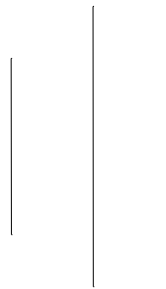
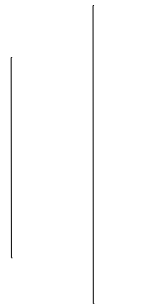


TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Vicarious Trauma in Philip Roth's *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain*



A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of M. Phil in English



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Letter of Recommendation

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Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled “Vicarious Trauma in Philip Roth’s *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Kirtipur, Kathmandu by Mr. Sudhan Dhungana has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

Philip Roth's novels--*American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain*--present American Jewishness. The main characters in these novels draw readers' attention towards the Vietnam War. This research examines Roth's narrativization from the perspectives of trauma theory. It studies the psychological suppressions in protagonists: Coleman Silk in *The Human Stain* and Seymour Levov in *American Pastoral*. Philip Roth's characters in the novels are the victims of trauma which passes in them through the characters who are suppressed by the unseen force when working with trauma victims. This research attempts to unravel the issue of vicarious trauma with relation to memory and ethics. This research focuses on how Roth depicts in these novels the post-war American life triggered by vicarious traumatic dread because of American violence in Vietnam. The significance of this study is a new way of understanding the Vietnam War trauma in mentioned characters. So far as this research is concerned, it can be another brick to put on the wall of knowing Jewish and vicarious trauma.

Chapter I

Philip Roth's Novels and American Life

Philip Roth's novels *American Pastoral* (1997) and *The Human Stain* (2000) portray the life of different characters in America. In *American Pastoral*, the focal point the story is a Jewish character, called Swede Levov, an old friend of narrator, Nathan Zukerman, is an outstanding former athlete. He is a successful businessman and a devoted husband and father. He is living pastoral life in rural Old Rimrock, New Jersey. His daughter, Merry, is involved in anti-Vietnam War movement and plants a bomb at the local post office, killing people. Swede's desire to live his life as a reputed American is shattered forever. The novel revolves forth and back time and again in its plot. Levov tries to find out the cause of his daughter's ill human activity and finds himself a tragic man. His Jewish identity relates to his daughter's revolutionary nature to the fact of the base of his life in America. Roth dramatizes the hidden war effect in American people through Merry. Levov lives a problematic life after his daughter's underground. How could it be possible Levov himself doesn't know? He is forced to remember long forgotten fact of his Jewish identity. Roth reiterates the perception of community and belongings, loyalty and betrayal and political situation of America through the novel. The father- daughter relationship is woven in such a way that the novel compasses many political facts in American society and reaction of Vietnam War policy. The post Vietnam War society in America is still living in the fantasy of pseudo secure society. Post World War II America is still giving a way to violence in different form.

In *The Human Stain*, main character Coleman Silk is living his life hiding his Jewish identity since so long. He is a retired professor of Athena College after giving resignation from the post. He is accused of racism, where if he reveals his own

identity as a light skinned black, then he would not have to face the racism charge. But he continuously hides his real identity. After the resignation from college his wife dies. Novel begins from Silk's appeal to his neighbor Nathan Zukerman, the narrator of the novel to write his personal history. Silk's love affair with Faunia Farley, a divorcee woman of thirty four, becomes the cause of his own doom. Faunia's ex-husband Lester Farley continuously blames her of killing their two small children. The love of Silk and Faunia becomes the matter of concern for all in the society. Lester is a Vietnam vet who suffers from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). Time and again he chases Silk and Faunia, and his chasing as a threat starts to emerge in Faunia's heart. The problem and tragedy continues and accidentally becomes the cause of death of both lovers. The narrator lastly happens to know the real history of Coleman Silk who was the second child of light skinned African American. Silk falls in love with a white girl named Iris. He abandons his house to live with Irish hiding his real identity as an African American. With three boys and a girl he lives happily with Irish. Zukerman, the narrator raises his interest in Silk's life and starts to write the novel. He concludes that if Silk had revealed his real identity he would not have to face charge of racism in Athena College. His demise is product of his racial disguise.

The Human Stain is the novel where Professor Coleman Silk is in love with Faunia Farley, who is a woman having children with a PTSD patient husband who is working through the trauma of Vietnam War. *The Human Stain* is a testimonial on twentieth-century morality that could not have been expressed as well by any other writer. In love with Faunia, Coleman wants his story to be written by the narrator Nathan Zukerman. Narrator investigates about him and finds his real identity more different than his expectation. Coleman has in a way identity crisis. He looks white by change but he was born to black couple. He hides his real identity. The revealing of

his true identity makes Zukerman suspects what the real cause of his hiding identity is. Coleman falls in love with a tall girl from the Midwest and is deathly afraid she will learn the truth about his racial heritage. This relationship does not last long, however, as Coleman meets Iris, the woman who is destined to be his wife. Coleman makes the conscious choice not to tell Iris about his racial heritage and instead invents a story in which he is an only child and an orphan. Coleman and Irish have four children three boys and a girl. However he falls in love with a girl half of his age.

Faunia's ex-husband, Lester Farley, is a Vietnam Vet who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. Faunia is divorced even though Lester follows her frequently. He is mentally disturbed because he has witnessed the ill human catastrophe in battle field. While following Faunia all the time he accuses her to kill their children which are not proven in the novel. That is his manifestation of trauma in madness. Lester decides he must kill Coleman in order to fix what went wrong between him and his buddy in Vietnam. Lester drives in the wrong lane on a river road to force Coleman's car into the river, unaware that Faunia is in the car with Coleman.

Coleman had written to another professor at college, Delphine Roux who knew more about Silk and his love affair with Faunia. Delphine is the man who helps Coleman in every problem he has been through. In the funeral of Coleman, Delphine offered her final insult by staging a fake break-in and blaming it on Coleman, all to cover the fact that she accidentally sent a personal ad e-mail describing Coleman as the perfect man to all her department colleagues.

Nathan meets Faunia's father after the funeral and learns that she was not illiterate as she made everyone believe that she was illiterate. After that Nathan meets Coleman's sister, Ernestine. Ernestine tells him about Coleman's past history specially

childhood, of his decision to pass as white, and her older brother Walt's decision to forbid Coleman from contacting the family ever again. She had nothing to say for his choice of living his life the way he wanted. Ernestine loves Coleman she had contact with him but rest of the family member had not. Ernestine tells Nathan more about Coleman's writing and books and Coleman's past.

Back home Zukerman meets Lester. He was fishing on a small lake by the road side. Zukerman asks some question to him. Zukerman hope to get the real information of the accident but Lester makes a story to cover the accident and leaves him with the feeling that it would be better for him to leave the town when he is done with the writing at the end of the novel.

The 1960s was civil right movement period in American history. The civil rights movement was one crucial factor that made people think about what was the demand of time. America had faced discomfort from centuries in the name of racism and discrimination. Be it African American movement be it Woman Right movement be it animal right movement the assimilation of this revolution is the civil right movement. There were riots almost all over the nation. Starting form Martin Luther King Junior's nonviolent demonstration there were various riots in American ghettos and cities. Dangerous blasting like in the novel in Newark by Merry links the real American society's reality. Blacks were minority so is the situation of Jews. Post war scenario presented in the novel links history.

American Pastoral is another book by the same writer Philip Roth which is an account of history of twentieth century America. This novel is almost a path of American history from Second World War to social restlessness of 1960s and 1970s. In the first section "Paradise Remembered" of the novel where Seymour Levov (the Swede) is living his life as a high school hero. He is a sport hero in predominantly

Jewish Weequahic Newark, New Jersey; the time is the shortly after Second World War. The narrator is unnamed for some time in the novel. He presents the background of Swede having brother name Jerry. Father Lou Levov runs a glove making business. He is wealthy Jew in Newark. Completing his high school he joins the Marines, just as World War II was coming to an end. While in the marines he gets engaged to a non-Jewish girl, but his father breaks up the marriage, after that he marries Dawn Dwyer.

After ten years Nathan Zuckerman meets Swede, in reunion party of the then school friends—who is about seventy years old. Zuckerman goes to dinner in Swede's house he shows Zuckerman pictures of back in the days. He is living with three sons and a daughter and his wife. After few months Zuckerman meets Jerry, from him he comes to know that Swede died few days earlier and Swede's daughter bombed a post office in that town. From the few clues Zuckerman has, he sets out to imagine what the Swede's life might have been like with his daughter, before and after the bombing. He puts this issue in the novel. This writing technique of Philip Roth is metafictional one.

In the novel's second section, "The Fall" Zuckerman discusses from Swede's perspective. Four months after the bombing Rita Cohen, a young lady comes to see the Swede. She tells the Swede she's come on Merry's behalf. He hopes to meet Merry after that and he gives Rita ten thousand dollars for Merry, but doesn't get to see her. Later on Rita disappeared. Swede waits for five years to see Merry during this he tries to figure out what was the reason behind bombing. At the end of the five years he gets a letter from Rita Cohen telling him where Merry is. He finds Merry and learns that she really was the bomber, that she has killed three more people, that she has been raped twice, and that she considers herself a Jain and has taken a vow of non-violence. Swede also learns that Merry's speech therapist hid her for the first few days

after the bombing. The section ends with a brutal conversation between the Swede and his brother Jerry, where Jerry blames the Swede for what's become of Merry.

The novel's final section "Paradise Lost" Swede imagines his life with family members in Rimrock. Because his life has changed the course from harmonious to disharmonious days. Swede returns home after his visit with Merry, They discuss Merry with some anxiety. Soon after, the Swede gets a call from Rita Cohen, accusing him of trying to take Merry away from her. Swede confront her about hiding Merry in her apartment just after the Rimrock bombing—a fact he's just learned from Merry. Swede tries hiding Merry out of the awful room. The novel ends with the Swede's father getting "stabbed" (352) in the face with a fork when he's trying to force a very drunk Jessie Orcutt to eat pie. The fork barely misses Lou's eye. Novel does not give the detail of the physical injuries in details. But Zukerman ends the novel with these lines: "They'll never recover. Everyone is against [the Levovs], everyone and everything that does not like their life. All the voices from without, condemning and rejecting their life! And what is wrong with their life? What on earth is less reprehensible than the life of the Levovs" (355-356).

The focus of the story is Jewish character in the rubric of Americanism. His rebellious sixteen-year-old daughter, Merry, gets caught up in the anti-Vietnam War movement and plants a bomb at the local post office, killing many. Swede does not understand what has happened in front of him. He is in shock that how could this happen. This bombing takes readers to understand what had happened in the history. The Vietnam War policy for new generation was not actable. In the name of the protest along with the civil rights movement the underground movement of hitting American administration goes no like in series. Roth's exploring of the real psychological reality writing this novel provides profound possibility to the real truth.

Jewish cultural values and assimilation with local people their identity is once again suspected because the holocaust trauma once again plays the role in it. To know father-daughter relations, familial loyalty and betrayal, and political fanaticism this research seeks a theoretical modality in further chapters.

These mentioned novels hence, accentuate the consistent trauma of the characters that after takes the form of transferred trauma. For this research Roth's characters Coleman Silk and Swede Levov, how they are facing the problem in their lives, is the research question. There is connection of these two characters if it is seen through trauma studies. The suffering of Levov and death of Silk is none other than the transference of trauma from other characters.

Philip Roth's novels present the society, where the characters are living their normal life. Jewish identity becomes a matter of great concern for the people in society in America all the time. The main characters from the novels--*American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain*--both draw the reader's attention towards their lives. The Vietnam War trauma especially in the form of PTSD is working there as a repetitive nature. The basic nature of traumatic person is the victim of being haunted by the psychic disorder. The holocaust trauma of being Jew as a second citizen in America in the first novel *American Pastoral* and the tragedy of the protagonist Coleman Silk, in the second novel, *The Human Stain*; are the victims who frequently come into the grip of trauma.

Philip Roth's characters in the novels are the victims of trauma that pass through transference of trauma from other characters. Faunia's ex-husband, Lester Farley's Vietnam War transforms to Coleman Silk and becomes the cause of his death in *The Human Stain*. By the same token, Merry's anti Vietnam War protest as a

trauma transfers to Swede Levov in the *American Pastoral*. The lot of these characters is guided by PTSD, which gives them terribly blow time and time again in their lives. *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain* are widely read novels of the Philip Roth. Tragic tale, tinged with the time's disgust influence of Vietnam War, has become a castle of American livelihood. Swede's transferred victimhood in the *American Pastoral* and Coleman Silk's tragic end the doom of repressive nature of his identity is particularly satisfying in *The Human Stain*. Under the rubric of Trauma Study researcher particularly focuses on the ideas advanced by Lary Ray, Dominick La Capra, Avishai Margalit, Kali Taal and etc. The significance of this research is to provide a new way of understanding the Vietnam War trauma in American society. It can be another brick to put on the wall of knowing historical trauma. The theoretical framework to study the novel is the transformation of trauma. It has seen that much of the psychological suppression in characters, Coleman Silk in *The Human Stain* and Seymour Levov in *American Pastoral*. There is one of the hidden phenomena of Vietnam War in American standards. Another purpose of this study is to bring the traumatized characters into the limelight and pave the way to understand their deeply-rooted trauma.

Critical Responses on Philip Roth's Novels

From racial discrimination to modern terrorism, American people have witnessed many social cultural problems. Be it 9/11 attack or be it Vietnam War, everywhere people's mentality to be safe and sound in the respective place they are living. Roth tells us that evil originates in the human quest for purity. That subject of the Vietnam War most acutely manifests itself in *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain*, two novels in Roth's American trilogy, which in *The Major Phases of Philip Roth* David Gooblar argues, ". . . represents Roth's first major (selfless) engagement

with the American culture around him.” (131). There is no doubt that the novels present the American social consciousness in large scale. The reaction to the fact of Vietnam War is prolifically represented in the novels. Post war effect has been a social trauma that is the reality of America at large.

About the presentation of American cultural history in *American Pastoral*, Debora Shostak from *Philip Roth: Countertexts, Counterlives* writes, “Even with Roth’s prodigious ability to narrativize American political and cultural history, obvious in these briefly summarized novels, *American Pastoral* in particular proved laborious to write, indicated by the novel’s twenty-five year gestation period” (310).

The exact historiography is found in the novel, it is more clearly said in the lines above. Post war period in America presented in the novel. The war trauma which has a significant influence in people’s mindset at that time, more often in today’s time too. The psychological shock to the family members who have faced first hand in battle field go through the anxiety and dissatisfaction is somehow valid. But when the army cadet come back to the family being injured or in his retirement the pain and anxiety of the person starts to haunt the rest of the family members in the family. The psychological shock takes the whole family in its clutch then the problem of trauma magnifies. The passing of trauma from one to another can be seen in the novels.

Quoting the version of Alain Finkielkraut and Philip Roth, in ‘The Ghosts of Philip Roth’, *Conversations with Philip Roth*, they say,

By spending numerous years on conceptualizing both *The Human Stain* and *American Pastoral*, Roth allows himself time to digest, assess, and untangle this historical Gordian knot retrospectively, to ‘mature his credentials’ in order to capture ‘the infectious volatility of

the moment', to formulate a mythical yet comprehensible approach to an incomprehensible war. (qtd. in Carlie 5)

American in a greater circumference of disgust are living their lives especially after the Vietnam War. The war as a means of psychological disparage takes various forms in them, sometimes in the form of PTSD and sometimes victimhood and cause of death. The tragedy of Coleman Silk in the second novel *The Human Stain*, José Carlos del Ama in "Everyone Knows: Public Opinion in Philip Roth's Contemporary Tragedy *The Human Stain*" observes as a tragic hero:

Coleman Silk is much closer to Aeschylus's Prometheus, who is presented by Nietzsche, as opposed to Oedipus, as to be active tragic hero. Coleman Silk owns a titanic will, and his heroic act is to defy the fate that his biological heredity may have determined for him. As the Titan Prometheus did when he decided to steal the fire and give it to the humans. Roth's hero challenges *the will of the gods* with the decision of passing as white. And also resembling Prometheus, Silk is perfectly aware of the enormity of his decision and the tragic consequences it would have for his family. (96)

There lies the trauma transference behind the tragedy of Silk. The session of this research is to find out how trauma in its various forms can transfer to individual to individual. This tragedy of Silk is not mere tragedy, this is the result of surpasses of trauma. But for another critics Patrice Rankine who observes the tragedy of Silk as an individual case in "Passing as Tragedy: Philip Roth's *The Human Stain*, the Oedipus Myth, and the Self-Made Man" writes, ". . .the tragic connotations of passing in *The Human Stain*. The rejection of one's own race, a substantial part of the individual's identity" (104). There is no doubt he deliberately hides his identity but his demise is

not only because he had secret in his mind but it is by the ex-husband of Faunia's ex-husband, Lester Farley's continues chase. Lester is a PTSD patient, his trauma has been transferred to his family and Silk suffers from the same trauma.

On the other hand we must not forget another deep rooted Jew's Holocaust Trauma. As we know that America is land of amalgam culture. The migrant Jew from centre Europe has another identity in America. Timothy Parrish, in focusing on "the end of identity" in *American Pastoral*, develops further the theme that the earlier contributors have emphasized. He begins,

[. . .] by maintaining that Roth's definition of the self, which Parrish calls "postmodern," makes it hard to see how his books endorse a particular point of view, "Jewish" or any other. [. . .] This is especially true in *American Pastoral*, which Parrish views as a kind of tribal narrative. For Zuckerman identifies with Swede Levov as a member of our "tribe," and the narrative becomes an "elegy" for the sort of Jewish identity that Roth's earlier novels tended to undermine. (qtd. in Jay and Ben, 13)

There has been always a different identity of Jews in America. The Holocaust trauma has deeply seated in the Jews in America. When Swede Levov finds that his daughter has planted bombs to counter the Vietnam War policy again he gets jolt for his identity. He cannot deny the fact that he is a Jew. Repeatedly he is in the threat of social exclusion. The dissatisfaction of his daughter and becoming of her a fugitive becomes the medium to remind himself that back in the days he and his family has faced the massacres of his tribe. So, again he is in traumatic situation. The anxiety as a Jew has grown in his daughter to be an anti-Vietnam worrier within States.

Another critic Elaine B. Safer in *Mocking the Age* views the suffering of Swede as:

Swede is a man of sorrows. He asks the same question Job asks: "Why me?" Unlike Job, he never finds an answer. The answer Job gets is that he must not ask this question of God. The Swede is a secular person; he has no relationship with God. Zuckerman would see him as being more like Sisyphus, living in an absurd universe where life made no sense. [. . .] Though the moral seriousness of the novel is evident. (83)

The suffering of Swede is not just a family problem but there lies the fact that his daughter's involvement in anti Vietnam War. As an American Dream seeker Swede sees the near future of his exclusion from the locality where he was supposed to be one of the social man by his heart. His dream is shattered so unwillingly that his desire to be a happy man at the later part of the novel is tragic comedy.

Many critics have observed the novels from different perspectives but the session to them this proposal is for the research of the foresaid novels from the perspective of transference of Vietnam War Trauma from one character to another. This issue is new to the research, no critics has gone through both the novels under the limelight of notion of transference of trauma particularly the Vietnam War Trauma, which this researcher makes sure to go through in the following chapters of the dissertation.

Chapter II

Trauma Theory: Trauma Transmission and Vicarious Trauma

The word 'trauma' is a medical term of Greek origin which denotes a 'wound' or 'injury' that remains long lasting or resulting after effects. The term also refers to the action shown by an abnormal mind to the body. It keeps close contact with psychology and develops accordingly. Trauma is a psychological casualty, results in mental and emotional disorder. Along with the change of time the very term 'trauma' widens its limit and questions its previous assumptions. Now the word trauma not only denotes the medical and psychological domain but also the temporal, historical, cultural and other domains as well.

Trauma now has become a mode of interpretation of narrative, history culture and various other philosophical fields. Because of its wide acceptance and broader periphery, trauma cannot be limited only with medi-clinical and psychiatry. It has now developed as a theory and is now given a distinct position in the heap of theories. Modern world is not beyond the traumatic effects since the world itself bears disorder, catastrophe, destruction and devastation which are undoubtedly features of trauma. It is a matter of survival, a metaphor of existence. Modern people are directly or indirectly haunted by traumatic experiences.

Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary defines trauma as “a mental condition caused by severe shock, especially when the harmful effects last for long time, or trauma is an unpleasant experience that makes you feel upset or anxious” (1384). Trauma may be in the form of individual, natural, psychological, ethical, technological or even historical. Initiator of trauma theory like Freud, Harman, Caruth, La Capra, Luckhurst focus their views on psychological, social/cultural, absential and memorial domain respectively. They agree that trauma is an

incomprehensible phenomenon when it occurs and it is acting out and working through in the form of dreams, nightmares, anxieties and other repetitive phenomenon.

Trauma theory synthesizes resources from a number of critical schools such as historical, ethical, memorial, psychological, social, individual, philosophical and aesthetic. Roger Luckhurst, in her essay “Mixing Memory and Desire: Psychoanalysis, Psychology and Trauma Theory”, further unfolds the mentioned fact when she says, “trauma study now includes many fields, focusing on psychological, philosophical, ethical and aesthetic questions about the nature and representation of traumatic events” (497).

Trauma theory, which mainly focuses on acting out or working through, has its own issue and it cannot be explained within limited territory. Stressing on the interconnection of trauma theory with other disciplines Hartman opines that trauma should be intersected with specific ethical and socio-political-cultural aspect to provide the actual explanation of issues. The trauma theory has aroused a vivid interest among other theories and theorists. James Berger, in this regard says:

It plays the closest attention to the representational means through which an event is remembered, and yet retains the importance of the event itself, the thing that did happen. Thus a concept of trauma can be of great value in the study of history and historical narrative. The idea of trauma also allows for an interpretation of cultural symptoms of the growth, wounds, scars on a social body, and its compulsive, repeated actions. (Berger 572)

These lines clearly portray the importance of intersection of trauma theory with other critical cultural issues. Trauma theory explores and investigates the cultural aspect of

things like growth and wounds.

Trauma Transmission

Trauma is a transformative event which is realized in a variety of historical, rhetorical and cultural symptoms. Trauma theory intersects with other critical vocabularies which problematize representation and attempts to define its limits discourse of the sublime, the scared, the apocalyptic and other in all its guises. Trauma brings the aftereffects of the emotional upheavals. It leaves a catastrophic effect in the victim, and the recovery from this requires a holistic and meaningful emotional and physical development of a person.

Cathy Caruth, in her essay, "Unclaimed Experience Trauma and the Possibility of History" defines trauma as perplexing experience and other contrastive responses. Each traumatic event is the result of its own unique triggered experience. She further elaborates:

[...], trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events, in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, and uncontrolled repetitive occurrence of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena. The experience of the soldier faced with sudden and massive death around him, for example, who suffers this sight in a numbed state, only to relive it later on in repeated nightmares, is a central and recurring image of trauma in our century.
(181)

Trauma theory explores not only a phase of destruction but an enigma of survivals, a metaphor of existence. Frustrated situation, anxiety, sleeplessness, disorder, irritation, memorization of past events which become obstacle for the progress and a failure to maintain psychological equilibrium are the general characteristics of trauma. These

characteristics affect the daily survivals to an individual and in this sense trauma is described as a metaphor of existence. Trauma, now has inevitable part of life, especially in the modern devastated world, necessity of trauma is grow fonder. Traumatic figure cannot forget the event and some are haunted by nightmares and flashbacks to scenes of unimaginable horror. Modern man's life clings in dreams hallucinations, imagination, fantasy and flashback. Jeoffrey Hartman in his essay "On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies" further clarifies this concept. According to him, "Where there is dream there is (was) trauma" (546). In the same essay Hartman also clarifies the atmosphere of trauma. He writes, "For it is clear that accidents too that is, apparently simple, daily events uncover, or are drawn into, an atmosphere of trauma" (546).

Freud, a related critic and main explorer of trauma theory relates trauma with the study of hysteria. Later Freud also relates trauma with historical development. Especially in *Moses and Monotheism*, Freud elaborates the concept of trauma with historical development of entire culture. According to Freudian analysis, "Memory of traumatic event can be lost over time but then regained in a symptomatic form when triggered by some similar event" (Berger, 570).

James Berger outlines the Freudian mode of trauma theory in his famous essay *Unclaimed Experience*. He states:

Freud's earlier idea, in *Studies in Hysteria*, concerned the dynamics of trauma, repression, and symptom formation. Freud held that an overpowering event, unacceptable to consciousness can be forgotten and yet return in the form of somatic symptoms or compulsive, repetitive behaviors. This initial theory of trauma and symptom became problematic for Freud when he concluded that neurotic

symptoms were more often the result of repressed drives and desires than of traumatic events. Freud returned to the theory of trauma in *beyond the pleasure principle*, a work which originated in his treatment of World War I combat veterans who suffered from repeated nightmares and other symptoms of their wartime experiences. (Berger 570)

The phenomena of trauma, particularly hysteria in Freudian analysis, were closely linked to the modernity, especially to the industrial revolution and its dangerous new machine as well as to link with Great wars. Modern world, disintegrated with its historical perspective, mainly due to the destruction of earlier norms and values, development of modern technology, urbanization, industrialization, possession of colony results in Great wars and capitalism establishes itself in a definitive break from the past. People in the modern world no longer remain aloof from the mechanization of machine and man now has become a cog of machine. Dehumanization, degeneration and disenchantment are familiar to the modern people. Because of the urbanization and industrialization, the atmosphere has increasingly grown more noisy, ugly and smoky. The abnormal activities no longer regard the wrong to progress and achievement since almost all the modern people falls in the trap of abnormality. Not only this but also modern world is not beyond existential anxiety because of the lack of self-affirmation of the modern people. The undergoing suffering from all sort of activities and experiences somehow lead the modern people to the path of traumatic survivor.

Freud and Breuer in their famous work *Studies in Hysteria*, note that the symptoms of hysteria are the result of trauma. They also investigate that the fantasies get attached to traumatic events. According to their view trauma has some sort of

gender attachments. Males largely have traumatic effects from accidents, women from watching the sick parents or children or from extreme sexual repression. Roger Luckhurst in her essay "Mixing Memory and Desire Psychoanalysis, Psychology and Trauma Theory" critically comments on the Freudian or Breurian theory of trauma. She comments, "Freud is conventionally caricatured as reducing everything to sexuality and seduction theory" (500).

Jeoffery Hartman, especially in his essay "Trauma within the Limit of Literature" turn off the Freudian or say psychoanalytical perspective of trauma and unfolds its relationship with literature or literary works. At one point of the essay Hartman explores the relation of trauma with language itself. In his essay "On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies" he remarks, "Trauma theory throws a light on figurative or poetic language, and perhaps symbolic process in general, as something other than of a prior (non) experience" (540).

As it has been already pointed out that the trauma explains the unexplainable of events, persons and situations, its major emphasis in literature lies in the fact of interpretation of disorder, anxiety, distress, destruction, misrepresentation, odd presentation caused mainly due to the mental repression and abnormal activities. Hartman writes "The post- traumatic story often needs a suspension of disbelief" (541). Hartman copes with this idea in Coleridge's famous poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" where according to Hartman requires a kind of empathy i.e. suspension of disbelief. He explores the relationship between worlds, images and wounds in this poem. He further clarifies:

Imagination purposes a body-the body and atmosphere of fact. It tries to make us believe the unbelievable; it demands the acknowledgement of being real not only imagined. The means for doing so include

somatic feelings. We are drawn into a species of belief by the recovery of certain visceral sensation: extremes of heat, cold and thirst, glare of color, horror of the void, loss of speech. Perhaps the only way to overcome a traumatic severance of body and mind is to come back to mind through the body. We recall how voice drives up, and chokes its way out again. (541)

Through these lines it is clear that, literary study or say literature enables traumatic knowledge to become a part of personal and cultural memory. Literature provides clues for the unexplainable and it makes trauma studies lighter and easier.

Regarding the issue of trauma and literature Hartman's major trust lies in another essay, "Trauma within the Limit of Literature". In this essay He relates trauma with literature as well as language and questions the Freud's earlier hypothesis regarding trauma theory. What Freud hypothesized earlier in his works regarding trauma had a culture-specific component. Trauma study is motivated by concern about social and moral well-being. Hartman's major focus in this essay is trauma study in art or literature exploring the relation between psychic wounds and signification. How trauma study affects the formation of words in particular and of language in general is his focus. He answers through these lines:

How trauma affects the formation of words or how worlds deal with trauma, can be viewed as a technical matter in which the focus becomes what region and processes of the brain are involved. But neurology, cognitive science, or a formal therapy are not the primary concerns of trauma study in arts. In so far as there is an established field to which it belongs, it would be close to semiology in Saussure's definition as the study of signs within the context of social interaction.

(258)

Hartman traces out the historical interpretation of literary works and has made a special comment on it. According to him literature has been analyzed from a political perspective and our duty is to read literature from a traumatic point of view. This sort of reading provides much more refractive idea. In his essay “On Traumatic Knowledge and Literary Studies”, he further argues:

Trauma studies provide a more natural transition to a real world often falsely split off from that of the university, as if the one were activist and engaged and the other self-absorbed and detached. There is an opening that leads from trauma studies to public, especially mental health issues, an opening with ethical, cultural and religious implication. (543-544)

It is clear that trauma study provides a real model to interpret literary works. There is no doubt that trauma study provides more accurate, more authentic and more realistic mode of interpretation rather than other interpretive mode since it deals with unexplainable of the things.

Trauma may result out of various stress-related disorder such as attachment disorder, somatize disorder, conduct disorder, and dissociate reaction or even eating disturbances of a victim. Trauma effects may also be catered as multiple personalities, paranoia, anger sleep problem and difficulty to trusting people and difficult relationship with fellowship. Hartman's investigation makes clear that trauma theory has opened up may new modes in the study of mind-body relation. Trauma is mainly concerned with psychosomatic network extending into the body. Traumatic events are laid down as perceptual, somatic-sensory experience, or as implicit memory. Making his notion stronger Cathy Caruth argues, "[...], trauma is an unexpected or over

whelming violent event or event that are not fully grasped as they occur but other repetitive phenomena" ("Traumatic Awakening" 10).

Similarly, Cathy Caruth in "Unclaimed Experiences: Trauma, Narrative and History", mainly deals with the "question of reference and representation: how trauma becomes text, or how wound becomes voice" (Berger 5). Caruth argues that trauma as it first occurs incomprehensible. Berger cites Caruth to claim that historical narrative arises from traumatic repetition. Caruth argues that "the historical narrative arises from such intersections of traumatic repetitions, that history like trauma, is never simply one's own, that history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other's trauma" (Berger 5). In the very essay Caruth relates the traumatic situation with referential aspect. Trauma is an experience which is assimilated only with latency. She argues, "The experience of trauma, the fact of latency, would thus seem to consist, not in the forgetting of a reality that can hence never be fully known, but in an inherent latency within the experience itself" (187). Caruth also exposes the history of trauma and how it comprehends, she clarifies:

[...] to be a history of trauma means that it is referential precisely to the extent that it is not fully perceived as it occurs, or to put it somewhat differently, that a history can be grasped only in the very inaccessibility of its occurrence. (187)

"Parting Words: Trauma, Silence and Survival", Caruth's best known essay regarding trauma, examines an enigma at the heart of Freud's work on trauma. She analyses the striking, juxtaposition in Freud's founding work beyond the pleasure principle:

[...]. My own understanding of Freud's insight did not emerge, however, simply through a reading of his text but began, in fact, in my encounter with a real child in Atlanta, a child whose best friend was

murdered in the street and who is interviewed by the friend's mother. I thus read together the language of the nightmare and the language of the child in Freud's text, and then attempt to understand how Freud's text, and the language of the real child shed light upon each other. (8)

Berger in his essay "Unclaimed Experiences" cites Caruth to elucidate the concept of problematic ground of trauma theory propounded by Geoffery Harman, Elaine Scarry and Slavoj Žižek. Berger's major focus in this fact is that trauma theory explores the relation between pain and language, in its narrative, historical and ethical dimensions. Caruth states that the effect of traumatic event lies in its belatedness in its refusal to be simply located. Narrative of trauma is strongly referential. It can be understood only with reference in an indirect way.

Theory of trauma has crossed the boundaries of psychiatry and mediclinical and has shown its close affinity with external effects of violence in psychic disorder. That is why there is no single trauma but traumas, such as, historical, national, individual, ethical, aesthetic, betrayal and war trauma. Each traumatic event is the result of its own unique "triggered" experience.

Dominick LaCapra's theory of trauma has its own special form. Generally, LaCapra's trauma theory is understood on three psychoanalytic topics: the return of the repressed, acting out versus working through, and the dynamics of transference. He is concerned primarily with the return of the repressed as discourse, rather than with physical returns, and he outlines two symptomatic possibilities for the return of historical trauma as discourse. LaCapra emphasizes the role of working through and acting out traumatic situations. The most pervasive concerns of LaCapra are transference. In this regard Berger writes:

Transference in psychoanalysis is itself a return of the repressed, or

rather a more conscious summarizing of the repressed; transference repeats or acts out a past event or relationship in a new, therapeutic setting that allows for critical evaluation and change. Transference is the occasion for working through the traumatic symptom. It is imperative therefore to recognize the symptom and the trauma as one's own, to acknowledge that the trauma still is active and that one is implicated in its destructive effects. (4)

So it is clear that trauma is not limited to psychoanalytical territory but it widens its limit and territory with the development of historical and structural trauma. LaCapra in his outstanding essay "Trauma, Absence and Loss" talks about the distinction between historical and structural trauma and also differentiates the notion of "Absence" and "Loss". He outlines the concept of Trauma Recovery Center, and its function in the field of marginalized sector especially victims. He clarifies this fact through these lines:

The Trauma Recovery Centre also provided a forum for the voices - often the suppressed, repressed, or uneasily accommodated voices - of certain victims who were being heard for the first time in the public sphere. [...]. This complicated past was none to be disclosed truthfully in order for a process of working it through to be historically informed and to make some chance of being effective ritually and politically in creating both a livable society and a national collectively. (696)

In the same essay LaCapra elaborates the distinction between "Absence" and "Loss". These stakes certainly include intellectual clarity and cogency, but they also have ethical and political dimensions. To clear this argument LaCapra further states:

Post apartheid South Africa and post-Alazi Germany face the problem

of acknowledging and working through historical losses in ways that affect different groups differently. Indeed, the problems for beneficiaries, earlier oppression in both countries is how to recognize and the losses of former victims, [...]. (697)

Trauma deals with how the victim endeavors to cope with post traumatic event which now haunts him/her. He describes two important implications of his view regarding the historical trauma. First trauma provides a method of rethinking post-modern and post-structuralist theories with the historical context. Berger cites LaCapra and views, "The postmodern and the post-Holocaust became mutually intervened issues that are best addressed in relation to other" (4). Secondly, LaCapra provides historical text other the literary cannons, suggesting that a canonical text should not help permanently install an ideological order but should rather "help one to foreground ideological problems and work through them critically" (4). Each text would be, in effect a site of trauma with which the reader would have to engage. But LaCapra dares not examine the relations between historical trauma and any literary text although literature can be the site of acting out or working through traumas. So, LaCapra talks about "working through" rather than "acting out". Literature is the site of symptomatic acting out combined with critical, playful working through.

Kali Tal's notion of trauma is slightly different from that of LaCapra and Caruth. Tal's main discussions deal with recent critical approaches to the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, literature produced by American veterans of World War, Vietnam War and testimonies of women survivors of incest and child abuse. Tal's chief concern is the social appropriation of individual testimonies. Remaining quite different from LaCapra and Caruth, Tal views that the literature of trauma consists only of the writings of victims and survivor of trauma.

Tal is very clear in her notion of traumatic literature. According to Tal, literature of trauma not only keeps relationship with writer's identity but it also deals with the traumatic experience of the writer. Berger comments Tal's view about traumatic literature and says:

Literature of trauma is defined by the identity of its author. The work of the critic of literature of trauma is both to identify and explicate literature by members of survivor groups and to deconstruct the process by which the dominant culture codifies their traumatic experiences. (6)

There line simply generates the idea of traumatic literature and its relationship with author. Relating traumatic literature with the identity of its author Tal is closer to the notion of somatic disorder which indicates that memories whether they are sweet or traumatic not only stay in brain but also in other parts of body. Simply speaking, her experimentation with traumatic literature gives clues to claim that traumatic literature exposes almost all the experiences of the writer. In other words, traumatic literature outlines the writer's traumatic experiences.

Kali Tal widens the periphery of trauma, relating it with life threatening event. She extends the very concept of mental trauma, which is described as the neurosis as a disorder, and relates it with physical domain. She views that, trauma is a life threatening event that displaces one's preconceived notion about the world. The stress of Tal lies in the fact that events must be experienced firsthand and not vicariously perceived as mediated through any textual conduct. In other words, trauma is known as threat to life or bodily integrity, or a close personal encounter with violence and death. The extra-ordinary events closely affect the victims and they come fundamentally as the trauma itself, which hampers the psychological as well as

physical development of a person.

Similarly, Jenny Edkins in her essay "Introduction: Trauma, Violence and Political Community" strengthens the Kali Tal's view regarding trauma theory. She states that the trauma theory now has become a mode of discourse which studies any text in relation with trauma violence and political community. She elaborates the concept of trauma mentioning the fact that each traumatic figure has a distinct tale to tell because of the violence they have faced. She opines, "Some traumatic people are haunted by nightmares and flashback to scenes of unimaginable horror. In their dreams they re-live their battlefield experiences and awake in a sweat" (1). She relates trauma with political community and violence and also examines the connection between these terms. In the same essay, she explores how traumas such as wars or persecutions are inscribed and re-inscribed into everyday narrative. She further says through these lines:

Trauma takes place in practices of remembrance, memorialization and witnessing. It also takes places in political action. All these practices are the site of struggle. For example, the temporality and inexpressibility of trauma makes the role of the witness an almost unbearable one [...]. I agree that the process of inscription into liner narrative, whilst possibly necessary from some point of view - it is argued that telling the story alleviates traumatic stress [...]. And that there is an alternative, that of encircling the trauma. (15)

These lines makes clear the fact that, narrative of trauma requires a sort of historical implication that is closely attached with catastrophe of human civilization due to the different types and sizes of war. Trauma studies in literature outline the turmoil of victims. The result of trauma has become a tool of a literary and cultural analysis,

which undoubtedly keeps close contact with political community and violence respectively. Edkin's notion of trauma elaborates the trauma's relation with catastrophe horror, death and violence. She views that we can find trauma everywhere because of the frustrated, devastated destructive worldview of modern life. In modern chaotic or mechanize world people find chaos is closer than peace, which makes them traumatize. Saying differently, trauma cannot be isolated from contemporary socio-political situation and it keeps intimate relationship with day to day phenomena.

After traumatic events, there is struggle over memory according to Edkin "Memory is not straightforward, especially in the case of traumatic memory" (16).

Elaborate this concept of traumatic memory she states:

As far as memory is concerned how we remember a near, for example, and the way in which we acknowledge and describe what we call trauma can be very much influenced by dominant views, that is by the state. However, it is not determined by them: their influence and the state structure itself can be contested and challenged. (11)

In the view of Edkins, traumatic experiences can be resulted when there is a mismatch between expectation and event. Traumatic experience may also arise in the forms of revelation since trauma cannot be comprehended when it first occurs. Edkins cites Stavoj Zizek to make strong her argument. He writes, "The essence of trauma is precisely that it is too horrible to be remembered, to be integrated into our symbolic universe. All we have to do is to mark repeatedly the trauma as such" (Edkins 1).

Ultimately, Edkins relates traumatic experiences with war, horror, catastrophe political instability, chaotic situation and violence.

Vicarious Trauma

Among the different types of trauma, 'vicarious trauma,' this is also

referred to as secondary trauma, is a normal response to repeated exposure and empathetic engagement with traumatic material? This type of trauma occurs to the secondary witness to traumatic events. In such case, a person is traumatic because of his/her empathetic engagement with the victimhood and empathy with the victim seems to become an identity. So, vicarious trauma occurs because one cares or empathizes with people who are suffering. The role of empathy is important here. Empathy is ability to identify with another person, to understand and feel another person's pain. Empathy is a major resource for trauma workers, who use it to assess survivor's problems.

In other words, vicarious trauma can be thought of as the negative changes that happen to humanitarian workers over time as they witness other people's suffering. Vicarious trauma is the result of opening up one's mind to the worst in human experience—natural and human-made disasters, and human cruelty. When a person witnesses the suffering of people he cares about and feels responsible to help, over time this can change the way he sees himself and world, and these challenges can change his spirituality or his deepest sense of meaning and purpose, hope and faith. He comes to question his deepest belief about the way of life and existence. Humanitarian workers often use the phrase “existential angst” to refer to the result of opening up their sense that they are constantly pushed out of their comfort zone. So, vicarious trauma is the process of change that happens because one cares about other people who have been hurt, and feel committed to responsible to help them. Over time this process can lead to changes in his psychological, physical, and spiritual well-being.

In this sense, ‘vicarious trauma’ is psychological term used to refer to a transformation in a therapist or any other humanitarian worker as a result of working

with client's traumatic experiences. Perlman Saakvitne in their *Trauma and The Therapist: Countertransference and Vicarious Traumatization in Psychotherapy with Incest Survivors* describe vicarious trauma as “[t]he inner transformation that occurs in the inner experience of the therapist [or other professional] that comes about as a result of empathic engagement with client's trauma material” (31). Vicarious trauma is best defined as a transformation is the helper's inner sense of identity and existence that results from utilizing controlled empathy when listening to client's trauma-content narratives. In other orders, vicarious trauma is what happens to the helper's neurological or cognitive, physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual health when he listens to traumatic stories day after day or responds to traumatic situations. A transformation occurs to his inner-self as well as his perception of the world, which can cause serious important-depression, anxiety, addition. Vicarious trauma is also referred to as compassion fatigue or secondary traumatic stress disorder.

Vicarious trauma can affect many aspect of a person's life. It may consist of short-term reactions, or log-term effects that continue long after the work has finished. Some have even argued that its effects are potentially permanent. Some effects of vicarious traumatizaion parallel those experienced by the primary victim. The empathetic engagement with the victim can lead to a person experiencing the symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. The person may experience nightmares, flashbacks, obsessive thoughts, physiological reactions and other persistent re-experiencing of the traumatic event. He may also experience anxiety, depression, de-personalization, increased irritability, low self-esteem, procrastination, etc. Connected to these experiences, vicarious traumatizaion may also involve a change in a person's belief about himself, the world, and other people within it. In short, vicarious trauma is the effect of bearing witness to the emotional pain and the explicit

details of another person's suffering, loss, and trauma.

Martin Hoffman summarizes vicarious trauma as a proper reporting findings of in-depth interviews with clinicians that he conducted together Tatiana Friedman. As he writes:

It is a process of change in the therapist's inner experiences—the normal and understandable bi-product of personal engagement with client's trauma memories and narrative descriptions. [. . .] they often reported intrusive thoughts, efforts to avoid thinking about their patient's traumas, somatic symptoms such as headaches, nausea, sleeplessness, intrusive imagery triggered by something innocent at home like a child sobbing; also increased feelings of personal vulnerability, difficulty trusting others, emotional numbing and flooding, and other changes in their beliefs about themselves and others. (34)

While Charles Figley had suggested that clinician's empathy plays a role in the impact of working with victims, Hoffman, whose research on empathy is well known, goes on to cast vicarious trauma “within a comprehensive theory of empathy—based on pro-social behavior” (2), so as to explore in depth its relevance to therapists' behavior trigger the painful effects of empathic distress.

Regarding vicarious trauma, E. Ann Kaplan in the essay “Why Trauma Now” holds that the reader or viewer of stories or films about traumatic situations may be constituted through vicarious or secondary trauma. He further says, “indeed most of us most of the time experience trauma in the ‘secondary’ rather than direct position, for good or ill” (39). His main concern is that while clinicians have described and theorized vicarious trauma, there is the absence of concrete research about vicarious

trauma in the field of humanities.

Dominic LaCapra, a leading scholar in the field of vicarious trauma theory, has produced some works that address the moral and hermeneutical dimensions of representing traumatic history and the Holocaust in particular. In *History and Memory After Auschwitz*, LaCapra deals with the nature of history and memory following the Holocaust. LaCapra sets about examining history and memory in a post-Holocaust age: What does it mean to remember? What is remembered and to what purpose? What is the precise role of forgetting? The book leaves the reader with a probing sense of the difficulties and surround the very act of remembering the Holocaust. Concerned primarily with the generation of individuals who did not experience Nazi horror directly yet who have lived with its memory all their lives, the book launches a thoughtful probe into some of the ensuing problematics.

Regarding vicarious trauma, he further argues that the response of even secondary witness to traumatic events must involve empathic unsettlement. According to him when the virtually experience involved in empathy gives way to vicarious victimhood, and empathy with the victim seems to become an identity. He further says, “a post-traumatic response of unsettlement becomes questionable when it is routinized in methodology or style that enacts compulsive repetition, including the compulsively repetitive turn to the aporia, paradox or impasse” (729).

In this essay, LaCapra alludes to ways in which absence misunderstood as loss can manifest itself in destructive forms of nationalism. He also identifies in such confusion a more subtle violence towards difference, through misplaced empathy that folds the other (the real victim) into the self. According to LaCapra, to violently empathize is to expand the space of the self, constructing social symmetry where there is none.

Another critic Geoffrey Hartman, in his work “Trauma and within the limits of literature”, contends that we have always been, or are in danger of being “captive observers” (257). He believed that a secondary traumatization threatens the bystander who views mechanically transmitted picture of violence and sorrow form all over the world. He writes:

The mind’s safe house is no longer safe; in a globalized “society and communication,” John Donne’s “Do not send for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee” resonates in unexpected ways. An anxiety arises that produces a desire for not-knowing rather than knowledge. The internal other is jeopardized: that profoundly private image guaranteeing the possibility of thought itself, of an inner dialogue that outlasts invasive empathy or defensive innervations. It is jeopardized not only as regards the victim but also the secondary witness. (257)

Vicarious trauma is interrelated with memory and ethics. Trauma is a complex form of memory; trauma comes because of the horrible past memories. ‘Memory’ is a label for a diverse set of cognitive capacities by which humans retain information and reconstruct past experiences, usually for present purposes. In psychology, memory is an organism’s ability to store, retain, and recall information. Traditional studies of memory began in the field of philosophy, including techniques of artificially enhancing the memory. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century put memory within the paradigms of cognitive psychology. In recent decades, it has become one of the principal pillars of a branch of science called cognitive neuroscience, and interdisciplinary link between cognitive psychology and neuroscience.

Plato thought that search for knowledge is tied up with memory, the effort to recall something we collectively knew. Freud took memory even further, positing that

repressed memories are the key to shaping up as individuals and as a society. Avishai Margalit, the author of the book *The Ethics of Memory*, takes up these issues in respect to an idea of communal memory. Acknowledging that historical religious “can make a bid on moral memory of humanity as a whole” (9), he instead poses a question: “Is there an ethics of memory?” (6). Margalit writes:

The topic of this book is the ethics of memory, with a question mark: Is there an ethics of memory? I consider this topic distinct from the closely related subjects of the psychology and memory, the politics of memory, and even the theology of memory. I believe that it is an important question to ask and not merely a futile administrative exercise in channeling issues to this or to that intellectual department.

(60)

Margalit is concerned with the ethics of memory of the duty of remembrance.

According to him we have ethical obligations to remember.

In this book, Margalit explores the ethical significance of memory with special reference to the potential value of even obligation to serve as the agent of historical memory for those who suffered and perished in the Holocaust. Margalit believes that we do have obligations to remember people or events from the past. He concludes, with the “ethics of memory is the ethics of collective memory” (48). He maintains that the source of this obligation to remember comes from the effort of radical evil forces to undermine morality by rewriting the past and controlling collective memory.

Vicarious trauma is also interrelated with ethics. In it, the ‘ethics’ of the secondary witness is with victimhood. *Dictionary of Philosophy* defines ‘ethics’ as a body of doctrine concerning what is right and wrong, good and bad, in respect of character and conduct” (137). It is particular kind of an idea or moral belief that

influences the behavior, attitudes and philosophy of life of a group of people. It is the study of issue concerning on what is morally right or wrong.

Hence, vicarious trauma, profoundly interrelated with memory and ethics, has moved beyond the parameters of clinical study to become a preoccupation among literary and cultural critics. Now, a unique and realistic discourse, 'Trauma studies' has become intrinsically multidisciplinary. Geoffrey Hartman in his work "Trauma within the Limits of Literature", defines Trauma study in the arts and literature. He writes:

As a specifically literature endeavor, trauma studies explores the relation of words and wounds. Its main focus is on words that wound, and presumably can be healed, if at all, by further words. But hurt, striking deeper than realized, may also come through the inadequacy of words when they cannot find a response, or convey reality, or redress other shocks including the impact of visual images. (258)

Hartman, considering trauma within the limits of language and literature, further says that trauma theory within literary studies does shift attention, in any case, to the medium of words, their forcefulness as well as importance. It is a shift with both an intriguing and more dubious consequence. According to him, when we speak of the nightmare suffering of war, or of the Holocaust's break with civilized values, those extra ordinary determinations of trauma differ from such ordinary ones as an unguarded word or deliberate insult, or a deliberate insult, or more violent but still random excitations that inflict psychic pain.

Thus trauma study has moved beyond the parameters of clinical study to draw much attention of literary and cultural critics. It has also become intrinsically multidisciplinary. Above all, trauma has become a socially, morally and politically

acceptable object to revolve around on the ground of multiculturalists institutional survival in the act of finding a sublimated object. Trauma can also be dealt with catastrophic history which carries the affective force of tragic events, captures the cynical reason of this moment and continues to function as a cultural trope that structure public attention, even as it devolves into a species of cliché. Now, trauma, no longer revolve around the mind and psychology, it has become cultural necessity because of its wide territory. To the great extent a traumatic event, traumatic analysis is both exploration and experimentation. Thus a concept of trauma can be at great value in the study of history, narrative and historical narrative and also of narrative in general, as the verbal representation of traumatic events.

Trauma is an unpleasant emotional and physical experience with a variable and more or less permanent effect upon the mind and personality of a victim. Traumatic experiences included hysteria, double or multiple personalities, hypnotic and other trance states and roots in some experience long since consciously forgotten and repressed and which later on manifests itself in nightmares, overwhelming anxieties and other accidental disturbances. It is no more than past event which now haunts regularly and remain obstacle for sound livelihood.

In this way, the effect of trauma is profound. Trauma theory is developed out of psychoanalytical foundation which not only encompasses psychoanalytical theories but it includes various disciplines. Up to now trauma theory has crossed a number of boundaries and made a special position in the field of literary theory. Trauma theory has become the cry of the day because contemporary frustrated, alienated, chaotic and destructive phenomena compel modern man to think about their trauma. The Great war further strengthens traumatic studies and now it has a wide coverage to deal.

In this regard, philosophical, ethical, aesthetic question about nature, war

experiences, violence, depression, repression, alienation frustration are the common working field of trauma theory. Traumatic experiences can be counted through medium of phobia, hysteria double or multiple personality, hypnotic effect, amnesia, sleeplessness, anxiety disorder, abnormality, nightmares, flashback, hallucination tendencies towards suicidability, hyperactivity disorder, somatization disorder, attachment disorder, anger, paranoia and aimlessness. These are also taken for granted to define the actual meaning of trauma theory.

Hence, this present dissertation on *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain* by Philip Roth tries to analyze the text from the perspective of trauma. The following chapter will analyze traumatic vision in Roth's novels. Traumatic experiences of the characters especially Swede Levov from *American Pastoral* and Coleman Silk from *The Human Stain* in the form of transformation of trauma from one to another generation. American people are still being subjected to violence. The violence has changed its face from direct revelations to hidden disgust, comes in various form. Trauma has unique quality that it can transfer from person to person. The victimhood from war vet has transferred to another character in *The Human Stain*. And the trans-generational trauma from which Swede is suffering in the second novel, *American Pastoral*. American socio-political situation can be best analyzed by traumatic vision through these novels.

Chapter III

Traumatic Transference in *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain*

Various critics have criticized and done research on the two different characters from two different books. The plots have been criticized and finalized as the American settings, but the researcher tries to tie the knot of two different novels making single tie of having traumatic experience of them in different ways on a same pivot. The *American Pastoral* and *The Human Stain* dramatize the stories of individuals with abnormal type of characters from their school levels. Coleman Silk was an athlete who as a boy was good at study. Swede Levov was also a brilliant and praised as a role model in Jewish community.

Both characters are uncommon but researcher brings the commonality between them and they are tragic characters. Seymour reminds me of historical event of holocaust and the character with many offended stories in his life whereas, Silk is a clearly a victim of situation which is systematically not in his control. The fall of these characters is partly because of hubris in them. Their ambition to control their situation which is guided as the collective consciousness so then American society.

Seymour Levov in *American Pastoral*, who lives in rural area of Old Rimrock; but in *The Human Stain*, Coleman Silk, the grandson of African American slave discovers himself as “one of those crimped-haired Jews of a light yellowish skin pigmentation who possess something of the ambiguous aura of the pale blacks who are sometimes taken for white” (15-16). Both of them attempt to transform them from the old seated minority mentality and want to live and assimilate with transformed culture in America. This attempt is more prioritizing for the omnipresent narrator Nathan Zukerman in both the novels. It is said that the narrator is Ruth’s alter ego for most of the critics. This is somehow convincing to researcher too.

Zukerman says to Coleman "the greatest of the great pioneers of the I" (108) and argues that his pretense is seen in the later of the novel as well "in the great frontier tradition, accepting the democratic invitation to throw your origins overboard if to do so contributes to the pursuit of happiness" (334). While in the funeral ceremony of Coleman Silk one of the friends of his praises him as "an American individualist" in the tradition of Hawthorne, Melville, and Thoreau, the friend further adds saying, "refused to leave unexamined the orthodoxies of the customary and of the established truth" (310-11).

Narrator who is present in the funeral ceremony remembers at first he had wished to write his story and had told everything true about him but later he discovers that he had lied with his middle name having "Brutus" and accuses to be close to him. Silk had lived with a new identity forgetting everything behind moreover, living an unreal life putting his real identity hiding his root to African American slave family. Due to the skin color it could have been possible for him to live like that. Silk says to his mother he wishes to marry Iris Gittelman, who is a Jew. The way Silk wishes to live his life is quite striking in the novel that when his mother says "You're white as snow and you think like a slave" (139). This ambition of his leads him to a measurable life for sure at the beginning of his professional life. It must be understood that in trying to eradicate the "stain" of his blackness by living as a Jewish Silk throws away his history. Historical trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma. One cannot live without one own history. There comes a day when one's history hits him hard and that phase of one's life becomes more hunted. Perhaps the articulation of "spooks" the phrase in his mouth is the result of disguise identity like a ghost because he had habituated to live in disguise. The second hand

meaning to the noun “spooks” hits hard to blacks’ mentality and became a racial issue. He could have revealed his real identity but he does not do so. He could save him from the action taken upon him at university. Silk is a transformed character who is a professor and Dean at Athena College; Seymour Levov on the other hand is a man with dignity. He possesses the good fortune though. Zuckerman praises saying,

Seymour’s desire to go the limit in America with your rights, forming yourself as an ideal person who gets rid of the traditional Jewish habits and attitudes, who frees himself of the pre- America insecurities and the old, constraining obsessions so as to live unapologetically as an equal among equals. (85)

Another side of his life style is that he goes by the nickname “the Swede,” the name given to him as a schoolboy because he had different hair and blue eyes. The observation of the origin of the nickname to him Zukerman views that:

[A]s long as Weequahic remained the old Jewish Weequahic [...], Doc Ward was known as the guy who'd christened Swede Levov [...], a name that made him mythic in a way that Seymour never would have done [...]. He carried it with him like an invisible American passport, all the while wandering deeper and deeper into an American's life, forthrightly evolving into a large, smooth, optimistic American such as his conspicuously raw forebears [. . .] couldn't have dreamed of as one of their own. (207-8)

Philip Roth's presentation of the real identity of his character involves irony of transformation. Seymour has been transformed as Swedish or Jewish by the name “Swede.” By the name there has been dramatized the religious and ethnic identity in the novel. Seymour tries to live his life fully but he couldn’t make it his own instead

this involves a loss of identity.

American Pastoral tries to explore serious problem among youths in America that the radical action against Vietnam war and manifested as protest. Merry Levov, the daughter of Swede, plants explosives in their quiet, suburban neighborhood to protest the Vietnam War. Merry's action evokes Zuckerman, actually he was about to write some papers but had no clue, now when it has happened he got the clue to further elaborate his paper works he writes "strewn with the bodies of the misunderstood" and marks a site on which the inaudibility of unrepresented voices may be recorded (42). Merry, cannot stand the American political system in the twentieth century. She is from middle class background, he is not silent, she seems silent but her voice erupts in such a way that it was socking to the family and neighbors, and government. Just as Seymour's story stands in as the story of the Sixties, so is Merry, a youth living in a trauma of Vietnam War policy not as a witnessed person but a person directly or indirectly affected by the policy America adopted. The bombing is a symbol of radicalism of decade of sixties in America in the novel. Roth perhaps sees the social vice as a prevailing problem among youngsters living in a ghetto. Almost by the end of the novel, the Swede exasperatingly muses, "If only Merry had fought a war of words, fought the world with words alone [...]. Then Merry's would be not a story that begins and ends with a bomb but another story entirely. But a bomb. A bomb. A bomb tells the whole fucking story" (340-41).

He doesn't know how to get rid of this ashamed and in his utmost disgust he expresses in that way. The disgust in each and every parents whose children are in the line of protest against the Vietnam policies are also living in a trauma, the trauma transmitted from battle (the defeated mentality) to the youngsters and from them to the parents, Swede is one of the representative example in Roth's novel *American*

Pastoral.

Through his pain, researcher feels it is the tyranny on the surface but in deep down there is the trauma of terrorism manifested from the trauma of youths in America. For post colonial study as well this story may offer one interesting opening possibly, however, the story is one of the representative story of the American youths and political situation of the then period. Clare Sigrist-Sutton in “Mistaking Merry: Tearing off the Veil in American Pastoral.” describes Roth’s craftsmanship of the story and presentation as:

Roth describes the Swede’s story with such vividness as to account for the book’s sensational success; yet, the possibility exists that the majority of his reader-ship put the novel down with the sense that Zuckerman understood the Swede, that we, in seeing him through Zuckerman’s eyes, understood him, too. Is this sense illusory? In the case of Merry, it most certainly is. We leave the novel with the impression that we do not understand—indeed, that no one understands—Merry. (52-53)

This makes reader think that they all understand Swede, or at least pretend readers to be known but it is not the matter of understanding rather seeing the trauma in the novel. Merry criticizes her father’s actions, and American politics which push an ideological message. For Merry, the American dream of life liberty and happiness is constructed with a tension. Her behavior is a sign of the voices that the every American living in the social turmoil of chaos and disgust. *American Pastoral* arises from the tensions caused by the counter-voices, signified by Merry and others. The Jew identity, victimhood and trauma invite the reader to think beyond what the novel offers.

In the beginning of the novel, *American Pastoral*, Zuckerman describes Seymour as masked: “Of the few fair-complexioned Jewish students in our preponderantly Jewish public high school, none possessed anything remotely like the steep-jawed, insentient Viking *mask* of this blue-eyed blond born into our tribe as Seymour Irving Levov” (3). The novel begins with the significance of the mask which hints the Jews history.

The complexity of wartime psychology and sympathetic portrayal of Seymour in the novel Roth achieves an effective point of criticism to American politics. The Swede represents the larger arena of an American underdog triumphing in world affairs, surely a reflection of the positive self-image that many Americans felt at that time. The narrator Zuckerman follows the Swede into his adult years he imagines as it grows to represent a history behind middle class customariness and modesty. Seymour is a assimilated father and a brother in a society where he has different identity with religious harmony among Christians. This perspective of the novel reflects the degree to which its characters are assimilated into the American myth.

On the other hand, for Merry, her father’s life remains incomprehensible because she has not known the struggle toward the good life. In *American Pastoral*, dissembling viewpoints, the narrative version of Nathan Zuckerman who is not sure how to write the story of Swede finds a clue to write as being political critique but the it is the trauma that reveals from underneath. The novel emphasizes the logic that would make Merry the symbol of Sixties radicalism. A good critical reading of the novel needs to decode this house of mirrors as a symbol of inquiry. This inquiry research finds connection with trauma theory.

Jenny Edkins in her essay “Introduction: Trauma, Violence and Political Community” states that the trauma theory now has become a mode of discourse

which studies any text in relation with trauma violence and political community. She opines, “Some traumatic people are haunted by nightmares and flashback to scenes of unimaginable horror. In their dreams they re-live their battlefield experiences and awake in a sweat” (1). She relates trauma with political community and violence and also examines the connection between these terms. In the same essay, she explores how traumas such as wars or persecutions are inscribed and re-inscribed into everyday narrative. She says through these lines:

Trauma takes place in practices of remembrance, memorialization and witnessing. It also takes places in political action. All these practices are the site of struggle. For example, the temporality and inexpressibility of trauma makes the role of the witness an almost unbearable one [...]. I agree that the process of inscription into liner narrative, whilst possibly necessary from some point of view - it is argued that telling the story alleviates traumatic stress [...]. And that there is an alternative, that of encircling the trauma. (15)

The narrative of trauma requires a sort of historical implication that is closely attached with catastrophe of human civilization due to the different types and sizes of war. Trauma studies in literature outline the turmoil of victims. The result of trauma has become a tool of a literary and cultural analysis, which undoubtedly keeps close contact with political community and violence respectively. Merry’s behavior is unquestionable fact that she evokes a trauma which is transmitted to her from history.

To my mind, Merry as mirror marks the novel’s political problem. Positioned as she is, as a reflection of her father’s search, Merry becomes a reduction of Sixties radicalism; as Zuckerman is well aware, this is an ideologically questionable narrative choice. The tendency of the novel to turn Merry into a figure of the Sixties radicalism

in general, and thus to represent that radicalism as a solely violent rebellion, which is from the trauma perspective is vicarious trauma. Merry's individualized acts of violence narrows a wide-spread phenomenon of nonviolent protest to a wholly enclosed exploration of ancestral and psychological factors. The parameters of the novels' question how disgust emerged from the unbelievable character like Merry and Silk from *The Human Stain* brings on the limelight of trauma theory, whereas, the basic nature of trauma is repeating.

Seymour is uncertain character his place is so integrated with people with different cultural backgrounds. Everybody thought that he was a Gentile but in real he is opposite. Seymour's brother Jerry is in despair and his daughter Meredith often called Merry is living in poverty in a slum of Newark. In traditional sense, a pastoral is borrowing the words of M. H. Abrahams is "a deliberately conventional poem expressing an urban poet's nostalgic image of the peace and simplicity of the rural life" (141). Levov's relation to his place in New Jersey, he is nearly skipping through Old Rimrock, that entire he has lost with the bombing by his daughter Merry. She is not living her life like her brother is living. Seymour's brother Jerry ridicules Seymour's life often, "Out there with Miss America, dumping down and dulling out. Out there playing at being Wasps [. . .] you thought all that façade was going to come without cost. Genteel and innocent. But that costs, too, Seymour" (280). For Jerry this glorifying the slums is not good thing that's why he is not really happy in the novel. But Seymour is in vanity that he is a kind of hero in the pastoral. The disaster begins from Merry's blowing up the local post office in the name of protest at American policy in Vietnam. This shakes him to the core that she did this and his ethnic identity as a Jew is again feels the jolt that nobody is now convinced that this it's true that Seymour is a hero.

You wanted Miss America? Well, you've got her, with a vengeance - she's your daughter! You wanted to be a real American hotshot with a beautiful Gentile babe on your arm? You longed to belong like everybody else to the United States of America? Well, you do now [...]. The reality of this place is right up in your kisser now. With the help of your daughter you're as deep in the shit as a man can get, the real American crazy shit. America amok! America amuck! (277)

Jerry mocks Seymour in these lines which in a way shatter the reality of American life as expected by Seymour. Roth's pastoral setting is also affected by the deep seated defeated mentality of people living in it.

Merry is underground since a while, one day when Seymour happens to meet her and it is the time shortly after the bombing of Old Rimrock post office, he is much disappointed to know that she was actually the responsible person for the terrorist attack. Seymour never had this imagination that one day her "Miss America" would cause the difficult situation for her as well as for the family as a whole. The bombing of the Old Rimrock followed by two more bombings killing a local doctor and three other people.

Merry's extremist behavior is the result of disgust from the war policy emerged in the name of "Revolt Rhetoric American" and "No War." Levov's reaction is presented by Roth in the novel is more psychologically rich. Roth has put himself in the shoes of a common American whose ethics is in high spirit. What would Levov react is clear. The one who had loved America so much would obviously be with American sentiments. However, there is own daughter who is creating terror to the people. The logic for terror is merely revenge. The vicarious trauma manifested in the form of revenge is clear by the theme of the terrorist attack in Old Rimrock.

Seymour is sorry for his own belief. He is sorry for what dream he had nurtured for his family especially for his daughter. She is degrading herself in that way, "For purity - in the name of purity" (240). She says she did the blasting for purity. Which is more striking in the novel is that. She is so docile character as a daughter as a sister. This purity of her echoes in louder to the anti-pastoral setting.

The ill human behavior can never be a form of protest. No matter how Marry is dissatisfied with American war policy it is not convincing that killing even the brothers within the nation is a good job. The way she took the steps is the manifestation of trauma in its peculiar way. Seymour has realized that it is her impurity, because while in underground when he meets her she smelled shit, which means she is impure, where as she is fighting for purity. Instead he vomits over her and flees in terror. The derogative behavior of her can never be appreciating to the researcher as well.

In *The Human Stain*, narrator Zuckerman spends an evening with Coleman Silk and Zukerman spends an evening together where he confesses he has an affair with Faunia Farley, half his age. Zukerman and Silk dance for a while in a song playing on radio.

On we danced. There was nothing overtly carnal in it, but because Cole-man was wearing only his denim shorts and my hand rested easily on his warm back as if it were the back of a dog or a horse, it wasn't entirely a mocking act. There was a semi-serious sincerity in his guiding me about on the stone floor, not to mention a thoughtless delight in just being alive, accidentally and downishly and for no reason alive. (26)

Back home, He discovers that he was somehow guilty: "I discovered [. . .] that [my] trousers were discolored at the front and that I smelled a little [...] been so engaged by Coleman and his story that I'd failed to monitor myself" (35-6). The way Zukerman thinks about the love affair of Coleman Silk with Faunia Farley as "purity binge" (2) he takes it at the level of moral standard. This love affair of Silk and Faunia reminds him of the love affair of Bill Clinton and Monica Lewinsky. Zuckerman thinks, "a mammoth banner, draped [. . .] from one end of the White House to the other and bearing the legend a human being lives here" (3). This love affair creates a scandal in their small town that is only rivaled by President Bill Clinton's relationship with Monica Lewinsky. From award winning author Philip Roth, *The Human Stain* is a statement on twentieth-century morality that could not have been voiced as well by any other writer.

For Zukerman it is an inhuman activity, for the professor who is so serious guy can't have the relationship with a lady having children. Faunia and Coleman's relationship make Zuckerman think about the sex first time, "[t]he contaminant of sex, the redeeming corruption that de-idealizes the species and keeps us ever mindful of the matter we are" (37). Earlier mentioned phrase "purity binge" makes a paradoxical meaning. Roth's novels are not related in the sense of sex but in the sense of trauma and transference of trauma from one to another not like the trauma and testimony but slightly different than the vicarious type of trauma where the person gets transferred trauma in the course of treatment but by living with the person and being related with the person in ethical manner. David Brauner in his article "American Anti-Pastoral: Incontinence and Impurity in "American Pastoral" and "The Human Stain" finds the reason for the dooms of these characters and writes "fairy tale of purity" (341) that deforms and destroys the lives of Coleman Silk and Seymour Levov."

In *American Pastoral* Merry's bombing creates terror. The deep seated disgust towards Vietnam War brings this terror in Newark. The form of terrorism in modern time is coated with revolution. In *On Revolution*, Hannah Arendt theorizes as:

The modern concept of revolution, inextricably bound up with the notion that the course of history suddenly begins anew, that an entirely new story, a story never known or told before, is about to unfold, was unknown prior to the two great revolutions at the end of the eighteenth century. Before they were engaged in what then turned out to be a revolution. (21)

The idealism with which people are living with dignity is sometime shattered with such acts. The Americanism with the notion of 'American Dream,' people simply hope to gain the prosperity. But the social reality is something different. The Vietnam War policy is not acceptable for Merry that's why she plants bombs and kills people. Americans were creating this kind of myth they are the superior, government is also making different myths as supreme power. The Vietnam reality was quite different. In Vietnam American army faced the defeat. Arendt says, "Before they were engaged in what then turned out to be a revolution, none of the actors had the slightest premonition of what the plot of the new trauma was going to be" (22). Merry's bombing that governs the book *American Pastoral* as a whole is absolutely clear that it is the reality some sort of trauma is still playing within the youths of America. perhaps sheds light on the burden of Merry's bombing that governs the entire text of *American Pastoral*. It is thinkable in terms of trauma studies which reveal the cause of actions like bombing in the novel, *American Pastoral*. Same is the case with another novel *The Human Stain*. Vietnam War vet who is following his wife who is also a PTSD patient who has witnessed the ill human behavior and grotesque of

warfare is mentally distorted person. Living with him Faunia also got the trauma of his. Her life is also ruined. Coleman Silk has become a scapegoat in the turmoil.

Trauma theory provides an insight into it to see Roth's characters and his worry about American life style. There is continuous threat of reappearing of the trauma which is deep seated in the people who has witnessed the traumatic events in his/her life. The basement on which American life as a good life has horrifying traces of trauma. The book's title itself is more thinkable "stain" of trauma is there in the basement of American identity. Not horrifying but can be horrifying.

Everybody is in favor of justice, liberty, democracy, and human rights. This justice, liberty, democracy and human rights activities always play for some sort of dissatisfaction and agony. Being "traumatic" in the traditional sense of the word, referring to tilted temporality, something Cathy Caruth talks in *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History*. Caruth writes about the impact of trauma not only on narrative, but on history as well. She goes on like Sigmund Freud's "unclaimed experience" that Freud writes in his book, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. With the help of Freud's observation of traumatic patients, the witnessing of trauma she brings as an insight to see the events in human lives. Merry's act in the novel must be understood in the limelight of trauma and its playfulness. The mysterious sense that this moment necessarily affects all other moments in time. Is the moment of bombing in the novel. As Cathy Caruth's book *Unclaimed Experience* opens with the revelation that:

Freud wonders at the peculiar and sometimes uncanny way in which catastrophic events seem to repeat themselves for those who have passed through them. In some cases, as Freud points out, these repetitions are particularly striking because they seem not to be

initiated by the individual's own acts but rather appear as the possession of some people by a sort of fate, a series of painful events to which they are subjected, and which seem to be entirely outside of their wish or control. (1-2)

The traumatic event involves critical and crucial events and the events normally haunts for short as well as long time. The trauma lives in the present; similarly in the past too that holds the original event in deep down. In *American Pastoral*, Merry's bombing looks superficial which was actually emanated from the Vietnam.

As in *American Pastoral*, the founding trauma, and the revolution it at the core. This trauma is not primary or firsthand trauma but it is secondary form of trauma which has transferred to her. She had never been to army and she never fought against Vietnamese in battle field. But this bad effect of killings resulted in her with the revolutionary nature. The unique thing is that her father Levov is severely affected by the acts of his daughter.

The catastrophic event in *American Pastoral* is not as Vietnam War, but somewhere in the psyche of people the events reminds them of Vietnam War defeat. Sigmund Freud has viewed that the problem of the time is also a problem of history. Roth reveals this history through his novel and makes readers re visit the history.

According to Caruth, one should not forget history, history can never be forgotten. In "Confronting Political Trauma" She argues that:

[t]he lessons of PTSD and its centrality in our culture at this moment should return us, at least in part, to the political lessons of those who helped make it so central a diagnosis, to the veterans whose message is not only about war but about blindness, not only about atrocity but about the nature of decision-making in a crisis. Our subsequent

involvement in international conflicts have not reflected a direct confrontation with these issues and these lessons, and it is my hope that the focus on trauma in our culture will lead us back to a sustained vigilance on our own blindness and to the meaning and impact—in the past and for the future—of what was both a moral and political trauma in our history. (182)

Merry give emphasis to moral blindness of US war effect. War always has ill effects; Roth seems worried about the collective identity of American people. Roth appears to be more worried about our collective blindness regarding such unintended consequences of the domestic revolution on traumatic ideals. *American Pastoral* is a cast stone to feel the vibes of the effects and the bad impacts of Vietnam War.

Zuckerman gathers the hope that people will forget the war “they could forget the war” (4). Zuckerman is being hypocritical here. Zuckerman’s hypothesis is in actual is the hypothesis of Philip Roth’s. Roth makes all forget the Vietnam War but letter he presents Merry as a vandalizing woman to the corner of the Newark.

At first Swede allowed the community of Newark forget, in actual he had forgotten that there is deep seated hatred towards American policies. The trauma has unique form of coming repeatedly in the future, the coming of the shock in devastating form created the terror. It was not Vietnam War his daughter brings home. It was the ideals of war, violence at large. Making own home destroying others. In this way, The Vietnam War is at the centre of the novel. It is ok to be worried by the Levov but the researcher says it is the transference of trauma from Vietnam War to his daughter’s activities to him in *American Pastoral*. In what democracy Americans are living? This has eternal violence that lies beneath its surface.

Chapter IV

Vicarious Trauma in Roth's Characters

After the detailed analysis and study of Philip Roth's *The Human Stain* and *American Pastoral*, the research has reached to the conclusion that Roth's novel narrativizes the traumatic experience of post-Vietnam War American generation. Roth portrays the traumatized post-war American generation as the protagonists characters in the novels. The researcher has come up with the idea that Roth by depicting the miserable condition of the protagonist suffering from the vicarious traumatic dread, intends to criticize the American interventionist nature and its misguided foreign policy in Vietnam, which destroyed the lives of thousands of innocent Vietnamese. Roth's ethics is with the war-victims and he identifies with the victimhood. Not the direct victim but the suffering of the victims transferred from one to another and generations at large.

In the cold-war narrative of Roth, characters are the typical example of the then society and the issue picked by him is Vietnam War and its result. The warfare and its impact in the psyche of American people has resulted in many forms like vengeance to the government policies and demonstration is one part more prior to this people were feeling so disgust that they were traumatized. As mentioned in the former chapters, vicarious trauma is a normal response to repeated exposure and empathetic engagement with trauma material. A person becomes vicariously traumatic because of his witnessing to the suffering of the victims and his empathetic engagement with the victimhood. In the novels trauma is transferred from one to another. The empathy to the victim, manifest in the person who witnesses the suffering of one. In the novel *The Human Stain*, Coleman Silk has been a scapegoat in the turmoil of Faunia's ex-husband, Lester Farley who is a former Vietnam vet who is PTSD patient. The true

nature of trauma is repetitive. The trauma of Lester Farley is transferred in Faunia who has spend with her husband who has witnessed the Vietnam warfare and killings and bombardment. The pathetic situation of killing and dying has seriously affected him and this witnessing has in to vicarious trauma in her and Coleman Silk's life is also severely affected to the level of death. In *American Pastoral*

Thus this research has attempted to unravel the issue of vicarious trauma with relation to memory and ethics in Philip Roth's *The Human Stain* and *American Pastoral*. The duo novels, as a post World War literary works vividly unmasks the traumatic vision of the people living in America. Minority sentiments and the trauma has manifested in frustration, death, destruction and terror. This research pictures out the transference of trauma from characters to characters. In fact, here in these novels, physical and psychological sufferings of the characters are deteriorated due to the feeble paralyzed and traumatic experiences of Vietnam War. So in this regard, traumatic experiences are extended when they try to escape from the agony of suffering. Haunting of the past to the present becomes traumatic when characters fail to meet manage the problems in their lives. As characters are beset with traumatic vision of Vietnam War and contemporary devastated world view they are unable to maintain psychological equilibrium.

Trauma is defined as a severe emotional shock having a deep effect upon the personality, characters authentic, beautiful and decorated life ruined by this emotional shock and other war effects. Roth's alter ego Nathan Zukerman is also haunted by the some malignant power of past of the characters he encounters in the novels. The smell of war haunts almost everyone in the novels. Departing from other critiques on the novels, this research has focused on how Roth depicts in these novels the post-war American life triggered by vicarious traumatic dread because of American violence in

Vietnam. In this way, this research acknowledges Roth's criticism of American arrogance to its bother nation and his anti-war spirit.

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