

Tribhuvan University

Representation of American Invasion of Japan in Malick's *The Thin Red Line*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Master of Arts in English**

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October 2012

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Letter of Recommendation

Piyush Rai has completed his thesis on “Representation of American Invasion of Japan in Malick’s *The Thin Red Line*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from February 2012 to September 2012. I hereby recommend his thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Representation of American Invasion of Japan in Malick’s *The Thin Red Line*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Piyush Rai has been approved by the undersigned members of Research Committee.

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Acknowledgements

I am profoundly grateful to express my heartiest gratitude to Badri Prasad Acharya who despite his heavy schedule, guided me in each and every step selflessly. His scholarly guidance, perennial support, and perpetual advices enabled me to complete this research.

I am also grateful to Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of the Central Department of English, for granting me an opportunity to carry out the research on this topic.

And I am truly grateful to all my respected lecturers of the department, who implicitly and explicitly guided me in all my pursuit. Their instructions and suggestions for the research are highly worthy.

My special thanks to all my friends – Suraj, Yam, Dipak, Chandra, Tika, Suman, Birendra, Bedh, Jharana and Bindu – for their moral support and suggestion in providing me a comfort zone and accessible companionship.

At the same time my family members are my strong backbone without whom I may not be able to reach this stage. So, I am much indebted to my respected parents, grandparents, uncle and aunt, my siblings, cousins and my sister-in-laws. I am proud of their emotional support, monetary help, care, love, affection and blessing. They all deserve my cordial thanks.

Likewise, my special thanks to my beloved wife Shobita Bantawa who helped me to overcome my entire obstacles while doing my thesis. Lastly I express my sincere thanks to all my well wishers who directly and indirectly helped me to complete this work.

October 2012

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Abstract

The film *The Thin Red Line* rejuvenates the genre of epic war film in moral, sensual, and philosophical terms; and does mirror the historical background of the World War II. In it, the dark sides of the war and the power politics have been intertwined. The director of the film, Terrence Malick has been successful in showing the politics of war as much as it was in contemporary time. War is evil and yet the power holders, for the benefits of them, utilized and victimized the other. The director being American shaded the Japanese as a whole and portrayed the Japanese very weakly showing the bravery of Americans. Not only that many soldiers like Witt, who is clear that he is unenthusiastic about serving in army, is the victim too. The war in the film is a war for Colonel Tall that determines the promotion and is his last chance to command a victorious operation. The film has intertwined its story around the marginalized characters and is triggered by the power-holders. Though the film is all about war, the microscopic analysis of the film reveals the politics of power and the impacts of it on the marginalized people.

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Chapter I. Introduction to Malick's *The Thin Red Line* as a Historical Film

This project focuses on Terrence Malick's directorial American war film *The Thin Red Line* (1998), which has achieved Seven Academy Awards. It won the top prize Golden Bear at the 1999 Berlin International Film festival, a fictional story of American soldiers set during the battle of Mount Austen in World War II. It portrays individual issues rather than one's country. It follows Jim Caviezel as Private Robert Witt, Sean Penn as first Sergeant, Edward Welsh, Adrien Brody as Corporal, Geoffrey File and John Cussack as Captain John Gaff. Though the politics of power is much emphasized, this research quests not only to death, destruction and individual loss of war but also exposes the compulsion and tiredness of militant that victimized them, who are associated with war.

According to Conrad Schirokauer's book *A Brief History Of Japanese Civilization*, before the Second World War, Japan was a powerful country and prosperous in economy. The Japanese were basically involved in agriculture and postural but few companies were established as most of the materials for the companies to run in Japan were imported from other countries. Some traditional buildings were built, which were based on its tradition, patterns and values. The Japanese were not influenced by the foreign culture and values before the Second World War. But when the cruel and callous, tyrant leader, Hitler in Germany came in power, Hitler wanted to capture the whole European countries by taking assistance from eastern countries as most of the countries of the east wanted to be free from Britain and America. During that period, Japanese were also interested and involved in association to Germany for the advantage of their country. With the help of the negotiation with Germany in some sector for the betterment of the country, Japan was

becoming stronger than other eastern countries like China and Korea. The strong ambition of Japan was to set its influence in eastern countries. Therefore, the war between Japan and China, as well as war between Japan and Korea were held before the Second World war. At that time, according to Conrad Schirokauer, Japan was known as “Greater East Asian Co- Prosperity Sphere” (256), during the early 1940s. The prime minister of Japan was General Tajo Hideke; Japan moved its troops into Southern Indo- China, the United States, Britain, Holland retaliated by applying the economical sanction they had held in 1931. An Embargo on scrap iron was serious but the crucial product cut off from Japan was oil.

The United States was determined that Japan should withdraw from China as well as Indo- China for Japan this would have meant a reversal of the policy in China since 1931, the relinquishing of the illusion of Japanese primacy in East Asia.

Dependent on oil and rubber from Southern Asia, Japanese were in opposition to carry on protected negotiation; their choice was to fight or retreat and prepared to go to war to attain the self sufficiency that the proponent of the total war had considered a precondition for war. When General Tajo Hideki (1884-1948) was the prime minister in Japan from October 1941 to July 1944, the last minute negotiation seemed finiteness. Then the Japanese decided to run war as the least unpalatable alternative. It began on December 7, 1941 with surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, in Hawaii, which destroyed 7 American battleships and 120 aircraft and 2400 dead. After the attack on Americans by Japan, the connection between them becomes worse than before.

America could not sustain the loss created by Japan on December, 1941 and decided to take revenge against Japanese for the competition of past loss. When the theory of atom bomb was made by Albert Einstein, the American government had spent so

much money on the creation and invention of atom bomb except spending in the activities of development and welfare. According to Conrad Schirokauer, after successful invention of atom bomb, America became stronger and it dropped atom bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki of Japan in August, 1945. On this explosion 200,000 Japanese were killed, 80% building, which were made on Japanese design, were badly destroyed. After this destruction Japan was weak on economy. Politically it was made a colony and ruled by Americans although the war left Japan in ruin, its city largely destroyed, the economy wrecked, the devastation extended also to the psyche of the Japanese people, for whom the known world had ended in a cataclysm of destruction. Unprepared for defeat, they could not turn to their own history for guidance, for never before. In historical time had their country been occupied by foreign victor. The whole nation found itself in psychological position not unlike the rare Japanese soldiers who contrary to all expectation found himself an American prisoner. Orientation and expectation shattered, such men were usually most cooperative toward their former enemies, and Japanese people too were disposed to cooperate with occupation authorities (Conrad 276).

After the destruction of Japan in the Second World War by America, the social and economic conditions were worse than before. Then Japanese government was forced to take right decision to develop Japan socially and economically and some social and economic policies were made by the leaders. The education system was reformed, which was basically based on the traditional values before. This was restructured to comfort the American sequence of elementary school, junior high school and high school and college were rapidly constructed. The Japanese were forced to eliminate their old technical schools and special high schools which

previously covered the eleventh to thirteen years of education and prepared students for university study. Under the old system only the student elite Red had an access to a university education but under the new system, all students were given equal opportunities through high school. In an effort to expand opportunities for higher education, many old technical and higher schools were upgraded to become universities. But these new universities were not of a quality comparable to the old established school like Tokyo University. Competition for addition to this and other prestigious universities remained brutal. Students found themselves embroiled in a variable 'examination hall'. In order to reform the context of education the occupation abolished the old ethics course and purged text book fostering militaristic and authoritarian values. Its attack on those old values was rather successful, especially since they had been already largely discredited by defeat. Similarly, language reform was found to be ready to accept the list of standard characters issued by cabinet in 1946 (Ronald Takaki 138).

Thus, it is found that Japan was rich in literature, art, visual film from 1947 to 1965. Writers emerged because of destruction in Japan, they wrote many novels about the pain and suffering of Second World War. In 1947, Vashunari Kawabata, novelist during that period, published installment of *Snow Country* that reflects the reality of Japan. *Thousand Cranes* (1948), *The Sound of the Mountain* (1951) about the beauty and sadness were published by Kawabata after Fumiki and Mishima Yukio had contributed in Japanese literature. Enchifumike published the *Tale of Genji* which was a realistic novel. Another important writer during that period was Kenzaburo Oe, who wrote *A Personal Matter* and *Silent Cry* that have depicted the Japanese culture and affect of atom bomb upon Japanese people during the Second World War.

As this research is associated with the film *The Thin Red Line* by Terrence Malick, about the war between Japanese and Americans during the Second World War, the main objective of the research is to explore the domination of privileged and powerful leaders over innocent and marginalized Soldier as well as American hegemony on the Japanese. In this film *The Thin Red Line*, Witt represents the innocent soldiers who leaves his company and lives with Melanesian natives in the South Pacific. There he is happy with his life but when some soldiers are needed to serve the injured soldiers in the battlefield, he is found and convinced to work as a stretcher man by his company's first Sergeant Welsh. Although he is not interested in such work, he is compelled to do so by senior officer and he begins to carry the injured soldiers and takes care of them in the battlefield. In the end of the film he is surrounded by the Japanese soldiers and they shoot him cruelly when he raises his weapon against them. Like Witt, many innocent soldiers are used in the battle by powerful leader like Tall and Welsh by alluring them for the promotion.

The Thin Red Line by Terrence Malick has been based on the context of the Second World War, though it was made in 1998. Most of the scenes presented in the film resemble to the scene of the Second World War. Especially the director Malick focuses on the American soldiers to show that American soldiers are more courageous and brave than Japanese soldiers. He also presents that the American soldiers have captured Japanese island by defeating them though they endure many losses in the war. The main purpose of making the film, *The Thin Red Line* is to show the victory of America over Japan in the Second World War. This film is trying to show America as powerful and superior to other especially Japan. It has also presented the victimization of innocent soldiers and their bad conditions.

In the Second World War, many innocent soldiers as well as other people were victimized according to the order given by power-holding leaders. And, some people were forced to live as handicapped. In this film such bad condition of both American and Japanese soldiers has been depicted clearly. The main issue raised in this film is about the seize of Japanese island.

Witt, the main character lives happily with Melanesian natives in the South Pacific. He is happy with native people but the native people are afraid of him because they think that he is an army soldier. Nevertheless, Witt convinces them that he is not a dangerous man. He spends his time playing game with native children and swimming in the ocean but when he is found and imprisoned on a troop carrier by his company first sergeant, Welsh. Welsh persuade him to work as a stretcher man in a battlefield. The men of the company have been brought to Guadalcanal as reinforcements in the campaign to seize the island from the Japanese. As they wait in the holds of a navy transport, they contemplate their lives and the impending invasion.

On deck, battalion commander lieutenant Colonel Tall talks with his commander, Officer Brigadier General Quintard, about the invasion and its importance. Tall's voice reveals that he has been passed over for promotion and this battle may be his last chance to command a victorious operation. The company lands on Guadalcanal unopposed and marches to the interior of the island, through wonderful takes of undisturbed but bewildered Nature and natives in their wake, encountering not the enemy, and only the brief but telling evidence of the gruesome Japanese presence and tactics, leaving mutilate corpses of intercept marines and rangers' scouts. They arrive near hill 210, a key Japanese position. The Japanese have placed a bunker housing several machine guns at the top of the hill, giving them full

view of the valley below. Any force attempting to claim the hill can be easily cut down by machine gun, fire and mortar.

A brief shelling of the hill begins the next day at dawn. Shortly after the Company attempts to attack the hills and are repelled by gun fire from the bunker. Among the first killed in the battle is the leader of the attacking platoon, second lieutenant Whyte. During a battle colonel Tall orders the company commander, Captain Staros to take the frontal assault, at whatever cost. Staros refuses, unwilling to treat his men as cannon fodder. When the two reach a stalemate, Tall cannot decide to join Staros on the frontline to see the situation for himself. By the time he arrives, the Japanese resistance seems to have lessened, and Tall's opinion of Staros seems to have been sealed. During the battle, private Witt, having seen a sign as a stretcher barrier, asks to rejoin the company and is permitted to do so. A small detachment of men performs a reconnaissance mission on Tall's order to determine the strength of the Japanese bunker. Private Bell reports back that there are five machine guns in the bunker. He joins another small detachment of men, led by Captain Gaff, on a flanking mission to take the bunker. The operation is successful and the company is then able to overrun one of the last Japanese strongholds on the island. They are successful in this regard, the Japanese they find are largely malnourished, dying and put up little resistance. Staros is relieved of his command for disobeying Tall's order. Tall proposes discommending Staros for several decorations and promises to recommend Staros for JAG duty in Washington DC. He does not want the unit's name stained by having an officer removed from his command.

Elsewhere, Private Bill received a letter from his wife asking him for divorce. But Witt leaves the company to find another native village, only to find that his sense

of peace in such place has been second, as he sees that even this place the evil of war action has been heard and touched and is disturbed and scared by it and him. He returns to the company before his departure has been noted. The unit is sent out on another mission further into the interior of the land. Witt and two other men corporeal Fife and Private Coombs, are send out but find that their unit is heavily outnumbered and most retreat, however, getting word back to Lieutenant band, who has replaced Staros as Company Commander. Witt decides to act as a D Company and lure the Japanese away from his two companies and the rest of their unit. He succeeds in drawing the Japanese away. But in course of retreating, he is surrounded by the Japanese soldiers One Japanese soldier advances towards Wit and requests him to drop his weapon but he raises his weapon against them and is shot by the Japanese. Latter the unit fined his body and buried it on the island.

The film *The Thin Red Line* directed by Terrence Malick portrays the condition of the American soldiers during the Second World War. Since the release of this film it has been very fascinating among viewers in the entire world. There are different critics who analyze this film from different perspectives. Roger Ebert criticizes this film as:

The Thin Red Line feels like an extension to second film, in which a narrator muses on the underlying tragedy that is sometimes shown on the screen, sometimes implied. Both films are founded on a transcendental sense that all natural things share their underlying reality in the mind of god. The film opens with a question; ‘why does nature contend with itself?’ It shows a crocodile, a killing machine.

Latter, as men prove more deadly than crocodiles it shows a bird, its wing shattered by gun fires, pulling itself along the ground. (10)

Roger criticizes this film through realistic perspective and comments that this film presents hallucinatory sense of displacement of living creatures. At the same time, it presents different kinds of animals and birds and negative effects of human creation towards natural world.

Similarly another critic Megan Grant comments, “Terrence Malick’s *The Thin Red Line* depicts war as a meaningless exercise in brutality. The necessity of imagining connective bond between human beings holds little significance for Malick” (70). Critic Megan Grant asserts that this film presents war and its worthless values on human world. So, he says that it is meaningless. On the other hand, Richard Misesk asserts:

It is hard to describe *The Thin Red Line*, the return of Terrence Mallick to directing after a 20 years absence, as anything but exquisitely beautiful, despite the fact that it largely traces the awful violence experienced and perpetuated by a band of American Soldier on the Pacific island of Guadalcanal during World War Second. This is what Malick does: juxtapose serenity and suffering in a lyrical, cinematic lament. (26)

Richard Misesk argues that this film presents the awful violence experienced by the soldiers in the Second World War. At the same time he praises Malick for his ability to juxtapose serenity and suffering in a rhythmic way to make the film more attractive. Likewise another critic Steven Llyod Wilson comments:

The Thin Red Line is an infuriating movie to watch, alternating between flashes of brilliance and stretches of boredom. It's either the most boring brilliant film ever made. When it's bad, it meanders like a stoned unicyclist, weaving back and forth in no particular direction, all motion no progress. When the good and the bad are woven together, they don't form the typical gestalt of mediocrity, but something unsettling to the viewer. It makes you suspect that you are just not smart enough to understand why all of the film is brilliant. (2)

Steven interprets this film as the most brilliant film and stretches on the other hand as most boring film ever made. Many film critics have criticized it in their own way, some of them are only associated with the one sided of the film which only talks about the theme of the film and the technical aspects of the film. Some of them have taken the film as the factual presentation of the contemporary Second World War.

One of the critics of this film Howard Zinn opines:

The Thin Red Line exploited the suffering a man in war along the glory of military heroism which should be buried along with dead soldiers. The films critics were wrong when they say that *The Thin Red Line* is a greatest war movie ever made they are merely superficial when they gloss over the cinematic effect of blood and chaos surrounded the Hill 210, more importantly, the film fails to ask if future generations will prevent such scenes from over happening again. (136)

According to Zinn, war is not only the subjectivity of glory of military heroism but also the physical and mental suffering of a man.

The film has not raised the question about the impact of the war which seriously concerns to future generation. War has the impact on human nature as well. Each and every character in this film not only soldiers but their beloved too are impacted in their living. Hwanhee Lee states:

The film is also about the nature of human being's relationship to his or her world. Here, a phenomenon like alienation against is not given an explanatory angle: Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek's loneliness and detachment from their world are not due to some particular psychological reasons or their places in a society. Rather, experiences such as alienation, anxiety, and listlessness are shown to be fundamental facets of human life, as life oscillates between the stable everyday world and its tasks and the realization that its stability is not based on unshakable foundations. Malick is insistent that human action is not always motivated by psychological causes. In effect, he challenges the traditional notion 'character' as primarily defined by psychology, deeply buried within a person's mind, instead preferring to envision human beings as by nature tied to their worlds, which forms the basis of an sort of human experiences. In fact, the freedom that Martin Sheen and Sissy Spacek experience, as they retreat more and more from society, is an oppressive unbearable one (3).

Lee explicates this film in a phenomenological understanding where he speculates the characters in a minute study of human relationships.

Even though many critics have analyzed this film from different perspectives, it is to be noted that no critic has analyzed it from the point of view of power politics.

So, there exists a strong need from a new perspective with a proper study on this issue, the film will remain incomplete. Having taken this fact into consideration the researcher proposes to carry out research from the perspective of new historicism.

New historicism received its existing meaning in 1982 when American theorist Stephen Greenblatt published his book *Renaissance Self-Fashioning from More to Shakespeare*. New historicism argues from the contextuality of all human thoughts and activities. It claims on historicist vantage point for judging such thought or activities. It acquired extensive influence in the 1990s rejecting formalism and new criticism. New historicists mainly emphasize the historical and cultural provision of the production. They give equal importance to literary text by turning towards history, culture, society, institution, class, gender, and so on. However new historicist rejects the autonomy of text as well as the author and establishes their inseparable relation to historical context. New historicists show the linkage between the role of the author and the historical circumstances and analyses the socio cultural and socio-economic atmosphere which is deeply rooted in the text.

It is the major view of new historicists that history should be regularly revisited, reread, and rewritten with the wave of time. New historicism denies the existence of absolute truth in history. It argues that there is no possibility of universal meaning of truth in history and that the meaning which is imputed to history reflects power relations. It is the time of writing as well as the time of the event's occurrence. It claims to be neutral to any historical context sensitive to all cultures with the practice of interdisciplinary approach and gives high regards to trans-disciplinary approach. It emphasizes on reading a text with 'equal footing' by breaking the 'hierarchy' of high and low, good or bad and so on. In new historicism social and

cultural backgrounds historical situations and even the history of the author cannot be undermined by emphasizing only what is written in the text: so, for new historicism the text is a time and place-bound verbal construction which never can escape from politics. That the historicization of literature is an opposite to history who focuses the open interchange of deeds and symbols.

French philosopher Michel Foucault's idea of discourse, power, truth and knowledge are the building blocks for new historicism. It always seeks to find examples of power and how it is dispersed within the text. According to Foucault, "truth is not outside power" (133). In other words, he means to convince that in the absence of power truth leaves its function and so power diffuses itself in the system of authority. The effects of truth are produced within discourses. And, that discourse is neither true nor false. For Foucault nothing has any meaning outside discourse. The ideas that discourse produces the objects of knowledge and anything run against the grain while thinking simply. Foucault accepts the idea the thing has its material existence in this world but when we go to get meaning of the same thing we must go within the discourse. New historicism employs the notion of discourse to project text as a cultural artifact and writing, speaking, talking and thinking within such specific historical limit.

Nietzsche also talks about the impacts of history while it is operated badly and while it is taken over-dosage. He also suggests people and directs them to use history for life and action not for comfortable turning away from life and actions. He is critical towards history and suggests not to overuse history as a truth. He expresses his ideas about history as perspective about the truth as Nietzsche says "Truths are illusion of what one has forgotten that they are illusions", (qtd. in Adams 636). The

idea blurs the traditional view of history as truth and literature as lies. Nietzsche blurs the hierarchy of humanity and the old versions of our evolution.

New historicism is against the formalist parameters and opposes to any unifying or universal theories. And, it plays with the relationships between history and literature or between text and context. New historicist critic, Louis Montrose in his essay, ‘‘Professing the Renaissance: The Poetics and Politics of Culture’’, establishes new historicism as a reciprocal concern with ‘historicity of the texts’ and ‘textuality of histories’. He expresses that all texts are embedded in specific historical and social context and by textuality of history he means that authenticity is never possible. Hence, new historicism subverts the idea that literature is purely subjective and history is totally objective. On the opposition that literary text may provide factual data and history may provide imaginative events. All these ideas are influenced by Foucauldian notion of power, discourse, knowledge and truth. Thus, the text cannot escape the ‘embeddedness’ of social practices and representation that has contributed a lot of efforts to create heterogeneous notions of discourse rather than monolithic and homogeneous notion of thinking. On the same spirit that is why Louis Montrose suggests that ‘‘a shift from history to histories’’ (441) is essential in new historicism.

New historicism undermines the concept of transcendental truth and erases the demarcation lines between history and literature. The present research is going to apply new historicism Terrence Malicks’ *The Thin Red Line* which will apply a remarkable role to study the text linking with its contexts which represents those different aspects of contemporary socio- historical as well as film historical situation. The film, *The Thin Red Line* revisits and rewrites the history of the contemporary society from different perspectives. It also dissolves the dividing line history and literature. It consists off the idea on history, old historicism and new historicism of

different critics such as Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, Louis Mantrose and Stephen Greenblatt along with the textual analysis of the text with the application of the new historical theory.

Though the movies are made for good and positive change, but things does not happen so all the movement. There are both positive and negative effects of the film on the public psyche staggering power of film and their ability to influence the thought process as well as the emotional and behavioral or habitual activities from different sections of the society should be credited.

The movie *The Thin Red Line* explores the dark side of war where people in minority become the victims. This film also uses the flash back technique whereby there is a second person narrative within it. Witt despite his will of peace and serenity with the local people he is enticed to join the force as a stretcher in which his life probably could be secure but latter he became scapegoat of war. On the other hand Captain Staros, who is a company commander, is detained for his disobedience to go forward despite the danger of many soldier's life. Thus we can see in this film the role of power regardless of many people's life.

This project has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter fundamentally gives an outline of the present study. It introduces *The Thin Red Line* as a historical Film, hypothesis, context, issue, literature review, theoretical insights and out line to the whole research. Thus, it presents the bird's eye view to the entire research. The second chapter aims to analyze the film briefly with both the textual and theoretical evidences. It attempts to examine the new historicist implication and historical aspects of the represented events and circumstances of the characters on the basic concept of Michel Foucault's *The Foucault Primer* and *The Foucault Reader*, Stephen Greenblatt's *Practicing New Historicism*, Harold Veaser's concept from *The*

New Historicism, Louis Montrose's *New Historicisms*, wherein the film will be analyzed in this chapter. It will further sort out some extracts and scenes from the film to prove the hypothesis of this research. This chapter serves as core of the present project. The third chapter concludes the ideas put forward in the earlier chapters, focusing on the outcome of the entire research.

Chapter II. Representation of American Invasion of Japan in Malick's *The Thin Red Line*

Terrence Malick's *The Thin Red Line* is a historical film that focuses on the war between America and Japan during the World War Second. As it is a war film, it consists of some historical events, context and important issues of that period which, have been taken as subject matters in the film. Therefore, *The Thin Red Line* by Terrence Malick has been based on the context of the Second World War, although it was made in 1998. The setting of this film and most of the scenes, which are seen in the film are very similar to the setting and scenes of the Second World War. The Second World War took place from 1939 to 1945 due to many causes like seizing weak country's land by powerful country, domination to weak and poor countries for the sake of economic benefit by strong and powerful countries. Similarly, conflict between America and Japan has been vividly presented in *The Thin Red Line* because American soldiers wanted to seize Japanese land in the hill named Mount Austen.

During the Second World War, Germany was stronger than other European countries. The ruler of Germany was Adolf Hitler and he had high ambition of ruling and capturing most of the countries of Europe, so that he wanted to capture the whole European countries by taking assistance from most of the countries of the East which wanted to be free from Britain and America. Even Japan was strong among Eastern countries and was interested and involved in mission of Germany for the advantage with assistance given by Germany. Japan became stronger than other eastern countries like Korea and China. Then, Japan attacked to America for benefit and economic growth on December 7, 1941, which destroys 7 American battle ships and 120 aircrafts and 2400 people. This Japanese attack on America has brought the

connection between them worse than before. For the revenge against Japan the American government had decided to be extravagant on the invention of atom bomb. After successful invention of atom bomb, America reacted strange and dropped the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki of Japan on August 1945. Because of this dangerous exposition 200000 Japanese were killed and 80% buildings were badly destroyed. Thus, Japan became weak economically and politically thereafter. And Japan was ruled as a colony by America from 1945 to 1952 (131).

After the invasion of America over Japan, the society and culture of Japan which was based on the traditional norms and values totally changed. The males were not responsible for their family physically and psychologically, Japanese people were greatly affected by the destruction of atom bomb. The ultra violet rays from dangerous bomb called atom bomb caused the Japanese woman to give the abnormal babies henceforth. The newly born babies were either physically or mentally abnormal or handicapped due to ultra violet rays. On the other hand, the males were frustrated by such condition, and they even decided to go to Africa for bright future. They did not feel responsible for the abnormal baby and family member as father and head of the family. They themselves were indulged in drinking wine and going to club, which was not their culture, rather western culture. Heterosexuality between opposite sex changed into homosexuality, which was followed by Japanese as culture even through it was western culture. Thus, the society and culture of Japan were changed after the Second World War.

On September 2, 1945, the surrender document is signed aboard the battleship of Missouri, anchored in Tokyo bay. Shortly there after, the occupation forces landed. It appears that the U.S. forces initially contemplated direct government and has

readied military script denominated in yen for use as currency. At one point a directive even went out to the effect that this 'B' occupation script should be used within Japan. The Japanese are concerned that if it is used, Bank of Japan notes and military script would end up in circulation side by side, making it impossible to control the money supply. After negotiations, the Americans eventually agreed to let the Bank of Japan supply the notes that the occupation forces needed and to refrain from using their occupation script (Conrad 132).

Therefore, the occupation forces permitted the Japanese government to continue to exist and adopt a policy of indirect administration, conveying their will and intention through the Japanese authority. Directive emanating from the U.S forces were to be carried out by the Japanese government immediately and without failure. Thus, American occupation began in Japan. The occupation era lasted for six and a half years, from autumn 1945 until after the treaty of San Francisco in 1952.

Thus, the big dividing line is a watershed decision by the United State's president in October 1948, presaged by gradual modification in occupation policy in 1947-48. An initial period of demilitarization and democratization in 1945-46, followed in the latter part of 1947 through 1948, by an internal policy draft, in which initial objectives have been achieved, but future directions have not yet been established. Then, in the fall of 1948, American policy abruptly and visibly changed. Now Japan is to be resurrected and make an ally of the United States. The fourth and final stage comes when the Korean War broke out in June 1950, prompting further policy changes ultimately, leads to the signing of the San Francisco Treaty on September 1951.

Long before the World War II ended, the United States has been studying how it should deal with Japan when the war is over. The American government is split into those who sought to be hard on Japan and those who adapted a softer line. Their debates have been the subject of much academic research in recent years. Eventually, two key documents that struck balance between the two factions are adopted. On September 1945, the first document, entitled “U.S. initial postsurrender policy for Japan”, is transmitted to general Mac Arthur, supreme commander for the aliened powers and released to the public. This is followed in November by a second document that elaborated on the content of the first, entitled “basic initial post-surrender Directive to the supreme commander for the Allied power for the occupation and control of Japan” (Conrad 134). These two documents represented the highest policy of the United States on Japan and are carried on remarkably faithful. Among the "ultimate objectives" of the occupation was to “ensure that Japan will not again become a menace to the United States or the peace and security of the world" (Conrad 133).

In the concrete terms, this means demilitarization, starting with dismantling of the Japanese armed forces," existing economic basis of Japan military strength must be destroyed and not permitted to revive" (Conrad 145). Japan is to be limited to those industries that would enable it to maintain economic levels and living standards define according to principles consistent with the Potsdam declaration. Those principles are to lead to the adoption of a policy of separation in kind through the transfer of industrial equipment and facilities.

In short, the occupation era, the process of postwar democratization and the subsequent economic recovery are marked by much turmoil. Japan advanced in

zigzag fashion, and sometimes marched in reverse, as talk of remaining surfaced. But overall, Japan emerged from the occupation era with higher living standards for the poorer segments of its society as a result of SCAP'S vigorous democratization policies. Worker's and farmer's income have risen. The rank of the wealthy has been thinned by the capital levy and inflation. Thus, there has been some who has made fortunes in the black market, but it is safe to say that on the balance progress has been made in the direction of greater economic and social equality. Industry is no longer dominated by giant organization, and business is in competition in their market. The foundation has been laid for Japan's postwar economy and society.

Many innocent soldiers were wounded and victimized on the order given by power holding leaders during the World War Second. And some innocent citizens who did not have interest in warfare are forced to requite as soldier for the country. The high rank leader used to allure them with high ambition to give good position in the company. But the promises that are given to them by leader are limited on their mouth. These innocent soldiers became the scape-goats of battle and some are forced to live as handicapped even though they are alive. In the film, the thin Red line, such worse condition of low rank soldiers can be seen. Robert Witt, one of the low rank soldiers has left his job from Army Company before the invasion over Japanese land by America. He is living with Melanesian natives in the south pacific being familiar with them playing game with the children and sharing his happiness and sorrow with the native people but when he is found by his company first sergeant, welsh and he is enticed to work as stretcher man in the battlefield. At last, he is forced to work as soldier and killed by Japanese soldier.

The death of an innocent soldier called Robert Witt is the example of domination by high rank soldier. In the battlefield only innocent soldiers and people are victimized but high rank power holding people are in the safe zone. Rather they reach to high position with sacrifice of the low rank soldiers. This reality is truth in any society and country, which is shown in the film, *The Thin Red Line*.

Dealing with a text within its historical context, new historicists attend primarily to the historical conditions of its production, its meaning, and its affects and also of its later critical interpretation and evaluations. This is not simply a return to an earlier kind of literary scholarship, for the views and practices of the new historicists differ markedly from these who have viewed literature as a reflection of the world wide view characteristic of a period. Instead, new historicists conceive of a literary text as 'situated' within the totality of Institutions, social practice and discourses. They constitute the culture of a particular time and place, and with which the literary text interacts as both a product and a producer of cultural energies and codes.

It is major subject of new historicists that history should be regularly revised, reread and rewritten with the wave of time. New historicism denies the existence of absolute truth in history. 'Truth' is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. It is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produces and sustains it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extends it. A "regime" of truth (Foucault, "power and Truth" 74). It argues that there is no possibility of universal meaning or truth in history and that the meaning which impute to history reflects power relation at the time of writing as well as the time of the events occurrence. Its claim to be neutral to any historical context and sensitive to all cultures with the

practice of interdisciplinary approach and gives high regards to transdisciplinary approach. It emphasizes a reading the text with equal footing by breaking the hierarchy of high and low, good or bad and so on.

In new historicism social and cultural backgrounds, historical situation and even the history of the author cannot be undermined by emphasizing only what is written in the text. So for new historicism the text is a time and place bound construction which never escape from politics. That the historicization of literature is as opposite to historian who focuses upon the interchange of deeds and symbol.

Power at the same time is pervasive; it is not timed to certain field. It is creative. An individual has power but that power is different from power of system because the power of system is formed of many individuals discourse. So it is a group power. Power is applicable everywhere, it operates in horizontal way but not in a vertical axis. There is equality in the term of power distribution. Foucault opines that:

... in a society such as ours, but basically in any society, there are manifold relations of power which permeates, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation and functioning of discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth. (Foucault, *A Foucault Primer* 59)

Every society has a kind of discourse but that discourse has been charged into time and space. Almost all discourses are formed by power. On the basis of such discourses, the people have taken a certain knowledge which is neither true nor false. There is interrelation between discourse and knowledge. Discourse consists of representation, power and truth. Representation has different forms, written audiovisual, oral and so on, and power is circulated through the different forms of representation. This represented power creates certain truth, which ultimately becomes truth to everyone who is under the system. Power determines the truth and as soon as the system of society changes, the truth even changes. That is to say, discourse is related to the power.

The mechanism of power constitutes the subject of one individual's domination over another or others; or even as that of one class over another or others as such. So power is not just ruthless domination of the weaker by the stronger but can be reversal too. In the book, *Foucault Primer*, about the power Foucault argues:

power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere ... power comes from below, that is there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition but between ruler and rule at the root of power relations and serving as a general matrix- no such duality extending from the top down and reacting more and more limited groups to the very depths of the social body. One must suppose rather than that the manifold relations of force that take shape and come into play in machinery of production, in families; limited groups and institutions are the basis for wide-ringing social body as whole. (39)

For Foucault, power is everywhere, which is very different from traditional socio political concept of it. It is not owned by the privileged group or person. It operates in circular way. Either it circulates from up to down or down to up. For circulation of power, there must be relation among individuals or groups. It doesn't operate in single individual.

In the film, *The Thin Red Line*, Japanese have been seen weaker than American soldiers. Japanese soldiers have made some bunkers on the top of Hill 210, which is surrounded with beautiful forest as well as tall grasses. The land is far away from the Pacific Ocean. Japanese soldiers have already decorated themselves with artillery, machine guns and grenades. Some Japanese soldiers are under the bunkers. They want to save their land from the enemy. So, these bunkers like big den are made on the hill 210. For protection of the land they seem to be ready to sacrifice their lives. They are already prepared to attack the adversaries if opponents come up to the land. They can easily see the American soldiers coming from far away because they are on the top of the hill.



Figure 1: Japanese Soldiers guarding their land on the hill 210

The Japanese soldiers who have the spirit of patriotism are stern and robust to protect their land from the enemy who attacked to conquer their land from them. American who were against them as powerful enemies appear to challenge the Japanese and easily take over them in the later scene. The Japanese were equally powerful and was on top of the Hill 210 to counter attack the ambush but they failed.

When America was not independent from the colony of British colonization, it did not select the way of imperialism. But after being released from the British colonization, it became powerful in the world. It desired for the expansion of the land from Europe to the East Asia by using modern weapon and dangerous bomb like Atom bomb. Expanding the land and making other countries colony for the utilization of natural resources and domination over the local people or native people forcefully are related to imperialism. Thus American government as well as soldiers has learnt such activities relating to imperialism from the Britain. Their mentality has been filled with the ambition of being powerful in the world and ruling over the other nation with the means of power. They have kept such policies and strategies in their mind since they are also once dominated by the Britain as colony. So, America wants to rule over the world by making other countries colony with the use of cruel power apart from modern weapons.

Foucault's concept of power suggests that "power is intelligible in terms of the techniques through which it is exercised" (65). Scientific knowledges are the most exemplary instance of the maturity of reason. But concomitant with this development was its negative underside: instrumental rationality. Modern society as Foucault opines that

... heralds the existence, unique to itself, of a new “mechanism” of power. This mechanism is a new way of consolidating power into ensembles concerned with the management and administration of ‘life’. Neither equivalent to the ‘state’ nor reducible to the effects of other more primary processes, it is mechanism which ensures the efficient functioning of power’s control over life processes. (63)

In the film *The Thin Red Line*, American government has prepared a large number of American soldiers to seize the land of Japan which is covered with enough natural resource like forest, different kind of animals, beautiful landscapes as well as small and big water resources. For that task, American soldiers from high rank to low rank like general, colonel, captain, sergeant and corporal are prepared to send out for the mission. Riding on the big ships the American soldiers are moving towards Guadalcanal shore through Pacific Ocean who are very curious in attacking the Japanese, are adorning themselves with machinegun, bullets and other modern weapon. Some soldiers are coming to Pacific Ocean by helicopter. They emerge at last into sunshine and fresh sea air in the middle of ocean. Looking up to the bridge, Captain Staros sees colonel Tall the battalion commander and they exchange salute to the general commander, Quidart by squads and by platoon, the men go over the side and clamber down the four- storey- high of the ship on the nets and into the chain of iron that shuttle back and forth from the share.

Ahead, they see the shore and sand beach and coco palms gradually coming closer. Beyond them lies the dark green band of jungle, with the mass and power of the mountain rising behind it to rocky peaks. Fife, one of American soldiers, expects some protest, some visible sign of enemy resistance, but a shot is fired. When they

reach to the beach of ocean through the ships, they started to jump from the ships decorating them self run with machine gun, artillery and short cannon with courage, after getting the permission from Battalion commander.



Figure 2: American Soldiers landing on the bay of sea to march forward to sieze Japanese land

This picture shows the American soldiers patrolling to attack the Japanese. The American soldiers get off from the big ships on the shore of the Pacific Ocean, who are inspired by the high rank commander saying that they are stronger than the Japanese and can conquer over them. Most of the American soldiers have been guided and influenced by the ideology of imperialism so they seem have eagerness of attacking and capturing the marginalized and weak country, Japan for the exploitation of natural resources and domination over the Japanese.

The American soldier trudge through the man groves the bivouac, led by the route guide from regimental headquarters. The roads are seas of soft mud, axle- deep on the trucks. It is impossible to march on or in them. The only way for them to

move ahead at all is to travel in two lines, one on either side, picking their way over the great hills of drying mud, turned back as through by a plow, staggering and senseless with exhaustion they march on, by the time they reach their bivouac.

After then, a dozen of the soldiers from 'C'-for-Charlie among them Big Queen, the Hug Texan, and Private Bell, the former officer approach the high way of jungle curiously and gingerly. But they startle with the parrot's screech. Huge vines and creepers hang from the canopy in great festooning arcs. Giant tree trunks tower straight up, from above their head they find a skull shrine, a wood carving of a man. The features of whose face have been eroded by the weather, a python strong tropical fruits, some split open by raiding ants.

Suddenly among them, Queen discovers a blood stained shirt for a moment, he thinks of saying nothing. He could pass it by none of the rest of them would know. But, noticing his strange hesitation the next soldier see it too and raises a shout. At that time they discuss about the murder. They think that this strange man has been killed by Japanese soldier. They are already guided by a discourse made by the western people about the Japanese that the Japanese soldiers are cruel murderer, who kill their enemy without any mercy. The dialogue among Gordon, Queen, and throne as follows:

Gordon: Is it American? Fuck yes, it's
 American. The Japan don't wear khaki
 like that, that's chino! That's not even
 Marine khaki! That's Army Chino!
 Well, the American Division's here. May be
 He's one of them.

Queen: Who ever he was, he was hit pretty bad.

Thorne: Where'd it hit him?

Gordon: It key holed out the back (00.34.17 seconds).

The above dialogue between American soldiers depicts the Japanese as murderers as well as cruel people without love and mercy over the opponents. It also shows that they are economically weaker than America because they can't wear the khaki- as the American soldier. In fact the Japanese soldiers are neither murderer nor weaker than American economically. The Japanese have not killed that unknown man from back because they have not come down to the plantation of sugar can rather they have lived on the top of the hill for the security of their land. The bad rumor about the Japanese is only made by the American to destroy the reputation of Japanese people.

Every society has two classes: ruler and ruled. Ruler always wants to dominate the ruled people. When ruling people repress the weak people with different techniques in the society, ruled people speak of their right the ruler dominates the weak to show himself superior to the weak and, the weak people start resisting against them and the clash between them begins in the society. Thus, power does not exist in powerful group, but the existence of power is in resistance to the privileged group in the community or society. So, for the circulation of power the resistance between powerful and weak is needed. The power always produces from domination.

New historicists always talk about the margin and take the side of it. According to new historicists privileged people are dominating the marginalized people for power in the society. They always dominate the marginalized group or people through the creation of false discourse or form of power. Therefore, in the

creation of power, domination and resistance are needed in the society. According to Michel Foucault, “power is never monolithic and power relation always implies multiple sides not only of power but also resistance” (403). Further, he argues:

The strictly relational character of power relationship.... depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance: these play the role of adversary, target, support or handle in power relation ... resistance ... can only exist in the strategic field of power relation. But this does not mean that they are only a reaction or rebound, forming with respect to the basic domination, an undesirable that is in the end always passive, doomed to perpetual defeat... the points, knots or focuses of resistance are spread over time and space at varying densities... Are these no great radical ruptures, massive binary divisions, then? Occasionally, yes. But more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory of points of resistance, producing cleavages in the society that shift about, fracturing unites and regroupings, furrowing across individual themselves... It is doubtless the strategies codification of these points of resistance that makes a revolution possible, some what similar to the way in which the states relies on the institutional inter reaction of power relationships. (95-96)

In fact, power is never monolithic rather it operates in oppositional relation between domination and resistance. The resistance of the weak to the privileged produces power and it is static but changeable accordance with the time. The formation and reformation of power depends on the reaction between privileged people and weak people in the society.

American soldiers move to the plantation of sugarcane through the dense forest. The battalion has been led by captain, Staros, the sergeant Welsh, Gaff, Private Witt, Doll, Keck, Bell and other soldiers are included in this battalion. The battalion is run in the leadership of captain, Staros. They have walked through the big grasses. When they approach the hill, suddenly bombing starts. In this situation, some American soldiers move towards the Hill, which is located in the land of the Japanese, courageously and fearlessly. But the Japanese go on firing from the top of the hill 210. Some American soldiers are killed in the bomb explosion in the big grasses. Even the sergeant, Keck and Sico are killed in Japanese's ambush, when they are moving forward the land of the Japanese.

In such situation, the captain Staros do not want to see his soldiers dying in front of him and tries to stop the remaining soldier from going ahead. Then after, colonel Tall who is away from the firing place orders the captain Staros to attack the Japanese from different places. The dialogue between captain Staros and colonel, Tall as follows:

Tall: Staros, I'm relieving you of your command

Lieutenant Band will take over

I've already told him.

It's a hard thing to do

Difficult decision to make.

I don't think, you're tough enough

You're too soft

You're just too soft-hearted.

Any way,

It's my decision to make

I've already made it.

Staros: I don't like

To see my men killed, sir

Have you ever had any one die

In your arms, sir? (2.56.05 seconds)

Even though the captain, Staros has no guts to march ahead to the hill, he is forced to obey the command after the colonel Tall orders him. With the assistance of Welsh and Bell, Staros goes ahead the land of Japanese taking the remaining American soldiers without fear and they attack the Japanese. But the Japanese have lived under the bunkers and some soldiers are standing on the hill holding machinegun on their hand. In fact, they have remained there for the security of the land. When they are attacked by the Americans, the Japanese have to protect their land from the opponent's attack because they have the love and feeling of nationality. And thus, they resist the American Armies by firing from the top of the hill whereby the colonel Tall the leader of American soldier, has considered that the Japanese are not stronger than them and they can easily defeat the Japanese in the war, but the Japanese have not planned to attack the American soldier before. But sergeants, Welsh and Staros as well as other soldiers start firing to the Japanese. Against such attack the Japanese are compelled to resist to the Americans.

In fact, most of the powerful countries want to dominate the weak countries and capture other land. Likewise, America also has desires for dominating the Japanese and seizes of the Japanese land forcefully. The Americans seem to have played the role of centre and Japanese as margin because they have not attacked the

Americans. They have no plan to involve in the war with American soldiers. Rather they live in the bunker they made for the protection of the land. And the picture below is the resistance of the Japanese to the American:



Figure- 3: The Japanese Resisting Soldier against the American

This photo depicts the resistance of the Japanese soldiers when the American soldiers come to the top of hill, 210 for seizure of Japanese land. The American soldiers have had the intention of attacking and capturing other land for exploitation of natural resources. They have thought that they are stronger than the Japanese psychologically and physically, so that they attack the Japanese but in reaction of attack by the American, the Japanese are forced to resist against them and they start bombing and firing them for the protection of the land even though they are weaker than the American soldier. In the photo the American soldiers appear to have been attacked with bomb and some are being burnt in the bombing fire by the Japanese. Yet Americans are never giving up, instead they crawled upto their destination and marched forward. Their spirit of never surrendering can be trace from the dialogue among them as

Col. Tall: John, we'll be back of you. If you can break through, we will
 come pouring after ... we'll charge at your whistle signal.

Bell: Better let me take the point, sir.

Gaff: You all know the job we've got to do, fellow. There's no point
 in my going over it again. I'm convinced the toughest part will
 be the open space between the end of the trough here and the
 soldier of the knob.... I want to pick the route myself. If
 anything should happen to me, sergeant Bell will be in
 command... Lets go...

Bell: Hey, Wait! Wait! Don't go yet! I got an idea!

Gaff: You must be out of your mind! I want to get as close to them as
 we can before we put the grenades to them. Well, fellows this is
 where we separate the sheep from goats. Let's crawl..... Go
 in!

Queen Doll: fucking murderers! (02.19.23 seconds)

With many difficulty and struggle American soldiers reach to the Japanese strange point. The American soldiers sergeant Bell, captain Gaff, Witt, Queen Doll are successful to approach near the bunkers and sergeant, Bell pulls the pin on a grenade and throws it in the Japanese bunker. Gradually are craning ahead, the entire strong point becomes visible. As they can finally see it, they are discovered by the Japanese and in a moment, all of the Japanese are on their feet running to them. The Japanese have sternly taken advantage of the terrain to save them digging work. Behind the holes into the placements themselves is a natural little low area where they can come out and sit in cover when they are actually being shelled. In this hollow scrawny,

bedraggled, the Japanese rise with rifles, swords and pistols from holes to attack Gaff and his crew. At least, some of them do and other stay in the holes. Three Japanese try to run to fire the American. Dale, one of Americans, shoots one and sergeant Bell shoots other. The third disappears in a grand broad jump over the edge of the rock face. Where it falls eighty feet to the jungle tree top's below the other American soldier come on Gaff and his tropes run to meet them while captain blows his whistle.

According to Paul Rabinov, one of the characteristic privileges of sovereign power was the right to decide life and death. He also opines that:

One might say that the ancient right to take life or let live was replaced by a power to foster life or disallow it to the point of death... that death is so carefully evaded is linked less to a new anxiety which makes death unbearable for the societies than to the fact that the procedures of power have not ceased to turn away from death. (261)

Death is power limits. Power establishes its domination through death, power is intertwined along with politics, culture, economy, etc. but, is always systematic in the society. So power is always assisted by discourse. The discourse that the East as orient and the West as Orientals is a discourse made by the powerful west. So the film *The Thin Red Line* directed by Terrence Malick who belongs to west is bias upon the East and portrayed the Japanese who belong to the East as dominated characters. such cruel behavior towards the Japanese can be seen below:



Fig- 4: The American Soldiers Beating the Japanese Mercilessly

This photo is associated with ruthlessness of the America soldiers toward the Japanese, who have been made nude and kicked with hard boot without showing pity even though they surrender themselves in front of the American. After the surrender, beating the Japanese shows the cruelty and brutality of the American soldiers, which is against the law of humanity and war. The Japanese seem to be enclosed by the American raising their rifles toward them. They are terrified with the American and asking for the alms of life by weeping. Sustaining such cruelty of the American is the curse of marginalized Japanese.

Furthermore, American soldiers spread around the hill and search for the Japanese. When they find them, they start shooting them. While going ahead, they still find some Japanese bunker. Being wounded by the attack of American soldiers, the Japanese lie scattered around in various positions and postures. Some Japanese soldiers are in the process of dying, and a few, though badly hurt, happen as if they might live. A group of American soldiers have gathered around the wounded

Japanese, who are living and breathing in uncomfortable way. The Japanese are sorry, sick looking a lot.

Feeble, stumbling, they shamble along appearing to be totally benumbed by their experience and looking as though they would not have energy or the will to escape, even if they are guarded by American soldiers. All of them are suffering from dysentery. Jaundice and malaria, some are naked. They look like some lower grade of animal, with their ribs and shoulder bones showing starkly through their yellow skin. Such is the condition of the Japanese soldiers as follows:



Fig-5: Condition of Japanese Soldier after being Attacked by the American Soldier

This photo displays the pathetic condition of the Japanese soldiers after the attack of American soldiers. They also have suffered from dysentery and jaundice as their faces are pale thin. They have not been given any food for eating by the American soldiers. In spite of being given clothes to wear and food for survival but they have been treated like animals, making them half-nude since the American soldiers lack the feeling of humanity. Even in the photo one of the Japanese is requesting to be freed from the trap by joining both hands, and another is crying with a disappointed face. Such

condition of the Japanese has become with the result of cruel behavior of American towards their enemy. And they are successful in this regard: the Japanese they find are largely malnourished, dying and put up little resistance.

In “Neitzsche, Geneology and History” Foucault reviews the responsibility of historians and redefines everything only in relation to context with other things. His focus of study is that how power and discursive practices transform and change over time. His analysis is that how human being understood themselves in their cultures. Stuart Hall in his text *Representation* talks about Foucault and says, “he was concerned with production of knowledge and meaning not through discourse (44).

Mallick historicizes the World War II sharing with Foucault’s concept, making acknowledge to everything as product of power and its practices and the changes over time. History is a reciprocal study that emphasizes the discontinuity of history and the changes over time. History is a reciprocal study that emphasizes the discontinuity of history and the inescapable subjection of subjects. Malick is not out of power. His film rill the subject of power and not much emphasis on the margin group.

One of the techniques in the film, *The Thin Red Line*, is flash back technique which has been used for the remembrance of the past events. The flash back is a technique through which the characters remember their past events which have influenced them sometime ago. In the film some American soldiers memorize their past events and pleasant day through the flash back technique. The captain, staros remember his wife through the flash back technique when he is disappointed and frustrated from the brutality and cruelty of the war the wounded and bruised soldiers, yelling and screaming of the Japanese blood strain on the ground and the death body

of both sides have badly affected his mind. As a result, he is mentally ill and for the reduction of the mental and psychological illness, he is forced to remember the past happy life with his beloved through flash back technique.

Similarly, Witt, another American soldier is also mentally affected with the bad impact of war while seeing and hearing the wounded enemies in the battlefield, and knows the reality of the war, begins to remember his mother, sisters and happy days he has spent by playing, swimming with the native children in the Pacific Ocean through the flash back technique.

Another technique found in the film is the Juxtaposition. The director has presented the beautiful and pleasant natural scenes and wild animal such as green dense forest, beautiful hills covered with snows, parrots in one side and in another side the war between American and the Japanese. Showing the nature in one side and the war in another side is juxtaposition which is seen in the film.

According to New Historicists, literature actively uses history which makes compulsory to treat literature with its historical context and history with textuality that never let to be authentic past and which is even shaped by language and the very nature of that language is symbolic. The issue of history and the text for Philip Rice and Patricia Waugh is that “history can only be narrative construction involving a dialectical relationship of the past and present concern” (252). The biasness of historians are expressed through the point of view of the narratives which end with individual subjectivity as in literary texts.

Malick’s film *The Thin Red Line* is almost narrative and is in flashback technique in which he explores the film from the perspective of the Canon and he is bias towards Japanese being margin. Since Malick’s film is based on the Second

World War, the film makes the historical accounts that expresses through the director's point of view with his subjectivity. Thus the biasness of Americans can be seen through Malick's presentation of Japanese in a pathetic condition.



Fig-6: The Japanese imprisoned by the American

This photo has been taken when the land of Japanese has been captured by the America soldiers, who have captivated the Japanese with rifles. In the background of the photo, small cottages appear ruined and have been burnt down. The Japanese look to be afraid of being shot while seeing guns raised to them by the American soldiers. The Japanese are crying putting their hands on the head considering that they are killed after capturing as captive. The Americans seem terrifying them with the pretension of shooting with guns.

The other Japanese, who come out empty and hands up, are shocked punched beaten, prodded and hammered with rifle butts but a few of them are actually killed. But nobody likes them well, and those who refuse to do so as they are told are shot out of hand by tense-faced, nerve-racked American men. There are still many un-reduced emplacements scattered across the bivouac and the hill sides beyond it.

Many of Japanese prefer to die rather than to be captured so they are attacking the American soldiers with naked hand so as to make themselves death. Some are too sick even to surrender, and simply sit by their guns firing them until they are killed. Those who have surrendered are over come with a deep shame and sorrow. The necked dead bodies of Japanese soldiers are scattered everywhere and in the mid of such dead bodies, some Japanese with out dress chants the holy song of Buddha, some, like a figure of the Buddha are sitting in obscurity beneath a stand of cocoa trees. Such a poor condition of the Japanese who is sitting to mediate for peace around the lying dead bodies of the Japanese soldier can be seen below.



Figure- 7: A Japanese soldier meditating in the mid of dead bodies of soldier for the peace

This photo is associated with the war and its brutality in highest degree. In the back ground photo where the Japanese soldiers are lying in the bed of death since they have been shot by the Americans ruthlessly. The necked dead bodies of the Japanese have scatted in mess condition on the ground, where the American soldiers are standing actively among the dead bodies. Likewise, a Japanese soldier among his

dead friends appears meditating for the peace with the remembrance of God, Buddha. Even he has been shocked with sorrow of cruel death of his friends, in the position of the God Buddha, he seems praying for peaceful departure of soldiers through the meditation. Even though the photo belongs to merciless death of the Japanese soldiers that it shows, the cruel and brutal attack of the Americans over the Japanese.

Nietzsche talks about the impact of history while it is operated badly and it is taken over dosage. He also suggests people and directs them to use history for life and action not for comfortable turning away from life and actions. He is critical towards history and suggests not to over use of history as truth. He expresses his idea about history as perspective. About the truthness of truth Nietzsche says "truths are illusion of what one has forgotten that they are illusion" (qtd. in Adams 636). The idea blurs the traditional view of history as truth and literature as lies. Nietzsche blurs own hierarchy of humanity and the old version of our evolution.

Likewise, Foucault asserts that genealogical history is "effective history". He opposes the traditional history because of its implicit belief in an eternal truth as a yard stick from which everything can be measured. According to Foucault the effective history, "deprives the self of the reassuring stability of life and nature and it will not permit itself to be transported by voiceless of obstinacy toward a millennial ending. It will uproot its traditional foundation and relentlessly disrupts its pretended continuity" (93). He says that effective history can evade ... metaphysics by seeing history as divergent, incorporating marginalities and disunities. According to Foucault,

Effective history can invert the relationship that the traditional history in its dependence on metaphysics, establishes between proximity and

distance. The latter is given to a contemplation of distance and heights: the novelist periods, the highest forms, the most abstract ideas, the purest individualities. It accomplishes this by getting as near as possible, placing itself at the foot of its mountain peaks, at the risk of adopting the famous perspectives of frogs. Effective history on the other hand shortens its vision to those things nearest to it the body the nervous system, nutrition, digestion, and energies, it unearths the period of decadence and if it chances upon lofty epochs. It is with the suspicion not vindictive but Joyous- of findings barbarous and shameful confusion. (95)

Therefore, for Foucault, history becomes effective history in so far as it introduces discontinuity into our being, refuses to see an end or goal to which history moves. An event in history is not a decision, a treaty, a rein, or a battle but the several of a relationship of forces. History should become a differential knowledge of energies and features, heights and degeneration, poisons and antidotes. Thus the "final trait of effective history is its affirmation of knowledge as perspective." (95).

History has almost written through the perspective of conqueror but not the perspective of defeated. But for the effective history both conqueror and defeated must be included or focused equally. The history is not only history of lofty things but also garbage things. The director Terrence Malick, being based on the historical context of the war between America and Japan, has made the film, the Thin Red Line, in which the forceful domination of American over the Japanese can be seen. As a historicist, Terrence Malick has to focus the both sides equally since the history is a combination of the defeater and defeated, but he doesn't do so. Rather he seems to

have been guided by the western ideology. As he himself is an American, he happens to be in the favor of American. In the film, Terrence Malick focuses on American soldiers from the beginning to the end of the film, has shown the victory of the American over the Japanese what he has shown in the film is the consequence of influence of the western ideology and discourse.

The westerners try to show themselves, brave courageous, humane, sociable, kind, mild and soft hearted rather than the easterner through the false myth, use of language and the creation of various written or visual discourses. They consider themselves superior to the easterners. In fact, the superiority shown by them is not truth but must be an illusion. They have made their special identity and shown other with the lack of identity or on the crisis of personal identity. Likewise, the director, Terrence Mallick has given special identity to the American soldiers the proper nouns like Staros, Welsh, Witt, Tall, Beck, Gaff etc. are used for the identification of American soldier from the low rank to high rank soldiers. But he has used the word "Japs" for the Japanese. The word "Japs" by him in the film indicates the collective noun used for the mass or group of the people, which seems to be disgusting. Because of this biasness towards the Japanese with use of the word "Japs" he can be thought to be bias or prejudiced to the Japanese.

Terrence Mallick has also selected indecent words like "bastard", "Murder" "Japs" and "prisoner", which the American soldiers have used in order to address the Japanese so as to demoralize and defame the real identity of the Japanese. He has brought before the eyes the cruel and brutal picture of a white soldier amputating his limbs and hand for the affronting of the fame of the Japanese, in the plantation of sugarcane on the hill. The amputated dead body of a white in the dense plantation of sugarcane is a kind of visual representation of discourse, which can be seen below.



Fig - 8: An amputated dead body of a white in the plantation of sugarcane

The above photo is an amputated dead body of a white in the dense plantation of sugarcane on the hill. He has been killed by amputating hands and legs. In the back round of the picture, the dense plantation of sugarcane can be seen. The dead body is surrounded by the American soldiers. Such picture is showing the cruelty and brutality of the Japanese, through which Terrence Malick is trying to show that the Japanese are cruel murderer rude and have no pity and love towards the enemy while killing them.

In fact, the visual presentation shown above is only used for defaming the Japanese. In reality the Japanese are not cruel murderer as presented above by the director, Terrence Malick. They have not come down to kill him, rather have stood on the top of the hill 210 for the protection and security of the mother land. Through the creation of such visual discourse Terrence Malick is trying to bring negative sense about the Japanese into the mind of audience.

Similarly, he has shown the bravery of American soldier in the film as the westerners want to reveal themselves braver and more courageous than the Easterner.

Even the Americans have no intention to bend their head in front of the enemies. In stead of doing so, they intend to be killed. Since he is guided with western idea and thought, he has displayed the bravery through a American soldier, named witt in the film but not the cowardness. This bravery of Witt can be seen below:



Fig - 9: Witt, an American soldier showing his bravery by raising his gun while he is trapped by the Japanese

The above photo depicts the bravery of Witt, an American soldier while he is captured by the Japanese. In this picture, he seems to be in the mid of the jungle and surrounded by the Japanese. Even though he is asked to put down the riffle for surrender, he does not want to show his cowardness among them, rather attempts to attack the Japanese by raising a rifle to shoot the Japanese in order to show the bravery of the American. So that he is shot from back. Actually it is not bravery of Witt because every human being has desire to live his remaining life by surrounding with the enemy. Through presentation of the picture the director, Terrence Mallick is trying to convince the audience the bravery of the American. In this sense, he seems

to be supporting to the centre, i.e, American but not the marginalized group, the Japanese. Thus, he can be said to be in the side of the American.

Human being is a social and political being. Not a single individual is out of political sphere. Malick's film *The Thin Red Line* is encircled around the nature of human who cannot be astray from 'will to power'. The director of the film himself is very bias to Japanese and screened the Japanese in shaded characters. Very less of Japanese is screened in the film although it's a war film without which it would be impossible to produce the scenario of the war. In this way Malick fails to parallelize the action wherein all the film is strongly in the side of Americans.

In new historicism, social and cultural backgrounds, historical situations and even the history of the author cannot be undermined by emphasizing only what is written in the text. So for new historicism, the text is a time and place bound to verbal construction which can never escape from politics. As Wilfred L. Gurin opines Macheal Warner phrases New Historicism's motto a "text is historical, and history is textual" (283), So also the film historical.

Likewise , Terrence Malick in the canvas of new historical approach treats the fictional film depicting the recorded history of imperial power. So to reveal the fallible aspects of human artifact that hides its loopholes in order to get power of truth is possible only through new historical approach.

Chapter III. Exposure of Power Politics and the Dark Sides of the War

Terrence Malick's film *The Thin Red Line*, a historical fictional film which amalgamates history and fiction to blur the factual claim of absolute history and motives behind its narrative construction. While studying deeply the analysis exploits the notion of new historicism as a new historical approach.

New Historicism is a reciprocal concern with historicity of texts and the textuality of histories whereby the film *The Thin Red Line* accomplishes it. The film aims to provide the historical reference of America and Japan during the WWII in the fictional make up to raise our consciousness about the relationship between these two countries and its historical events. The blend of history and fiction is apparent in the sense that Malick's characters are based on historical figures between whites and Japanese.

Terrance Malick opines history and literature as Foucault's idea of discourse, power, truth and knowledge who talks about official history is just the shadow of those who are enjoying the power. They modify the history according to their interests. The 'pen' of historians writes through one 'ink' of authority. So history becomes an imaginative fiction. But new historicist fiction includes the pain and suffering of those under-privileged which becomes real history. New historicism blurs the so-called boundary between literary and non literary texts and clearly shows their interconnections. Montrose deals with power and its nature. At the same time Foucault too deals with power and discourse as such. So power is never monolithic, and power relations always imply multiple sites not only of power but also of resistance. In this sense, literary fiction is as important as history is. No objective history is possible to be written since the historical prejudice and pre-occupation are

unavailable and inseparable. Likewise, Malick in his film *The Thin Red Line* presents the context of the W.W. II where many innocent soldiers as well as other people were victimized on the basis of order given by power holders. And, some people were forced to live as handicapped. Such bad condition of both American and Japanese has been depicted clearly, for the sake of seizing the Japanese Island. Malick especially focuses on the American soldier to show that American soldiers are more courageous and brave than the Japanese soldiers. It also presents that the American soldiers have captured Japanese island by defeating them though they endure many loss in the war.

The film *The Thin Red Line* bears the new historicist entities in its writing to reveal tensions on power politics. As Wilfred L. Guerin in *A Hand Book of Critical Approaches to Literature* opines New Historicism concerns itself with extra literary matters - letters, diaries, painting, medical treaties - looking to reveal opposing historical tensions in a text, Malick shares Guerin's view in the sense that he deals with cultures that collide as characters invent and reinvent themselves on new landscapes, from the west to east and east to west as such.

To wrap up, this analysis of the film has attempted to unmask the issue of war and its power politics. The research also attempts to juxtapose the dark sides of war and effect of power politics by war. Thus, this research acknowledges that Terrance Malick's film *The Thin Red Line* an exemplary example of disclosure of secrete exposure of power politics and its consequences caused by war which are often overshadowed in the name of heroism, bravery, courage, glory, sacrifice and patriotism.

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