register and deportation list to Auschwitz to find Dora's surviving traces makes her Holocaust victim. There is also the narrator's own story related to Dora by his own youthful period as described in the novel as:

My father had barely mentioned this young girl when, for the first and only time in his life, one night in June 1963, he told me about his narrow escape as we were dining in a restaurant off the Champs

Elysees almost opposite the one where he had been arrested twenty years before. He gave me no details about her looks or clothes, and I had all but forgotten her until the day I learned of Dora Bruder's existence. Then, suddenly remembering the presence of this young girl among the other unknowns with my father in the Black Maria on that February nights, it occurred to me that she might have been Dora Bruder, that she too had just been arrested and was about to be sent to Tourelles. (57)

Bare Life is a kind of racist confines of the political power. It comes up to the form of violence. Under the base life, the biological existence of the people is always dominated by politics through state authority. Bare life is synonymously attached with illegal activities as no man's land which is known as concentration camps. It is in the camp that we encounter the people who can be killed there. In this way, Dora bears the bare life during occupation. Modiano explains Dora's life through the perspective of her natural existence.

This paper discussed on political overtones in Modiano's novel *The Search Warrant* which was originally published in France under the title *Dora Bruder* as it alludes political maneuvering of the Nazism during occupation in France. By using purview of critical analysis along theoretical connection, researcher used the term "Biopolitics" to show intricate relationship between the state power politics and natural life of individual's, political power consequently turning authority as a dictator that ruined the existence of Dora.

Modiano can't map these lives onto his own, which is all he seems to want to do at the start. But he is not helpless. His conclusion, that what we don't know about Dora is her secret, and precious for that reason, is perhaps too quick a consolation, but

at least it isn't an attempt at possession. He states in his novel that "I shall never know how she spent her days, where she hid, in whose company she passed the winter months of her first escape, or the few weeks of spring when she escaped for the second time. That is her secret. A poor and precious secret which not even the executioners, the decrees, the occupying authorities, the Depot, the barracks, the camps" (137).

Patrick Modiano stumbles across this notice in a December 1941 issue of *Paris Soir*. The girl has vanished from the convent school which had taken her in during the Occupation, at a time of especially violent German reprisals. Moved by her fate, the author sets out to find all he can about her. He discovers her name in a list of Jews deported to Auschwitz in September 1942 and what further fragments he is able to uncover about the Bruder family become a meditation on the immense losses of the period - people lost, stories lost, human history lost. Modiano delivers a moving survey of a decade-long investigation that revived for him the sights, sounds and sorrowful rhythms of occupied Paris. And in seeking to exhume Dora Bruder's fate, he in turn faces his own family history.

*The Search Warrant* is a remarkable book. The researcher can say that there was deeply moved by the narrator's ghostly evocation of Dora Bruder and her fate, her tragic presence conjured out of the tiniest slivers of historical evidence. Dora Bruder was a real, historically-existing person. This work can have no doubt, at the text's end, about the real, historical existence of Dora Bruder or about the terrifying simplicity of the world that sent her to her death.'

Innocent and ignorant people like Dora Bruder, are always got suppression, exploitation and mistreatment in the concentration camps and barracks by Nazism in France. Nazi authority exercised absolute power to kill the Jews. Under Nazi regime,

Jews were compelled to tolerate their anguish and their physical existence is always in crisis. Jews life was defined as fate because Nazi can finish Jews at any time without taking hesitation. They do not have sympathy towards Jews.

In this way, Dora is deported from one camp to another as deportee and deportation Tourelles to Drancy, and finally to Auschwitz, where narrator states that the city seems deserted and there is not a single mark for her presence. She was killed in Auschwitz. Modiano creates bitter reality of war and Nazism misused political power, which killed the people of the nation. They used people as Homo Sacer. *The Search Warrant* reveals overall scenario of war and dehumanizing behavior of the state power towards people.

The existence of Jews like Dora is always in crisis. In the same manner, Dora intentionally banned and killed by Nazi authority of autonomous power without being protected by any law. Nazism had marked an irreparable rupture in her life under power politics. Hence, Dora becomes Homo Sacer under sovereign power and she spends Bare Life in Auschwitz.

## Works Cited

- Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. Daniel Heller Roazon. Stanford: Stanford UP, 1998. Print.
- Allet, Herve. "Dora Bruder by Patrick Modiano." *World Literature Today* 72.2 (1998): 333-34. Print.
- Avni, Ora. "Patrick Modiano: A French Jew?" *Yale French Studies, Discourses of Jewish Identity in Twentieth-Century* 8.5(1994): 227-47. Print.
- Charbonneau, Jean. "Patrick Modiano: Remembrance of Shadowy Things Past." *Agni* 50 (1999): 224-28. Print.
- Flohr, Heiner. "Teaching Biopolitics in Germany." *Politics and the Life Sciences* 5.1 (1986): 103-12. Print.
- Foucault, Michel. "Truth and Power." *Critical Theory Since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. University of Washington: HBJ College Publishers (1992):1135-45. Print.
- Golson, Richard J. and Higgins Lynn A. "Introduction: Patrick Modiano's Dora Bruder." *Studies in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literature* 31.2 (2007): 317-24. Print.
- Hamilton, Peter. "The Historical Context." *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. Ed. Stuart Hall. New Delhi: SAGE (1997): 88-91. Print.
- Levinson, Brett. "Biopolitics in Balance: Esposito's Response to Foucault." *The New Centennial Review* 10.2 (2010): 239-61. Print.
- Liesen, Laurette T. and Walsh, Mary Barbara. "The Competing Meanings of "Biopolitics" in Political Science: Biological and Postmodern Approaches to Politics." *Politics and the Life Sciences* 31.1/2 (2012): 2-15. Print.

Mills, Catherine. "Biopolitical Life." *Foucault, Biopolitics, and Governmentality*. Ed.

Jakob Nilson and Seven-Olov Wallenstein City. Soderton University Press

(2013): 73-90. Print.

Modiano, Patrick. *The Search Warrant*. Trans. Joanna Kilmartin. Paris: Gillimard ,

1997. Print.

Welch, David. *The Third Reich Politics and Propaganda*. 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ed. New York:

Routledge, 2002. Print.