

CHAPTER I

People's War Trauma Narratives: A Study of Their Affective Economy

The research considers four a decade long People's War era related war trauma narratives. It delves into uncovering trauma rendition and cultural politics of affective economies in the literary texts. Among the trauma literary narratives, *Palpasa Café* is a war narrative written by a renowned journalist cum writer Narayan Wagle. The novel draws on the insurgency period of the People's War that perpetuated violence and state of disorder in Nepal. The war left thousands of innocent people killed and other millions were forced to leave their native land and were left in lurch in distant areas. Similarly, other thousands of the people disappeared and got mutilated. *Palpasa Café* gives an account of vicarious trauma of the protagonist Drishya. The writer Wagle takes an interview with Drishya and thus becomes a witness to the trauma of Dirshya. Thus, he experiences a vicarious trauma of Dirshya. The novel is set in at a time when “a series of socking incidents” were gripping the people psychologically and physically due to the devastating People's War (1-2). The novel expounds on the experiences of Drishya, Siddhartha and Palpasa through the first person narrative.

Another war trauma narrative *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy* that draws on People's War, is a non-fiction written by much acclaimed literary writer Manjushree Thapa. The book encapsulates two parts. The first part demonstrates the writer's encounter with politically volatile situation of Nepal occasioned by the Royal massacre that took place on June 1, 2001. The writer's faith in monarchy is wavered with the unfortunate and heartrending incident. Her faith in Monarchy dwindled down when the “Parliamentary democracy— won late

in 1990— was lost to a gradual staggered coup that began in October 2002, and culminated in February 2005, with a military takeover by Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah” (11). Similarly, the writer’s faith in monarchy slipped with her act of taking the politics of Nepal as bad politics. Psychological trauma is evident on the writer as she expresses that “psychologically everyone was lingering” (39) and the “public mistrusted the new king” and found themselves “bereft of any democratic leadership” (41). She shows that the public has got a massive distrust over the new king. It also hints at what she feels about the new king and the democratic leadership. With a disappointment, she discloses her own reflection on the past Shah Dynasty’s legacy of massacre. The writer shows it in her words: “After the massacre at the royal palace, grabbed thoughts about the past jammed my mind, making me feel: I know all this because something like this has happened before” (65). She documents the historical lineage of the Shah Dynasty when she divides the entire book into seven sections. The historiography sketches the bad political history from Prithivi Narayan Shah’s unification time to the time of the declaration of the country into Federal Republic of Nepal. The writer’s documentation of historical events gives a prime focus to a decade long People’s War. The period was extremely volatile and full of topsy-turvy that rendered the country remain stagnant in terms of socio-economic transformation.

Manjushree Thapa’s *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy* devotes three chapters to give an account of the history that exhibits the bloody and treacherous past of the Shah dynasty. The following two chapters—The Massacres to Come and the Unfinished Revolution— draw on the vicarious experience of the writer with reference to the trauma of the people in the hinterlands of Nepal and the writer’s account of the yearning of the people for the restoration of democracy in the country respectively. The writer’s desire to uncover the real

situation of the people living in war-torn districts of Dailekh, Kalikot and Jumla, leads her to “trek through the war-torn districts” (199). Her journey along with Malcom, a human right activist in these districts is underpinned by her act “to see what war had wrought in the countryside” (199). The writer wants to see through the ground reality of the influence of the People’s War on the common people in the countryside.

Mahesh Bikram Shah’s anthological collection *Sipahiki Swasni (A Soldier’s Wife)* contains eighteen stories having different thematic content. The limitation of the dissertation seeks to take only four of the stories that draw on the theme of war and conflict. The stories taken for the research are: “Khuma”, “Samaya ra Chitkar” (Time and Bellow), “Sipahiki Swasni” (A Soldier’s Wife) and “Santrat Manharu” (Fearful Hearts). These stories contain trauma narratives of the victims of the ten years’ insurgency period that is characterized by the fierce and intensive war between the Maoist guerillas and the government military troops. The stories, charged up with poignancy and emotion, depicts pain and trauma of the victims of the war.

The dissertation takes another masterpiece anthology of stories named *Stories of Conflict and War* translated and edited by Govinda Raj Bhattarai. The book contains twenty five short war narratives that have elaborated the suffering and unprecedented violence and torture that made the innocent victims feel trauma. Since the dissertation is limited in its area, it only takes ten trauma narratives for the analysis. The dissertation takes the emotionally charged trauma narratives of the writers ranging from amateur to veteran writers. However, dichotomy of amateur versus is easily abated at the face of the mastery of all the writers in terms of trauma rendition and affective economy.

War and Conflict a Global Phenomena

The pages of human history are full of war and conflict. So, a great chunk of literary corpora of the entire world is coloured with war literature. Ranging from the great Hindu epics, the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* to *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of the western world, they contain war literature or their prototype. From the time immemorial, the human civilizations have continuously been destroyed due to strong magnitude of war among the human civilizations. In the ancient time, the great devastating wars took place in Greece and Rome. The wars descended down to the wars in nineteenth century that shattered the European countries. Going further, twentieth century is even more drenched in blood and has suffered unprecedented loss and destruction of human beings. The twentieth century witnessed the wars such as Vietnam War, Falkland War, Gulf war and many other wars all over the World. It seems that the war and conflict is in the innate nature of the human beings. The wars that commenced in the Stone Age have been transformed into atomic wars in the present time. The countries are all involved in killing and making people terrified by showcasing power of arms and weapons. Thus, the entire world seems to be a conglomerate that consists of genocide, civil wars, indiscriminate killings, racial hatred, and, many other sorts of unrests that have left the entire world simply inhospitable to live peacefully with dignity and freedom.

If taken the situation of the entire world ravaged by war and conflict, our country bears no exception. It also has to come across many wars and conflicts in its history. If we limit our historical representation of war, we have to go back to the time of King Prithivi Narayan Shah's regime. His act of conquering different territories to unite Nepalese people into one chain is also full of problems and conflicts among the people in Nepal. The united Nepal itself has not been able to tie all the Nepalese into one bond. Thus, the country has been suffering from an endless

status quo. Moreover, the country fails to accommodate all the people of different cultures, castes, races and ethnicities and nationalities. In order to make an inclusive Nepal Budhi Prasad Bhandari in his book *Inclusive Democracy Racial Autonomy and Self-Determination in Nepal* takes Jitendra Dev as saying “Nepal has a character of having multiple castes and multiple cultures. At the stage, in order to make democracy all inclusive and proportionate multicultural and multiracial forms should be provided” (94). Jitendra Dev holds that only through the proper accommodation of all the people in mainstream politics and history, Nepal can be truly democratic. Similarly, it is an imperative to forward a holistic approach to accommodate the entire Nepalese people into one knot. The researcher holds that the failure to encompass all the nationalities in Nepal’s historical representation has persistently been causing war and conflict in the country. Historical representation of conflict and war in the mainstream historiography of Nepal always reckons bloodshed and trauma for both the victims and the perpetrators. Govinda Raj Bhattarai in case of reading a much tumultuous bloody history of our country and the world asserts, “In the history of our country, extreme fear and tyranny ruled a whole decade to which we bade goodbye recently. We had heard many stories of untold suffering, indiscriminate killings and bombings, raid and genocide that took place in Tadjhakistan, Lebanon, Burundi, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Bosnia-Herzegovina and so on. They experienced racial wars, cold wars, and genocide” (6). The writer posits that in many countries across the world the untold sufferings of the people have come to the surface that have been evolved out of racial wars, cold wars, and genocide.

A decade long insurgency period fared Nepal an embittered state that suspended all the rules and laws that regulated society. People became susceptible to violence and torture at the hands of maoist guerillas and government military troops alike. Extortion, threat, detention,

abduction, disappearance and death became common phenomena during the insurgency period. Taking the decade long insurgency period as catastrophic, an eminent diplomat Kul Chandra Gautam in his book *Lost in Transition: Rebuilding Nepal From the Maoist Mayhem and Mega Earthquake* puts forth that Nepal suffered “catastrophic man-made disaster of the Maoist insurgency measures, followed by a prolonged and chaotic political transition with pernicious consequences for Nepal’s development” (3). He opines that Nepal has suffered a decade long insurgency period that has really hindered the country to march forward in the path of development. Thus, he deems the war as “man-made earthquake” that killed seventy thousand people and displaced and devastated the people from the core. The war was considered as *Kramabhangata* or disruption of all existing social, cultural and legal norms to destroy the “old bourgeois democratic order” to rebuild a “New Nepal”(4). Thus, the country suffered a huge setback in its path forward. The dissertation now sketches a brief outline of a decade long Maoist insurgency that became a watershed moment in the history of Nepal.

A Decade Long Maoist Insurgency: An Overview

“Workers of all lands unite” (mentioned in the Communist Manifesto)

“The Philosophers have only interpreted the World in various ways- the Point however is to change it” (Engels)

The above mentioned first catch phrase in the communist movement in all over the world assumes that the workers in the world should unite together to pave a movement that will solely be focused on toppling down the rule of feudal lords who were considered to be bourgeois class people. The second catch phrase stimulates the people to change the world. The manifesto holds that the bourgeois class people are ruling the societies with their discretionary power and

authority. The manifesto also assumes that their power can only be challenged by the workers—Proletariats in Marxist term.

With euphoria to establish a new democratic-socialist society, the CPN (Maoists) rode on a bandwagon to “overthrow the bureaucratic-capitalist class and the monarchy, and force out hegemonic and imperialist forces from the country” (9). If we trace a lineage of communist movement in Nepal it began with the establishment of democracy in Nepal in 1951 A. D. The communist parties began to embark on a journey to make the country a communist country. They took new ideological appeals of Marxism and Leninism that gripped the country intellectuals with a forceful wave. To elaborate the flow of the communist ideology, it is pertinent to bring forth Nishchal Nath Pandey’s quotation which he takes from the book *People, Politics and Ideology: Democracy and Social Change in Nepal*.

[The] light of education and the canon of the Marxist ideology seemed to have entered Nepal almost the same time (in 1951). Both Marxist and socialist ideologies appealed to the demands Nepalese society for equality. Equality itself was not a new concept, but the possibility of its application to society as a whole was an intoxicating- even an explosive- political idea for people living in a society still in the shadow of caste hierarchy and feudal structure. (13)

The above quote makes it evident that the social structure and social inequality prevailed in the country was an instigating point for the commencement of the Maoist communist movement in the form of insurgency period in Nepal. In the mid-1990s Nepal saw an emergence of a radical communist party CPN (Maoist). With a standpoint that multiparty parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy were not suitable for the country, the Maoists thought it imperative for

the nation to witness an armed revolution to change the status quo in which the state was attached to. Therefore, with a conception: “politics is a war without bloodshed and war is a politics with bloodshed” (189) the then CPN (Maoist) in order to establish an egalitarian and just society embarked on a mission to “change the status quo” that made the country stagnant and dysfunctional. Just as Mao made Yenan as his main site of uprising, Prachanda- the supremo of the then CPN (Maoist) wanted to make Rapti Hill areas as his ground for the armed revolution. He chose to make Thabang village north of Rolpa as his fort to wage and consolidate his armed guerilla warfare. So, in order to launch the horrible and destructive guerilla warfare, Prachanda prepared ten point manifesto —modality of village class struggle. The Maoist party launched an armed revolution in March 1995 holding “its third plenum during which parliamentary elections were denounced and a decision was taken to take up arms against the existing state” (41). The decision was followed by forty- points list of demands submitted by Baburam Bhattarai, the then party’s political front’s chairman to the then Sher Bahadur Deuba government on 4 February, 1996. Nine days after the submission of the demand list, the party formally began the armed revolution. Even before the completion of the deadline for the demands, the party started the armed struggle. It is accurate that the agenda to go for an armed struggle was already behind the decision of the party. Since the demands were laced with opposition to the Indian expansionism, Western imperialist domination, and preserving Nepal’s cultural purity, they were impossible demands to meet up. So, the submission of the list of demands was only to camouflage the apparent reality of the party decision to initiate the warfare.

The Stages of Maoist Insurgency

The assertion of the Maoists’ rhetoric that the government is apathetic to address their demands laid a perfect ground for the initiation of their guerilla warfare. They made strong

strategies to counter the military actions by the government. They launched their insurgency in three phases namely The *Khukuri* Phase, The Rifle Phase, and The Automatic Weapons Phase. The phases will be elaborated after giving a brief account of the actions undertaken by the police force in the remote parts of the country before the culmination of the People's War.

Nischal Nath Pandey considers the inconsistent ideologies that provoke the war and conflicts in societies. He writes, "it is said that a conflict rises and escalates when two or more people or groups pursue goals that are mutually inconsistent" (61). The very mutually inconsistent ideologies of the Maoists and the then Nepali Congress government provoked the government which resorted to move police operations to curtail the Maoist movement in the hinterlands of the country. In order to bring under control the ideological appeal of communism espoused by Maoists the police force was mobilized under the different code names. The names include Operation Romeo, Kilo Saro Two, Operation Kilo, Operation Juliet, Operation Hotel, Operation Delta, Operation Mike in various districts of Nepal. When the government "realized the dangers of the spread of left groupings in the remote hills" (62) it initiated the above mentioned various armed operations to what the people called "a reign of terror". The operations produced the reports of rape, torture, and mass killing as well. The people, who earlier used to have a negative mindset towards the Maoists, with the initiation of the government's operations turned against the police and started having soft corner for the Maoists. Now the three phases of the Maoist insurgency intensified.

***Khukuri* Phase**

They commenced their war with what they called *Khukuri* phase. Since the commencement of the war required a lot of arms and ammunition, the apparent lacking of them

in the initial stage made the mutineers resort to *khukuries* for spreading terror among the people and the police force. The phase is characterized by the selection of such districts which were not linked by roads and the socioeconomic condition of the people was not sound either. In this regard, Nischal Nath Padey writes, “ Rolpa, Rukum, Gorkha, and Pyuthan were especially chosen for the first attacks by novice mutineers” (66). On the very first day of the launching of the armed revolution they attacked Holeri police post in Rolpa, Bethan police post in Ramechhap. They demolished telephone towers, electricity poles, and the roads were obstructed to “thwart easy government mobility” and to bring the villagers under the intimidation and appeal of the Maoist insurgency. The *Khukuri* phase’s initiation did not impact the government since it was in the nascent stage. However, the success that the stage provided to the Maoist guerillas was certainly formidable.

The Rifle Phase

The People’s war intensified with this phase. The access to the dynamite, detonators and fuses supplied by the People’s War Group (PWG) of India, the Maoists started their violent raids not only on the psychology of the common people, but also on police stations and army barracks. Similarly, the operation of the Maoists “has obviously been financed through the donations of the rural folks, booty from the public sector banks, and extortions from business houses, including educational institutions in the cities” (69). The financial upsurge of the rebels took place with the looting of the banks in the headquarters and forcing the people to donate the money for the revolution to make it a successful one. While the Nepal government looked mired in its own dysfunctional political maneuverings, the war of the insurgents intensified with the killing of the police personnel and the demolishing of the public property. The money collected was mobilized to purchase the modern weapons from abroad.

The Automatic Weapons Phase

The Automatic Weapons Phase was initiated at the same time when the assassination of the entire royal family took place. The assassination jolted the Nepalese society from the core. The mobilization of the then Royal Nepal Army (RNA) further escalated the war. The government of Girija Prasad Koirala was considered dysfunctional which “succumbed to a sequence of corruption cases, Maoist attacks, and demands for resignation by the opposition” (72). Moreover, the phase brought the condition of ceasefire declared by both the parties—Maoists and the Government. But to the utter dismay of the people the ceasefire was ultimately turned out to be a failure. Nischal Nath Pandey in his book *Nepal's Maoist Movement and Implications for India and China* quotes Prachanda— the supremo of the Maoist army as saying, “since our demands for a Constituent Assembly has been ignored by the government, we have ascertained that the peace negotiation with it is fruitless” (73). The deadline for the negotiation was the election of the constituent assembly but failure to get the deadline was the cause of the end of the ceasefire. The termination of the ceasefire ensued the major attacks in Syangja and Dang headquarters. The attacks caused big human casualties and loss of property. Right after the attacks the government declared a state of emergency and termed the Maoists as terrorists and “that those found involved, directly or indirectly, of helping them, would also be treated as terrorists” (74). The assassination of the Inspector General of the Armed Police Force, Krishna Mohan Shrestha by the guerilla forces came as a huge blow for the government. The ceasefire took place thrice between the Maoists and the government but all of them turned out to be unsuccessful ones.

A big swerve came in the Maoist uprising with the royal “takeover of executive power in 2005” (205). With the arrival of Ian Martin, the head of the United Nation’s Office of the High

Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Nepal appointed as the United Nation's Secretary General's special representative in Nepal, the then underground communist party of Nepal (Maoist) and the seven party alliance of the democratic forces came together to have a talk to decide the future course of Nepal. With the "Indian government's contribution to the Nepali transition these talks were hosted in New Delhi. There both sides were prevailed upon to sign the first of many pacts to come: the twelve-point agreement, published on 23 November 2005" (205). With the signing of the twelve point agreement between the then Maoists and the seven Party alliance brought the informal end of a decade long Maoist insurgency. A year later on 21 November, 2006 "the formal end of Nepal's decade-long civil war" took place with great aspiration to change the country into new Nepal and the Maoists joined the democratic politics.

Trauma and Politics of Affect in *Palpasa Café*

Gauging *Palpasa Café* of Narayan Wagle in light of trauma theory and affect theory uncovers it clad with subjective propensities of the novelist. If seen in light of trauma theory, the novel does not exhibit a proper trauma rendition of the characters in the novel. Drishya's trauma itself is a vicarious trauma since he has not directly survived the war and become a trauma victim himself. Drishya's experience is evolved out of his bearing witness to Siddhartha's brutal murder and Palpasa's tragic fate that leaves on him "a scar of traumatic experience" (31). The writer is a witness to Drishya's experience. Prior to the finalization of the work the writer awaits Drishya and finds that he has been abducted by some unknown people. As the narrative begins, the writer shows Drishya in Goa where he meets Palpasa and realizes that she is the one he loves the most. In his return to Kathmandu he happens to visit Palpasa's grandmother due to a Dutch lady's comment on his painting. The lady makes a remark, "you make beautiful paintings but they are cold. In most of them, the colours don't seem to suit the subject matter" (45). Evoked by such a

remark he visits to look for a book that shows the way to keep a perfect way to paint his paintings. He meets Palpasa's Grandmother in his search to find out an appropriate book on painting. Furthermore, encounter with Siddhartha makes him visit the rural areas made complex by the brutalities both by the Maoists and the military forces. The trauma of Drishya begins with the journey he paves in the rural areas. On his journey he meets several people and hears their traumatic fate at the hands of both the Maoists and the police brutalities. He himself witnesses the terrible war that was waged between the Maoists and the police personnel. Ultimately, he witnesses the killing of Palpasa when the bus, on which she was riding with Drishya himself, got trapped in an ambush laid by the Maoists. He lost his beloved Palpasa. No matter how much war incidents he witnesses, his bearing witness to the victimhood is not appropriate since he has not directly experienced the traumatic experience of the victims. Instead, the trauma expressed by Drishya is imparted to the novelist. The novelist then renders the trauma of Drishya. Although, *Palpasa Café* exhibits trauma of Drishya, the writer fails to render a proper voice to trauma representation since the actual victims'— Palpasa, Siddhartha among others— voices have been deliberately subsided. Similarly, the prominence given to Drishya by the writer for trauma rendition is also lopsided since La Capra assumes that proper trauma rendition can be achieved only through the voice of the victim himself not the witness of the victim. In this regard, Drishya is not the victim himself rather he is only the witness to the victims' trauma. Similarly, his rendition of trauma of the victims shows that he is not emphatically unsettled to inscribe trauma. The lack of emphatic unsettlement is seen when Drishya is found busy in his own painting work after the death of Palpasa. His reconciliation in the normal society especially after his witnessing the trauma of the victims makes it evident that his trauma rendition is not an effective way to show appropriate trauma of the victims. Similarly, the writer Wagle's appropriation of Drishya's

voice also makes the novel loosely constructed not appropriate for a perfect rendition of trauma narrative. Moreover, the writer's privileges of being the *Kantipur* daily's chief editor at the time of writing the novel makes the novel amass a huge popularity. The writer throughout the novel seeks to unearth the atrocities of the Maoist insurgency to depict the Maoists' work not to liberate the ordinary proletariat class but to serve the petty bourgeois politico-cultural interests. It does not do justice to unprejudiced rendition of trauma transference. The novel falls short of the requisites of an impartial trauma rendition. The novel thus suffers from a deep parochial praxis of the writer's close affiliation with the media and the government.

Trauma and Politics of Affect in *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy*

Manjushree Thapa's war narrative *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy* depicts the historical representation of the Shah dynasty. Following the royal massacre, the writer resorts to write the history of Shah dynasty since the dynasty itself is a victimizer cum victimized in course of historical representation. The writer suffers a trauma of the Royal massacre which leads her to retrospect the royal history. Furthermore, the writer comes to focus on the Maoist insurgency as a continuation of the power struggle following the footsteps of the bloody violence of the Royal massacre. Since the dissertation limits its study in weighing the appropriateness of trauma rendition and the politics of affective response of the writer and the readers, the research puts forth that the trauma rendition of the writer is not appropriately expressed. Furthermore, her expression of the affective response tends to be one-sided. Although she presents the different narratives of torture and killings, her representation takes more the cases of violations of the human rights committed by the military personnel not by the Maoists. Although she gives some narratives of the victims of the Maoists, her resentment for the military and the government makes it explicit in her critical treatment of the government role and its military corpus. The

analysis further brings into light the inappropriateness of the way she represents trauma of the victims. Her narrating the trauma of the victims does not make her traumatized at all. To be traumatized listening to the trauma narratives is a key to appropriateness for trauma transference. But narrating the account of trauma by the writer does not follow the ways of trauma rendition espoused by La Capra. Similarly, the dissertation contends that her expressing the painful narratives of the victims is full of problems. The writer's privileged stature as a Kathmandu bourgeois and her criticism for the government's military actions on Maoists makes her critical towards the political parties. Therefore, she takes more the human rights violation cases committed by the military troops not by the Maoist guerillas. Thus, her true representation of the trauma and pain of the victims is biased. The research seeks to see this very politics of the writer in the next chapter.

Trauma and Affect in *Sipahiki Swasni*

Sipahiki Swasni (A Soldier's Wife) an anthology of stories by Mahesh Bikram Shah portrays the victims as vulnerable and sympathy provoking. The dissertation takes only four of the stories collected in this anthology. They are all victims' trauma narratives of the inexplicable pain and torture caused by the Maoist insurgency. The stories show extreme love and sympathy for the victims. Besides, the stories produce hatred for the victimizers who not only cause heinous atrocities on the victims but also jolt the writer from the core. To say succinctly, the writer shows appropriate trauma transference by depicting his lot similar to that of the victims. The use of language of the narratives shows that the writer is really successful in appropriate trauma transference. Moreover, the trauma narratives too are highly effective since the writer has been able to depict his self as a traumatized self. The writer successfully evokes the sympathy for the victims in the stories as well. The dissertation will analyse further how the war narrative

Sipahiki Swasni renders appropriate way to trauma rendition and evokes affect of sympathy for the victims.

Trauma and Politics of Affect in *Stories of Conflict and War*

Stories of Conflict and War translated and edited by Govinda Raj Bhattarai encompasses twenty five war narratives that have foregrounded pain and suffering of the people occasioned by the war of the insurgency period. However, here the dissertation puts a limit on the selection of the stories that tend to be focused only on the insurgency period and its consequent impact on the people. The research takes only ten of the war stories that render trauma of the victims.

Although, trauma representation is a common phenomena found in war narratives, emotion produced by such war narratives plays a crucial role to make them worth considering good war literature. Moreover, the dissertation seeks to probe the appropriateness of the trauma transference and politics of affective responses in the narratives. The dissertation takes the following stories for the analysis:

1. A Pair of Innocent Eyes
2. Sitas
3. The Silence of Violence
4. The Bullet
5. Now You Can Return Home
6. The Other Person
7. Biplavi
8. The Sky Was Still Overcast
9. The Maoist

10. I Heard the Cock Crow

The above given stories bear different thematic contents of grave human rights violation. The stories show rape, fear, brutal killing, missing, nervous breakdown, separation, and other similar kinds of grave violation of human rights. They depict various sorts of emotional breakdowns of the characters. The plight of the victims in the stories render strong trauma. The trauma representation of the victims' fate clearly shows the writers' mastery to inscribe trauma in their literature. The writers' position in trauma rendition looks to be thought provoking in terms of the effects that it produces on the readers. Reading the stories, the readers feel that the victims' voices are really painful and traumatic. The caliber of the writers to make the readers feel emotionally traumatized reading the stories make the stories good trauma literature. Similarly, the affective response that the stories generate on the readers is one that aligns the readers with the victims. The stories evoke different sorts of emotional responses on the readers. The emotional responses such as pain, fear, sympathy, love, hate, shame among others are produced on the readers. The production of such responses on the readers and affective emotion of the readers for the victims pave a long way in national reconciliation and true address to the traumatic voices of the victims. The stories not only open up the traumatic but also make a strong recommendation for the national reconciliation after the grave human rights violation caused by a decade long Maoist insurgency.

Appropriateness of the Methodology

The dissertation takes four war narratives for analysis. They are analysed taking into account theoretical perspectives of Dominic La Capra's trauma theory, Sara Ahmed's affect

theory and some conceptual frameworks of Giorgio Agamben's concept of witness, and Muselmaan.

A decade long Maoist insurgency caused much devastation of property, people and other valuable entities. The horrendous human rights violation was a common phenomenon during the war. The impact of the insurgency period on the people left them shattered and traumatized in course of time. The inappropriate measures to tackle with the trauma suffering of the victims cause them to remain in the shadow of perpetual suffering. The danger of trauma politics remains there in case their trauma is not channelized properly. So, in order to appropriately channelize the trauma, the inscription of the victims' trauma in literature should be politics free and unprejudiced. In this regard, La Capra's theory puts forth the postulations that postulate politics free transference of trauma in literature. His concept of middle voice is an apt way to depict trauma in literature. Similarly, his concepts of acting out and working through remain seminal for trauma transference. Moreover, the analysis further seeks to give light on the identity politics of trauma.

Sara Ahmed's affect theory has been taken for the analysis of the war narratives. She shows the politics of various emotional responses behind the production of texts. She talks about various emotional responses— pain, hate, fear, disgust, love, shame among others— in her affect theory. At the same time, the theory renders the politics of readers' emotional responses for and against the characters in literary representation. The research seeks to uncover in the war narratives the politics of the emotional responses produced on the readers. It further looks in-depth the writer's politics behind the provocation of certain kinds of emotional responses on the readers. The politics of the writers' motive will be looked in light of the socio-political ideologies of the writers.

Giorgio Agamben's ideas of true witness and Muselmaan, have been taken for the methodological postulations for the analysis as well. The research contends that the trauma victims' situation should be like a Muselmaan— a victim in between life and death. The research gauges the situation of the characters vis-à-vis Agamben's concept of Muselmaan and true witness.

The dissertation departs from the earlier postulations made about the war narratives taken for the research. *Palpasa Café* by Narayan Wagle has been reviewed by Kunda Dixit. He asserts that "Wagle has visited remote corners of this rugged country, bringing stories about the neglect and apathy of officialdom to the notice of government on faraway Kathmandu" (96). The places neglected Wagle visits do not necessarily produce good trauma literature unless he applies the mode to write trauma narrative and affective economy. Since the present war narratives have not been analysed frequently, the present dissertation seeks to look at them from the theoretical perspectives of trauma and affect theories.

The present dissertation aspires to make an analysis of the representation of trauma of the victims of the People's War. Similarly, it also seeks to resolve the politics of evocation of certain sorts of emotional responses on the readers. It also hopes to make an appropriate way to see the war narratives in light of trauma and affect theories. The research will further take different measuring rods of the trauma theory and the affect theory to analyse the texts. In light of these theories, the present dissertation will unearth the latent loopholes remained in the literary pieces. Besides, the dissertation will also try to excavate the positive characteristics that should be incorporated in any piece of trauma literature. It will also peep into the socio-political dimension of the writer's ideology in regard to the production of the trauma narrative. With the completion of the work, the research hopes to show new avenues to see a trauma narrative in a fair way with

a new light in Nepali literary corpora. Moreover, the research aspires that the findings will open up new guidelines for national reconciliation in regard to the atrocities committed during the People's War in Nepal. With a bright prospect about the listening to the trauma stories of the war victims no matter whether they get justice or not Abhinawa Devkota writes in the *Kathmandu Post*, "The true homage we can pay to the victims of the revolution is to make sure that each individual story gets recorded and becomes an event. They might or might not get justice but there is no point in losing hope" (8).

Chapter II

People's War Trauma Narratives: An Analysis

The dissertation takes into account four People's War era related narratives which have raised the content of war and conflict. The analysis will solely be underpinned by the insights taken from both trauma theory and affect theory. In order to make the analysis of the narratives more cogent, the research takes into account some prominent theorists' insights about writing historical trauma narratives. The research seeks to probe into the war narratives— *Palpasa Café*, *Sipahiki Swasni (A Soldier's Wife)*, *Stories of Conflict and War*, and *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy*. The analysis of these trauma narratives tries to focus on the aspect whether these war narratives are the appropriate or not in terms of trauma rendition. Trauma representation is a complex and fallible task especially when it is rendered sufficiently yet inappropriately in trauma narratives. The research seeks to uncover the appropriate way to trauma representation in war trauma literary narratives. The research contends that the appropriate way of trauma rendition should have some basic propositions. These propositions must be weighed in certain measuring rods. The theoretical propositions, taken into account to analyse the primary trauma narratives, have certainly created a kind of fair and valuable judgment— whether a primary text for the research is worth being considered a good trauma literary piece. Similarly, the research looks at politics of evocation of emotion produced by the narratives. The research assesses that in order to be a good piece of trauma narrative, the literary piece must encompass two basic phenomena: unprejudiced trauma representation, and the creation of affective value judgment on both the writers and the readers. These two phenomena are what the research looks into the trauma literary texts taken for research.

Trauma Rendition and Cultural Politics of Affect in *Palpasa Café*

Palpasa Café, a much acclaimed and celebrated war narrative, gives an account of the life story of Drishya, a character more of a creation of the writer's imagination than of the character himself. *Palpasa Café* is a story of Drishya's life; his profession as a painter; his encounter and love with Palpasa; his experience of traveling to his own village; his feelings towards his friend Siddhartha; his encounter with the people in the hinterlands sandwiched between the conflict and war waged by the government military troops and the Maoist guerillas. Drishya's life story has been narrated by the writer Narayan Wagle. His manifestation of Drishya's life story as his own places him in the position of the protagonist making himself closer to Drishya. It is evident when he asserts in the prologue of the novel:

The novel was a portrait of his world. It was the music of his experience and his imagination. A painter, he was my novel's rightful critic. He was the one who'd inspired me to write it in the first place. Drishya was like a painting to me and I, his enraptured viewer. I'd written my novel in such a way that readers could mistake his story for my own. (2-3)

The writer Wagle asserts that his novel is the portrait of Drishya's world. Hence he makes himself closer to Drishya. In making himself closer to his protagonist he warns the readers of committing mistakes for taking Drishya's story as his own. However, in evincing his feeling for Drishya, the novelist fails to realize that creating a distance is what is required to portray someone as closely as the character himself remains. In contrast to this, the writer tries to desubjectify himself lest he will be charged of being subjective. Ironically, he is trapped in the trap of subjectivity as soon as he declares his position of being aloof from Drishya's life.

Furthermore, the writer's failure comes to the fore when he seeks to align his identity with the identity of Drishya. He posits that he has framed the story of Drishya in such a manner that the readers can mistake his story of Drishya's. Since Dominic La Capra's assessment of a good trauma literature always hinges on the writer's application of middle voice in trauma rendition, the novelist Wagle's appropriation of Drishya's story as his own renders problems in the novelist's position as an unprejudiced observer in the novel. Moreover, La Capra asserts, "Moreover, all narratives 'construct' or shape and some narratives more or less drastically distort their object" (10). The assertion contends that the narrative distorts the reality of object being described. The distortion of the reality can aptly be applied to Wagle's representation of Drishya's character. The writer's appropriation can easily be deciphered in his frank acceptance of Drishya's story as a real story. For La Capra middle voice is the most appropriate way to express trauma representation. In this line he asserts:

In my own tentative judgment, the use in historiography of some discursive analogue of the middle voice might be most justified with respect to one's most tangled and difficult relations of proximity and distance with regard to the other, notably when one is moved even shaken or unsettled, in such a manner that one is unable or unwilling to judge or even to predicate with any degree of confidence.

(29)

The above given paragraph pushes for the application of middle voice. This application makes the writer more confident about how to deal with the problem of proximity and distance especially when a writer is moved or unsettled in such a manner that one has difficulty in representing the victim's trauma. In contrast to La Capra's judgment, Wagle's novel is too coloured by his own subjective judgment since the character of Drishya is the writer's creation of

his imagination. In this regard, the representation of historiography is not represented on Wagle's part objectively. To consolidate this fact La Capra posits:

Objectivity is a goal of professional historiography related to the attempt to represent the past as accurately as possible. One may reformulate and defend this goal in postpositivistic terms by both questioning the idea of fully transparent unproblematic representation of the way things in the past "really were" [...] and response of the historian with respect to the object of study (including the voices of others). (99)

The above quote suggests that the representation of historiography must be objective and the attempt of a historian should be to represent the past as accurately as possible. In this regard, the excessive giving voice to Drishya has made the writer unsuccessful in representation of the traumatic history objectively. He must comply with objective motives while representing trauma in his war literary narrative. Wagle fails to objectify his position in representing Drishya's experiences and opens up his frank acceptance of his inability to grasp his past completely. He accepts:

To write more honestly about Drishya's experiences, I probably should have trekked through the hills as he did. But I am a busy man. I don't have a time for a long trek like that. I still didn't know a few basic facts about Drishya. How did he come to be absent to boarding school in Kathmandu? How did his parents pass away? What had made him an artist? When did he start loving solitude? [...] I view those aspects like the empty spaces in a painting. Just as paintings do, this

novel leaves some empty spaces for the reader to fill in with his or her imagination. (262-263)

In the above paragraph, the novelist suggests that although he tries to keep himself away from being too subjective, he nevertheless fails to objectify himself in representing the story of his protagonist, Drishya. Furthermore, in making the story of Drishya, Wagle over-represents the character of Drishya. Moreover, the novelist tries to make his voice as the voice of Drishya. Furthermore, the writer seems to have snatched the true agency of Drishya and the novel, *Palpasa Café* “represents the past of” Drishya “in a misleading and ideologically tendentious manner” (187). The Novelist’s process of taking interview with Drishya to write his story is full of problems. The task of the novelist is seen in relation to what La Capra asserts: “Attentively viewing survivor testimonials is often all too moving, but one’s response to the procedures of the interviewers or the content of questioning may impede, If not disorient, one’s emotional response (216).” Not being too emotional about the feelings of Drishya makes the writer produce a less powerful trauma narrative about the People’s War.

Drishya bears witness to his trauma story as a survivor testimony to the novelist. The novelist, in recounting the tale of the People’s War survivor Drishya, confesses that he has not completed the work of good trauma representation. His confession itself is an ample ground that he is unable to put his own work *Palpasa Café* in a category of good narratives often People’s War. The novelist accepts:

I didn’t interview anyone except Drishya. It was his story, after all, and told from his perspective. How the other characters appeared was entirely my responsibility. I’d constructed them purely from snippets of information Drishya had given me.

But then, all written works are incomplete. Something is always missing. There is always more to add. (261)

The acceptance of the novelist suggests that he has not adopted the right way to represent trauma. His interviewing process with Drishya has not made the novel a good trauma war narrative. In the same vein, La Capra asserts that the interviewing process with the survivor is a problematic genre in representing historiography. La Capra sees problem with the interviewing process in writing trauma narrative. He asserts:

Survivor testimony, including the interviewing process, is in certain ways a new, necessary problematic genre-in-the making with implications for oral history, particularly in especially sensitive areas of research. Historians have not yet worked out altogether acceptable ways of 'using' testimonials, and their task is further complicated by the at times marked differences between the conditions and experiences of victims as well as their response to them. (110)

As the above mentioned opinion about the true representation of survivor testimony asserts, it is problematic to represent survivor's testimony as the survivor goes through the trauma followed by the violence.

La Capra's concept of true representation of trauma in a trauma narrative is accomplished by applying and creating a certain distance with the victim cum survivor of the atrocities of war and conflict. La Capra opines that the appropriate position that a writer should adopt in representing a war survivor is what he calls middle voice. For him middle voice is an unproblematic identification and it "is most suitable at least for representing the most extreme, traumatic limit events in history, such as those of the Holocaust" (8). La Capra's identification

with the ‘middle voice’ is identified with the Derrida’s concept of differance and the middle voice paves “in-betweenness in representing true trauma representation. La Capra takes this middle voice as an “in-between voice of undecidability and the unavailability or radical ambivalence of clear-cut positions” (20). For La Capra application of middle voice by the writer is the most appropriate voice in trauma rendition. He assumes that one should write trauma in literature without being politically coloured. In order to be free from the political prejudices, one has to represent the trauma in the form of the body language. The victim’s body should be allowed to speak of the horrendous violence perpetrated on him. He puts it succinctly: “The looks and gestures of the survivors also call for reading and understanding. At times nothing could be more graphic and significant than the body language, including the facial expressions, of the survivor witness in recounting a past that will not pass away” (xiv). La Capra asserts that the body language is a forceful evidence of the brutalities committed upon the victim. The body language includes facial expression, cuts and bruises visible on the bodies. They are crucial in showcasing the war crimes perpetrated on the victims. Moreover, the novelist Wagle does not give any account of body language and cuts and pains in relation to Drishya in the novel. only for a nominal case, only for the sake of representation of the trauma faced by a village woman, Dridhya narrates her post-traumatic experience to Wagle. The woman has been victimized by the Maoists. Her traumatic memory and her verbal language suggest that indeed she has suffered an intense pain and suffering at the cause of abduction of her son. She remembers her son’s abduction and responds Drishya. He remembers the conversation with the woman:

‘You remind me of my elder son,’ the woman said to me. Then she started babbling to herself. If I don’t send my younger son to the jungle, I will have to go myself. Or I will have to give them a hundred thousand rupees.’ She looked

devastated. 'Even if I sell my all oxen, I will get only ten thousand. And who will buy my oxen in this village?' (139)

The above mentioned conversation between Drishya and a woman in a village shows the traumatic pain faced by the woman. The Maoists have urged her either to send her younger son with them or to join them herself. Her desperate situation is made miserable when she has to opt for either of the situations. The woman goes through the trauma when Drishya tries to sketch her photo. The woman's reaction is reflective of what La Capra calls the situation at which someone responds at a traumatic situation:

In traumatic memory the event somehow registers and may actually be received in the present, at times in a compulsively repetitive manner. It may not be subject to controlled, conscious recall. But it returns in nightmares, flashbacks, anxiety attacks, and other forms of intrusively repetitive behaviour characteristics of an all-compelling frame [...] whether or not the past is reenacted or repeated in its precise literality, one feels as if one were back there reliving the event, and distance between here and there, then and now collapses.(89)

The above assertion made by La Capra in relation to the post traumatic situation makes it clear that the woman Drishya met in the village has severely been traumatized. Her meeting and conversation with Drishya makes her go past the memory of her son's tentative abduction.

La Capra asserts that identification with the victim should be made by a writer in two ways. He calls the first one as being fully identified with the victim that is called full objectivity and the other one is to be a surrogate victim. The novelist has to be like a surrogate victim who

seems to be overwhelmed by the extreme pain that the real victim has gone through. La Capra clarifies it when he theorizes:

In a sense, there are at least two extreme identificatory possibilities for the historian: the first is the extreme of full identification with participants [...] there is also the possibility that the historian (or any other observer) might go to the any extreme of full identification with the victim [...] the empathy may go the point of fascination or extreme identification, wherein one becomes a kind of surrogate victim oneself and assumes the victim's voice. (146)

The above quote suggests that a writer should adopt either of the two identificatory practices in the rendition of trauma narrative. Contrary to La Capra's assertion, *Palpasa Café* does not take any of the sides. The writer neither prefers to have full identification— purely being objective— nor does he become surrogate victim listening to the story of Drishya as an experienced victim of the war. Drishya in his conversation with Christine— Palpasa's friend— declares that he is completely neutral. He declares that he is neither with the Maoist rebels nor with the government military forces. Rather he states that he falls in the third category. He critiques both the sides. Drishya remarks:

The stand I'd taken was that of people who resisted the warmongers on both sides. I belong to this, third force. People who felt as I did could be targeted by either side because we opposed both. I'd protested against both warring sides in these paintings, my colours showing my support for the third camp. This was my strength. (238)

The above remarks of Drishya puts him on the pedestal of a bias-less person in terms of his support for the warring parties. Drishya's opinion of remaining isolated from any of the warring parties suggests that he does not tend to retain much needed emotional response to portray the characters' trauma in his account of his encounter with the war trauma victims. Being emotionally affected by the trauma stories of the victims is a must for a writer to be a surrogate victim. Drishya does not show any such signs of being emotionally affected. Thus, he fails to be a surrogate victim to inscribe trauma in his account of his journey to war affected areas in remote villages. In order to be a surrogate victim and to be more objective in trauma representation, the real witness of the victimhood and the interviewer of the witness— Drishya and Narayan wagle respectively— have to be emotionally moved to render the real traumatic representation. An apt emotional response is what is called emphatic unsettlement for La Capra. He considers it a middle voice that a literary writer must employ to write a trauma literature. In order to take a middle voice, a writer must show empathy for the victim. It is a kind of self victimization. The writer has to listen to the victim's trauma narrative and should be moved by the trauma that the victim in the past went through.

Dominic La Capra states that trauma theory must be free of politics. There should not be any kind of subjective judgment in representation of trauma in war narratives. He posits two phenomena to come to the terms of trauma representation. He names them acting out and working through. Through these two essential properties of trauma rendition, a victim's real victimhood should be foregrounded. By showing the trauma, a victim does not create any trauma identity rather it questions the formation of identity related to trauma. La Capra states that, "trauma should not be identity rather be problematic question of identity" (23). La Capra's statement questions the presumption that trauma should be identity for a person. Coming again to

the two properties of trauma rendition, La Capra states about acting out: “In acting out, tenses implode, and it is as if one were back there in the past relieving the traumatic scene. And duality (or double inscription) of time (past or present or future) is experientially collapsed or productive only of aporias and double blinds” (21). In regard to La Capra’s version of acting out with a real victim, the victim tends to lose his sense of past, present and future. He is just stuck to the state of melancholy which La Capra sees as a process of acting out the trauma.

La Capra enumerates another property of trauma rendition. He calls it working through or mourning. La Capra’s working through is defined below:

Working Through is an articulatory practice: to the extent one works through trauma (as well as transference relations in general), one is able to distinguish between past and present and to recall in memory that something happened to one (or one’s people) back then while realizing that one is living here and now with openings to the future.(23)

Working through is to some extent a healing process. It is so in the sense that the victim of the past is able to recognize the past atrocities and he also comes to know his present state of affair. He recognizes the past and present and thereby opens up new avenues for a livable future. He deems a post traumatic situation worth being alive albeit with deep wounds and scars. He puts forth post traumatic situation: “Indeed, in post traumatic situations in which one relives (or acts out) the past, distinctions between then and now wherein one is able to remember what happened to one in the past but realizes one is living in the here and now with future possibilities” (46-47). La Capra opines that in the post traumatic situation, the victim fully recognizes his status in the present and he remains fully able to cope with the situation. The victim’s adjustment in the

present is crucial for La Capra. He pushes for an indefinite identification with the wounds and pains that a victim should cope with. He calls it a good way to live with a scar that can never be healed fully. Similarly, he states that trauma can never be represented through redemptive narrative. He sees problems with this kind of narrative as it is a sublime grand narrative. He states, “Redemptive narrative is a narrative that denies the trauma that brought it into existence. And more experimental, non redemptive narratives are narratives that are trying to come to terms with traumas in a post traumatic context, in ways that involve both acting out and working through” (179). The statement of La Capra posits that non redemptive narratives leave a lasting trauma impact on the readers. He opines that redemptive narratives deny coming to the terms of trauma. They further make the trauma representation more a subject that questions trauma politics.

Looking *Palpasa Café*, with an insight of trauma representation is not ample to judge its value as a good piece of trauma narrative. Along with evocation of trauma, a good piece of trauma narrative should produce emotions on both the writers and readers. Politics free emotional responses of the readers and the writer make a piece of trauma narrative worth being considered as a good narrative. In this regard, Sara Ahmed’s affect theory bears a pertinent answer of a major question: what is the politics behind evocation of affect on the readers and the writer? Politics of affect refers to a writer’s ideological stand regarding the text through which he tries to generate a certain kind of emotional response he intends to produce. In doing so, the writer tries to accomplish a certain goal. His goal is explicitly associated with his ideology and his opinions. Furthermore, it is evident that readers’ response is crucial in judging the value of a literary text. The research proposes that a writer’s position in society as well as in media is also equally significant in relation to the success and failure of the writer for his work. In this regard,

the privileges and stature that the novelist of *Palpasa Café*, Narayan Wagle holds, justifies his undoubted favor that he can garner through media. His status as a chief editor in the widely circulated newspaper, the *Kantipur* daily has certainly created vibes for his recognition as a good writer of war narrative. No matter how well he seeks to justify his objectivity in writing, he bears lacks and loopholes in writing the novel. His bearing witness to what Drishya says is twice removed from reality since the real witness Drishya also lacks bearing witness to the trauma and the testimony that he gives of his trauma experiences. In this regard, it is pertinent to take into consideration Giorgio Agamban's statement about the real testimony and witness. Agamban asserts:

Testimony, however, contains a lacuna. The survivor agree about this "There is another lacuna in every testimony: witnesses are by definition survivors and so all, to some degree, enjoyed a privilege [...] No one has told the destiny of the common prisoner, since it was not materially possible for him to survive [...] I have also described the common prisoner when I speak of 'Muslims' but the Muslims did not speak. (Levi 1997:215-216 , quoted in Agamban)

The above quote suggests that a testimony contains a lacuna, that is, gap. So, the testimony presented by the victim cum survivor becomes incomplete. Agamban calls this incomplete person as *Musalmaan*. He calls the true witness or the complete witness are "those who did not bear witness and could not bear witness" (33) because "the past belongs to the dead" (34). La Capra holds that the true representation of trauma can never be seen since the true trauma representation is impossible to impart. Now if we take Drishya's narrative as a witness's narrative there are a lot of loopholes in his representation of trauma that he bears witness to. Similarly, Narayan Wagle's appropriation of Drishya's voice is what deviates *Palpasa Café* from

being considered as a good piece of trauma literature. The inappropriate condition of Drishya to be regarded as a real war victim is the evidence that Drishya hardly becomes a source of trauma representation. Too much identification of the novelist with Drishya further dissipates the impact of the novel as a real war narrative.

The research now focuses on the politics of affect in the novel, *Palpasa Café*. Before entering into the analysis of the text, the researcher takes Sara Ahmed's definition of affect as an emotional response to a certain kind of outside phenomena that produces an impact on the people. Sara Ahmed's book *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, gives an account of varying sorts of emotional responses to a certain kind of outside phenomena. Furthermore, she makes a point that the emotional response that readers make towards victims is full of politics. She asserts that an emotional response emanates from a person's associations with certain kinds of preconceived notions created through repeated historical representations. In order to talk about historical representation, the writer Ahmed elaborates many affective responses — pain, hate, fear, disgust, shame, disgust, sympathy, empathy among others. These affective responses are created in order to make the readers go with the writer's ideology.

The research assumes that a trauma narrative, produces varying emotional responses on the readers. These responses are produced with a political motif. A writer's privileging of certain characters in his trauma narrative at the cost of othering some other characters certainly showcases his alignment with some characters and his dissociation with the other characters who are considered as minor characters lacking proper agency. Taking *Palpasa Café* in this light, Drishya's presence from the initial stage to the last signifies that he is favoured by the novelist excessively. Similarly, the other characters— Palpasa, Siddhartha, the little girl among others—

are not given the proper place in the novel. This explicitly exhibits that Drishya is privileged at the cost of the other characters.

Moving to the politics behind privileging of Drishya, the novelist wants readers to express sympathy for Drishya. But ironically enough he fails to gain much sympathy from the readers since he lacks the victimhood. Rather than him, other minor characters (my emphasis) suffered the real trauma.

Palpasa Café renders various affective responses aiming at the readers. The research focuses on the politics of emotion that is mixed up with the rendition of the trauma narrativization. Beginning with the politics of pain that the narrative produces, the narrative represents a lopsided representation of victimhood between the real victim and the surrogate victim. The novel, although written from the perspective of Drishya, Narayan Wagle, a privileged chief editor in the *Katipur* news, colours his voice with that of Drishya's voice. In identifying Drishya's voice with his own voice, Wagle seeks to draw the readers' attention and sympathy towards Drishya. The writer seems to have accomplished this target since the novel has amassed prominence among Nepali readers. Thus, it has stood as the best seller among the various war narratives written in context of People's War in Nepal. Furthermore, the novel was awarded Madan Prize for literature in 2005. The politics behind making narration of Drishya's trauma story is underpinned by the fact that he enjoys a privileged status of being a celebrated painter. Besides, Wagle himself enjoys a privileged status as a top journalist in Nepal. In the line of politics of pain, Sara Ahmed states:

Given that subjects have an unequal relation to entitlement, then more privileged subjects will have a greater recourse to narratives of injury. That is, the more

access subjects have to public resources, the more access they may have to the capacity to mobilize narratives of injury within the public domain. (33)

The above quote suggests that a privileged subject remains powerful in terms of representation of narratives of injury. The more access a character has to the media through his status and influence the more he accomplishes in his motif about the narratives of injury. Narayan Wagle's character Drishya is a celebrated painter whose life is supposed to be going well looking at his art gallery and his market value in the public. His public face overshadows the real victim (my emphasis) Palpasa's story of injury. At the same time, he enjoys fame among the art lovers including Palpasa. Therefore, he retains a strong influence to manipulate the public domain through his trauma narration. Furthermore, he is made more powerful by the writer himself through his celebrated status in media houses as well. The research unearths this politics of privileged stature of the protagonist who maneuvers to disseminate his narrative of pain and trauma. Therefore, in order to read the real victim's trauma, one should really understand whether Drishya is a real victim; whether Drishya has been appropriate in unburdening his experience of war and conflict in front of the novelist Narayan Wagle.

Drishya's friend Siddhartha is presented as a Maoist rebel who intends to sacrifice himself for the cause of his so called noble reasons like liberation of poor class people, toppling down the bourgeoisie class, establishing an equitable and just society among other welfare goals. In order to establish his reasons, he provokes fear on the part of the people who are supposed to be following him making a sacrifice. To create an atmosphere of fear, Siddhartha tries to manipulate the villagers to shun the others, their rivals— military personnel. Siddhartha's act of making others fearsome draws an insight of Sara Ahmed who talks about the politics of making others fearsome: "Fear works by establishing others as fearsome insofar as they threaten to take

the self in. Such fantasies construct the other as a danger not only to one's self as self, but to one's very life, to one's very existence as a separate being with a life of its own" (64). Ahmed's words suggest that the others are different from the self. In this regard, Siddhartha is at dangerous situation because of the fear created by the presence of the others— the threatening and intimidating. Siddhartha resorts to violence and creates fear among the villagers to serve his own purpose of recruiting the villagers in the Maoist army. In order to persuade Drishya, Siddhartha justifies the violence in the name of construction or rebuilding of a new horizon of a just and equitable society. Siddhartha and Drishya's conversation goes on this way:

‘Consider the purpose’ he said. Destruction in order to create’.

‘Isn't it possible to create without destroying?’

He said, ‘The important question is what is being destroyed. To cure this diseased country, its fundamental structure must be changed. And that's what we're doing.’

‘But people are being killed.’

‘Most of the people who're being killed are representatives of the old power elite.

True, some innocent people are getting caught in the cross fire,’ he

conceded...Didn't the state first arrest, torture and kill unarmed people?’ (91-92)

The above conversation taken place between Siddhartha and Dirshya unmasks the latent politics behind the violence perpetrated on the people. Siddhartha justifies the war on the pretext that the elite people are disgusting or the means of fear for the poor, marginalized people. Therefore, Siddhartha validates the people's war on the grounds to uproot the feudal structure of the country. His argument is further reinforced by his assertion, “We are fighting to build a new

nation” (93). The argument of Siddhartha’s revolutionary attitude has been misunderstood by Drishya. Siddhartha states, “that’s where you are wrong,” he said. ‘You didn’t understand. You just went for superficial appearances and painted me as a character, not as a part of a larger phenomena” (90). The statement of Siddhartha clearly manifests that Drishya is trying to belittle him considering him only a subject of a large phenomena of structural change of the society but not a large phenomena or the change itself. Drishya’s lukewarm response to Siddhartha suggests that he does not consider Siddhartha seriously. It further gives his lax opinion towards Siddhartha and his agency.

Relating Agamben’s concept of state of exception with Siddhartha justification of war, La Capra’s opinion about German justification of War is pertinent to be taken into consideration here. La Capra states:

The putative struggle for survival of a superior race required war against peers and an elimination of ‘inferior’ races, but this elimination of the putatively inferior could be formulated [...] phobic ones involving anxiety about contamination and degradation and a desire for liberation, regeneration, or even redemption. (132)

The above quote states that the superior German race eliminates the inferior race in order to safeguard itself from being contaminated, degraded and retain itself liberated. The German justification of war tends to be tantamount to Siddhartha’s opinion about the necessity to change the fundamental structure of the country. Thus, he says, “The important question is what is being destroyed. To cure this country, its fundamental structures must be changed. And that’s what we

are doing” (91). Siddhartha urges for the structural change of the country that has been plagued by the presence of feudal class people.

Palpasa Café evokes along with other emotional reactions, an affect of hate. Sara Ahmed takes hate as “a negative attachment to an other that one wishes to expel, an attachment that is sustained through the expulsion of the other from bodily and social proximity” (47). In this regard, Siddhartha’s powerful derogatory speech towards bourgeoisie society makes them provoke hatred for the proletariat class for which Maoists were supposed to be waging People’s War. Siddhartha puts forth in front of an old man:

‘The rich, the powerful, the exploiters and the bourgeoisie have everything,’
Siddhartha continued. They can afford any health treatment they choose, all the
education they want and any entertainment they like. They drive expensive cars
and indulge themselves in luxury. But what do we have? (99)

The above speech of Siddhartha tries to assure the old man to shun the bourgeoisie people. Here, the bourgeoisie class is made opposite the Maoists who are supposed to represent the poor proletariat class. This speech produces hatred for the bourgeoisie society. The speech deals with politics of making the state military culprit for all the socio-economic discrimination in the society. Siddhartha further makes his remarks stronger by his strong manipulation:

We will never get anywhere till the power of the state rests in the hands of the
people, Siddhartha said, sensing the old man was beginning to waver. ‘your
daughter had to leave school while the children of the high and mighty get to
study in America [...] Generation will continue to live in the hills as you do, as
long as the rich keep running the country. (100)

The above speech by Siddhartha strongly manipulates the villager and tries to deviate from his ordinary life convincing him to comply with his demands. He seeks to evoke hatred for the bourgeoisie class not only on the villager but on the readers as well. The writer shows the demise of Siddhartha in a war between the Maoists and the military personnel. It shows that Siddhartha is made weaker in comparison to Drishya. The writer's position as a journalist is visible since taking side with the Maoists may cause trouble for his career and life given the much difficult situation in the face of People's War.

Trauma Rendition and Cultural Politics of Affect in *Sipahiki Swasni*

Another war narrative taken for analysis is *Sipahiki Swasni (A Soldier's Wife)*. It is a collection of stories written on various subject matters. But the analysis seeks to take only four of them since they are related with the dissertation's motive. The stories for analysis are: "Khuma", Samaya Ra Chitkar (Time and Bellow), "Sipahiki Swasni" (A Soldier's Wife), "Santrat Manharu" (Fearful Hearts). These stories are seen from the perspective of trauma theory and affect theory. The stories for the analysis deserve a serious attention since the level of popularity celebrated by the book has been really praiseworthy. The analysis focuses on whether popularity of the text is genuine or an exaggeration. This dissertation aspires to weigh the authentic measurement of the trauma stories of the book in light of both trauma representation and affective response that they render. Similarly, it will discover the trauma performance of the victims and affective response of the readers. The writer's latent motive for evocation of the affective responses will also be looked into closely.

The storywriter Mahesh Bikram Shah's collection of stories, *Sipahikai Swasni (A Soldier's Wife)* shows the characters suffering from the post traumatic situations. Furthermore,

the characters of the stories have been shown as shattering and stuck to an endless pain and suffering. La Capra's concept of melancholia and mourning can be foregrounded here to talk about appropriate trauma rendition. The former can be taken as acting out and the latter can be regarded as working through and collectively they form appropriate way to represent the trauma of the victims. La Capra states:

Mourning might be seen as a form of working through, and melancholia as a form of acting out. Freud in comparing melancholia with mourning as characteristics of an arrested process in which the depressed, self berating, and berating and traumatized [...] melancholia and mourning are acting out and working through-concepts, whose applicability must, of course, be further specified in different contexts and with respect to different subject positions.

The above quote suggests that melancholia is compared with acting out and mourning is compared with working through. And it is only when these two phenomena are combined, the real trauma rendition is accomplished. It further suggests that trauma representation cannot be accomplished through redemptive narratives that seek to heal the trauma of the victims. In relation to this La Capra asserts:

Indeed, a function of certain ideologies is to transvalue the traumatic into a figure of the sublime and Nazi ideology and practice achieved this feat in a particular, invidiously harmful, and extremely destructive way [...] Moreover, the quest for sublimity for the self or the group may require the abjection of the other. (135-136)

The above opinion of La Capra suggests that sublime narratives distort the real image of trauma and it weakens the power of trauma and makes it misguided. Thus, it can be assumed that trauma representation is accomplished through the radical break from the normative limit values. The concept of sublime narrative denies the long lasting impact that falls on the readers. The sublime narrative seeks to liberate the victims' wounds and ever deepening scars. But La Capra rejects this concept and pushes for a long lasting recognition of trauma that leaves indelible effect on the victims.

The indelibility of deep wounds of the trauma victims retains a daunting task to inscribe in war narratives. *Sipahiki Swasni* tries to bring forth the ineffaceable trauma of war victims through the mastery of language and the affect that it leaves on the readers. The dissertation seeks to gauge the impact of trauma on the war victims as well as the affective responses that they produce on the readers. The initial story of the war narrative, *Sipahiki Swasni* is "Khuma". The story shows the story of a girl Khuma . She is alone at home and studies at a school. She has no one to look after her. Her father has joined the Maoist army. Her mother has also left the world due to her constant thinking about the father. Her elder brother has left Khuma at home alone with the younger brother. But soon the younger brother of Khuma too has left her and has joined the Maoist army. Since then she remains alone in her home. The speaker of the story is a teacher and he teaches Khuma in a school. The writer has skillfully fully presented the tragedy that Khuma has to suffer when she has been forcefully and brutally taken with the Maoists. Her condition is unknown and the readers are left confused about whereabouts of Khuma after the story ends up. Since the story employs the first person narrative, the narrator is assumed to be the real witness of Khuma's tragedy. The narrator is offered to live in the house of Khuma since he is asked to live with Khuma, he finds that she has already been forced to flee with the Maoist

rebels. The following scene draws the heartrending feelings for Khuma as presented by the narrator:

After some time I dragged my feet into the house of Khuma. The scene was heartrending inside the room she used to sleep. Clothes were torn apart and thrown everywhere. My body started trembling seeing her blood soaked clothes and the blood patches created on the land. My heart started bellowing. (18, My Translation)

The above mentioned passage shows the poignant image of the surrounding of Khuma's room. The narrator describes the picture in such a way that it puts the readers in sympathetic mood for Khuma. Her pathetic condition has been made as such that it deeply moves the narrator. He describes his situation:

Weeping I tried to see other images. On the corner of the room a *diyo* was still burning on the clay pot [...] she might have been reading burning *diyo* up to the late midnight. 'Khuma, my sister!' a distressing cry erupted. Taking her book, pen and copy with both the hands I let them touch my eyes, kissed them and wept bitterly. (18, My Translation)

The pathetic situation that the writer comes across feeling the tragedy happened with Khuma shows a strong empathy that the narrator produces. The narrator's response for Khuma shows that the writer has aptly inscribed the empathy in the narrative. At the same time, the story of Khuma has produced feelings for sympathy on the part of the readers. The tragedy leaves a lasting impact on the narrator as well. It is evident when the narrator recounts the tragic event. He says, "Long time might have been elapsed since this event. I have not been able to count the

days. Months have not been counted and I have not been able to count the arithmetic of years. I have been teaching at the same school” (18, My Translation). The statement of the narrator spotlights the fact that he has been completely unable to get rid of the trauma that he as a witness to the horrible situation, saw earlier. At the same time, the speech of the narrator exemplifies an appropriate working through condition.

When a narrator undergoes a trauma situation seeing the unspeakable pain of the war victim, he is said to be emphatically unsettled to render the appropriate trauma situation. The narrator seems to have undergone the same situation as is emphasized by La Capra in the following lines:

The interviewer or even the commentator or observer may also tend to repeat the traumas of the victim, particularly when identification proceeds in an uncritical manner and is even valorized. Such repetition may in some sense be necessary, but it may also be mitigated through empathy that recognizes and respects the alterity or “otherness” of the other. (143)

The above assertion of La Capra states that the observer of the traumas repeats the traumas of the victims. It is necessary in the sense that it respects the otherness of the other, that is, victim.

Taken the above quote of La Capra, the narrator of the war narrative Khuma identifies with the trauma condition which is necessary to recognize the trauma of the victim— Khuma. The evidence of realization of pain and trauma of the victim Khuma can be seen in the writer’s description of his own miserable condition looking at the horrendous situation perpetrated on Khuma. The writer describes his feelings: “My heart beat was stopped. My hands became still. My brain had been hit by something heavy. Suddenly I was caught by paralysis” (18, My

translation). The statement of the writer suggests that he has undergone the post traumatic situation looking at the condition of Khuma. Moreover, the narrator portrays the character of Khuma sympathetic. Khuma talks about her predicament when she loses her brother who inspired Khuma to go to school and make her future bright. But he too left her to join the Maoist rebellion. The hopeless and solitary situation of Khuma provokes sympathy for her. Her account goes this way: “Even before going to school he entered the jungle leaving me. For him Jungle is dearer than me. She looked at me. I was looking at her. Her eyes were drenched in tears” (9, My Translation). Khuma’s miserable speech really evokes sympathy on the readers when she brings into her image of her brother who left her leaving alone in this world. The misery that Khuma suffers makes the readers generate love for her as well. The mourning and grief that moved the narrator having lost Khuma is an expression of love not only by the narrator but also by the readers. Sara Ahmed’s following remark proves that the expression of the narrator evokes love for the victim, Khuma:

Mourning and grief become an expression of love; love announces itself most passionately when faced with the loss of the object. Love has an intimate relation to grief not only through how the subject responds to the lost object, [...] I have already taken judgment on whether others approximate the ideals that I have already taken to be ‘mine’ or ‘ours.’ (130)

The above quoted remarks by Sara Ahmed clarify that mourning and grief are the expressions of love. The identification of grief and mourning by the observer as his own makes him express love for the victim. Since the condition of the victim can befall on the observer as well, the observer readily aligns himself with the victim. The same case applies here with the narrator of

Khuma as well. Khuma's fate can also befall on the readers and that produces love for Khuma on the part of the readers.

Along with the affect of sympathy, the story plays with the politics of affect of hate. The writer being a superior police cop tries to create an affect of hate in the readers for the Maoists who take away Khuma enforcing unjustified violence. This kind of projection of Khuma necessarily provokes the negative sentiments for the Maoist rebels. This will cause greater benefit to the Police personnel since the readers will develop a kind of hatred for the Maoist rebels. Toppling down the image of the Maoists is what is latent in the story "Khuma" which certainly brings politics in its maneuverings. However, the affect of sympathy for Khuma; love for Khuma, the critical distance— emphatic unsettlement— paved by the writer make the war narrative worth being considered as a good trauma representation.

The next trauma literary narrative included in the anthology is "Samaya ra Chitkar" (Time and Bellow). The story similar to that of "Khuma", evokes trauma and affect on the part of both the writer and the readers. The story is an imaginative narration of the writer. He starts to write a story and immediately follows the horror and chaos of war and conflict. The writer meticulously presents the extremities of the characters' suffering and their inexpressible pains of torture and killings. The writer gets agonized looking at those situations and recognizes the complexity of the inexpressible pain and trauma of the characters revolving around the writer. They force the writer to write their own stories of pain and tragic fate. The writer finds it almost impossible to write their trauma stories. The writer's inability to express the trauma and pain of the victims makes him emphatically unsettled. The writer's expression of the identification of the characters' pains as his own makes it evident that he is making himself feel empathy for the victims of the war. He asserts, "I feel those old people's pain as my own pain" (53, My

Translation). The writer's statement tells that he tries to empathize with the victims. In this vein, La Capra holds that, "Empathy may also be seen as counteracting victimization, including self victimization" (40). La Capra takes empathy as a kind of self victimization that unsettles the writer to inscribe the victim's fate as his own. It makes the writer more powerful in his representation of trauma.

The war narrative, "Samaya ra Chitkar" (Time and Bellow) evokes various affective responses. Among them fear is a response that is created not only on the writer but also on the readers. The following lines show that the writer's narrative produces fear on the writer. In case the same kind of the situation happens to pass on the readers, the passing will be extremely menacing. The writer shows the situation fearsome when he says, "My pen is turning into gun, a gun that leaves the bullets, a gun that turns alive people into the dead ones. I tried to flee from the room immediately" (58, My Translation). The statement of the writer takes Gun as a source of fear. The writer tries to flee from the menace of the impending danger caused by the gun— a symbol of war and conflict for ages. Thus, fear is produced on the part of the speaker as well as the readers simply not because of the emotion that the gun carries rather it bears the history of guerilla warfare caused by the Maoist rebellion. In this very line, Ahmed also deems that fear does not reside on the object rather it is the circulation and association of the fear to the objects that make the objects fearsome. Ahmed says, "this contact is shaped by past histories of contact in the present" (7). Further, she asserts that the histories are created on the basis of "how the object impresses (upon) us may depend on histories that remain alive in so far as they have already left their impression" (8). Ahmed argues that the histories are the founding principles on the basis of which the effect of fear is created. The histories have remained alive throughout the ages and they leave us the lasting impression in our minds. Thus, fear does not reside on the

mind of the people rather they are the product of the impact of their circulation and recognition by the people.

“Samaya ra Chitkar” (Time and Bellow) creates another affective response— pain. The expression of pain gets the politics done on the pain itself. The inscription of pain in war narratives demands for a collective politics, “ a politics based not on the possibility that we might be reconciled, but on learning to live with the impossibility of reconciliation, or learning that we live with and beside each other, and yet we are not one” (39). The affective politics of pain calls for recognition of pain that has to be remained along with the impossibility of full reconciliation and assimilation of the pain into healing. Furthermore, the writer evokes a language that shatters the smooth running of language in order to disturb the readers. In this line, he renders the pain of a victim:

In the time of ringing red bangles, my hands became naked, storyteller! In your village, day to day the number of widows is increasing; white clothes are hard to be found in market. Storyteller, where should I go carrying innocent offspring? Where is that land where I get the smell of my mud not of bomb and human blood? The girl started weeping bitterly. (54, My Translation)

The above mentioned speech of the victim leads the readers feel sympathy for her. At the same time, the speech of the victim renders an extreme pain on the part of the writer as well. The language brings about the unrepresentability of pain. In this line, Sara Ahmed citing Elaine Scarry in her book puts forth about the pain. She puts forth “pain is not only bodily trauma, it also resists or even ‘shatters’ language and communication. So that which seems most self-evident-most there, throbbing in its thereness- also slips away, refuses to be simply present in speech, or

forms of testimonial address” (22).Sara Ahmed provokes an important aspect of pain politics. She highlights that the language is also shattering when the unrepresentability of pain is foregrounded. The language of the victim as given above suggest that her trauma is beyond explanation and just as she is shattered so is shattered her language and its inscription by the writer.

The writer captures the heartrending bellow of a woman who is now a widow and is expressing her pathetic condition. The writer makes a reference to that widow who seems to have gone mad and is still asking for the demand that the victimizers ask for sacrifice from her. She asks the writer:

Storyteller, the land has been drenched in the blood of your own brothers.

*Raktabiizes*¹ will be emanated from this land. The more *Raktabizes* will be sprung out the more out sisters will be widows. Therefore, write the story of this land and ask-how many days have been remained to irrigate this land with our tears? (55, My Translation)

The above shattering language supposes that the girls have been making a sacrifice for the unwanted violence and have been severely traumatized by the events. Here, the intensity of pain of a widow is as great as a condition unrepresentable. The language itself is simply unable to render the appropriate rendition of trauma. In this very vein, Ahmed argues that “the vocabularies that are available for describing pain, or through metaphor that creates relations of

1- According to Hindu religion, *Raktabiize* is a mythological demon, who was said to have produced more and more *Raktabiizees* like him as his blood fell on the earth. He was wiped out by Kali- an incarnation of Goddess Durga- by drinking his blood before it fell on the earth. By doing so the Goddess was said to have saved the Gods and Goddess of the heaven.

likeness seen inadequate in the face of the feeling” (22). The argument of Ahmed suggests that the feelings of pain are inadequate in language representation.

Mahesh Bikram Shah’s story “Samaya ra Chitkar” remains a critique of the politics of fear as well. The politics of killings of thousands of innocent people on the pretext of saving the nation and to make the villages sophisticated and beautiful ones, the story counters this politics by making a corpse alive again. The corpse questions the writer on the legitimacy of his killing. He was killed on the grounds that the nation will be equitable and the villages will be beautiful and hospitable.

Maimed corpse stood up quickly turning into a real person and started asking me.

I gazed at the corpse wrapped in a white cloth. People say I have been killed in order to make this village more beautiful, but I say I have been killed. Other people say I have become a martyr, I sacrificed myself! But I wanted to live storyteller, wanted to live my full life [...] due to my corpse this village will not be beautiful. I don’t believe in this. Instead my corpse is spreading foul smell. (56,

My translation)

The above quote explicitly counters the rhetoric of legitimacy of sacrifice that hinges on the assumption that the sacrifice of the innocent people is committed in order to make the country and village more beautiful. Here, the reawaking of the corpse suggests that the ground on which the corpse (earlier human) was sacrificed was wrong. This counters the politics of fear which demanded sacrifice for the so-called rhetoric of liberation. In this line the research assumes that the writer to some extent tries to argue that the People’s war was wrong. The writer’s argument

about the war which he considers wrong is emanated from his position as a critique of war, the researcher believes.

The research now takes into account another powerful war story, “Sipahiki Swasni” (A Soldier’s Wife) for the analysis. The story is also equally thought provoking in terms of trauma rendition and the affective responses of both the writer and the readers. The story comprises of politics of affective response of varying kinds: fear, sympathy, empathy, love and others. The story tells a story of Kamali. She has two sons. Living away from her husband, she has constantly been haunted by the rhetoric of fear of the people around her. Her misery has been added with more pain with the people’s remarks about the impending danger that can cause damage to her husband at any time in the near future. With her broken heart she has been living with utmost pain in the district headquarter of Jajarkot away from her husband, a policeman, deployed in extremely volatile areas ravaged by the atrocities of the maoist rebels. The pain that Kamali sustains is beyond explanation. The openness of the pain and wound in the present time makes the narrative a strong war trauma narrative. In line of the openness of the pain for the readers, Sara Ahmed puts forth:

In order to break the seal of the past, in order to move away from the attachment that are hurtful, we must first bring them into the realm of political action.

Bringing pain into politics requires we give up the fetish of the wound through different kinds of remembrance. The past is living rather than dead; the past lives in the very wounds that remain open in the present. (33)

The above lines suggest that the openness of the wound and pain brings them into the realm of politics. Sara Ahmed states that the pain should be remembered and the past in the form of pain

and killings should be constantly brought into our conscience. Only through the constant repetition and hearing of the wounds of the victims, the real trauma situation is said to be acknowledged. The narrative “Sipahiki Swasni” (Soldier’s Wife) in this line keeps open the possibilities of acknowledgement of the pain that Kamali suffered. At the same time, the story also gives glosses on the fact that the pain that Kamali suffered necessarily brings in the mind of the readers the other victims similar to her. Furthermore, the affect of pain is provoked in the mind of the readers. Feeling pain for Kamali is provoked when she suffers the indescribable pain occasioned by her husband’s death. Shah presents this in the following lines:

Outside environment is drenched in darkness. Neither there Likhure is not seen nor is seen the tea shop, nor is seen the crowd every time huddled there. This dream really happens to be real? Kamali started weeping bitterly pressing hard the photo of her husband smiling wearing his military uniform. Children’s sleep gets disturbed by the poignant cry of the mother. The children also wake up crying. Rohit’s voice stammers- “What happened to our dad, mommy?”(100-110, My Translation)

The above lines of Kamali render an insurmountable pain not only on the part of Kamali but on the part of the readers as well. The narrative suggests that the writer has really come up with the pain of the victims. This moving description renders pain for the readers. The readers’ acknowledging the pain for the victim keeps the pain and wound of the victim open. This very opening up of the wound opens the ethics of the readers for the victim. The realization of the readers that they cannot feel the victims’ fate makes a trauma narrative successful. In the same vein, Sara Ahmed states, “I want to suggest here, cautiously and tentatively, that an ethics of responding to pain involves being open to being affected by that which one cannot know or feel

(30).” Here, Sara Ahmed opines that the open acknowledgement of the pain and trauma of the victims makes the painful voice of the victim even stronger. The ethical response for the victim’s pain is crucial for the reconciliation between the victims and the victimizers. The impossible realization of the readers and the writer for the pain of the victims confirms the injury itself. Ahmed posits that “impossibility of fellow feeling is itself the confirmation of injury” (39). She puts forth that when the readers feel the impossibility of the fellow feeling with the victim, the readers feel the victim’s pain.

Mahesh Bikram Shah’s position as a top cop of Nepal Police contributes to produce his war narrative. His war narrative “Sipahiki Swasni” brings forth the politics of fear in the mind of the readers. He seems to align himself with the people who take side with the Government Military. It is evident when he makes the character of Kamali pathetic in the eyes of the readers. The writer presents Kamali suffering with the constant reminder of her husband’s potential death at the hands of the Maoist rebels in Jajarkot. The writer provokes an affect of fear in the mind of the readers at the potential death of Kamali’s husband. The writer’s portrayal of Kamali as a faithful and courageous wife of a soldier draws readers feel good for her. At the same time, her idealistic image of a good wife makes her an ideal wife in Nepali society. Apparently, her painful loss of her husband makes the readers feel loss on their part as well. It further provokes the readers feel hostility towards the Maoists who are the causes of the death of Kamali’s husband. Thus, the death of her husband and the resultant pain of Kamali highlight the fact that the writer wants to make the readers have a low opinion about the Maoists. At this juncture the voice of the writer seems to be lopsided. However, Kamali’s vow not to make her son a soldier in the future gives somewhat balancing view on the writer’s part. This balanced view of the writer makes his war narrative “Sipahiki Swasni” a good war narrative.

Along with the poignant portrait of Kamali, the writer brings forth the affect of fear as well. Rohit— Kamali’s son— remarks that he wants to protect his nation from a prospective danger of the enemies (here Maoist rebels). Rohit asserts, “I will be like my *baba* (father)!holding the gun, I will kill the enemy” (97, My Translation). Rohit’s vulnerable mind is filled with the concept that he needs to protect his nation from a prospective danger from the Maoists. Here, Rohit’s rhetoric shows that the writer is playing with the affect of fear. He might imply that there is a necessity of protecting the nation from the impending danger from the Maoist rebels.

Mahesh Bikram Shah’s “Santrat Manharu” (Fearful Hearts) is another war trauma that shows the fearful disposition of the characters living in the district headquarters of Rolpa, Liwang. The major characters of the war narrative Pewaram and Jasmaya living in miserable condition in Liwang working hand to mouth get suddenly disturbed at the arrival of the two girls from the village Eribang. Their appearance is duly respected by Jasmaya. However, Pewaram puts a suspicion on their identity for he doubts them of being Maoists. The writer has presented Pewaram a victim of the maoist atrocities. His son too was assassinated by the Maoists. Finally, he too was captured by the policemen for they doubt that he kept the two so-called maoist girls Dhauli and Tilasara in his home. Both the girls were killed by the policemen. The writer in this war narrative again evokes sympathy for Pewaram and hatred for both policemen and the Maoists. His war narrative is successful in giving a balanced view. His representation of Pewaram as a victim of the war provokes sympathy for him and it also draws resentment for the perpetrators (both the Maoists and the police). Both the forces are presented as the violators of the dignity of the victims. Hence, the writer gives a balanced view in this war narrative.

Trauma Rendition and Cultural Politics of Affect in *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy*

The research takes into account the war narrative *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy*, a historical cum travel account, for analysis, written by Manjushree Thapa. The research seeks to weigh the text in light of trauma theory and the politics of affect. The research proposes that the elite bourgeoisie background of the writer impacts her standpoint in her writing. *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy* has been divided into seven chapters. However, the text is thematically divided into two sections— the first exhibits the history of Nepal and the second accounts for the personal travel account of the writer accompanied by her friend Melcom in the remote districts— Kalikot, Jumla, and Salyan in western Nepal. The first section is written in line with writing historiography adopting Documentary or Self-Sufficient research Model. La Capra sees this model based on “gathering evidence and making referential statements in the form of truth claims based on that evidence constitute necessary and sufficient conditions of historiography” (1). To present Documentary or Self-Sufficient research model in a cogent way La Capra defines the model:

In a documentary or Self-sufficient research model, priority is often given to research based on primary (preferably archival) documents that enable one to derive authenticated facts about the past [...] writing is subordinated to content in the form of facts, their narration, or their analysis. (2-3)

The above mentioned quote of La Capra makes it evident when the first part of the text is looked into. The first part of the text is a compilation of historical events, incidents, statistics, and narration of various sources. She makes her point by giving the Nepalese history a mark of

violence throughout its history. She states that the Nepalese history is full of blood, massacre, and turns and twists.

Manjushree Thapa in the first major section entitled “The History Exhibit” gives an elaborate description of Nepalese history that ranges from the time of king Prithivi Narayan Shah to the election of the first constituent assembly in 2008 in Nepal. The title is preceded by an account of the notorious royal massacre that killed the family members of the late King Birendra. It is assumed that the Royal family was assassinated by the royal crown prince Dipendra Shah. On the contrary, the account of the writer assumes that he did not kill his own family. The writer gives an elongated account of the atmosphere followed by the Royal killing. She talks about the different conspiracy theories hatched by different agencies and nations that led to the killings of the royal family. The only Royal family members left alive in the massacre were the family members of the King’s brother Gynendra Shah. The writer shows a kind of frustration at the loss of the King Birendra and his family. Not only that but also she shows the reactions from the various corners of the country; people were dissatisfied with the newly enthroned king Gynendra Shah. Furthermore, The writer sketches the royal history of the kings from the king Prithivi Narayan Shah to Gynendra Shah. In course of her account of the history, the writer gives a focus on a decade long People’s War that ranged from 2052 B.S. to 2062 B. S. The then CPN (Maoist) party launched an armed struggle against the government of Nepal putting forth the 40 points of demand. Even before meeting the deadline, the Maoists started their armed struggle against the government. The armed rebellion of the Maoists marked the watershed movement in the history of Nepal that paved the way for the abolition of monarchy for good. It established Nepal from a Democracy to Federal Republic.

The writer's motive behind the production of the text is not to give account of the historical representation of Nepal but to talk about the people's plight during the of the People's War in the country. Similarly, Manjushree Thapa's account of People's War is more emanated from her own experience of visiting in the remote parts of Western Nepal than her experience as an outsider remaining in Kathmandu and abroad. Her visit in the war ravaged districts— Jajarkot, Jumla, and Kalikot gives her a firsthand experience of the war scene. Her encounter with various people in her journey gives her an experience regarding the trauma and pain the people have to suffer in these areas.

Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy encompasses the pain and trauma of the people living in the war ravaged areas. The writer in order to inscribe the trauma of the people visits the remote places tries to give their pain a real touch. The writer's representation of the trauma of the People's War victims lies in her representation of the victim's trauma. The research seeks to see the ideology of the representation of the trauma of the victims. Along with the affective economy of emotional response by both the writer and the readers the research assumes that the production of any text hinges on the affiliation and the cultural cum historical background of the writer. In this regard, the war narrative *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy* does not stand aloof from the writer's family background of an elite culture. Apparently, her approach to mainstream media is also influential in her production of the war narrative.

Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy evokes traumatic and painful experience of the victims mostly victimized at the hands of Government Military troops. On her journey, the writer has presented less number of the cases of the atrocities perpetrated on the victims by the Maoist guerrillas. The people in her journey narrated their painful stories caused by the People's

War. The victims' narratives of their pain and suffering caused by the government military assume that the sole perpetrators of the trauma for the victims are only the soldiers of the government. This sort of representation, the research assumes, is lopsided. The dissertation's postulation is based on the fact that the People's War was although waged to uplift the proletariats and to topple down the semi-feudal and feudal class, the People's War not exclusively targeted to abolish the semi-feudal class structure rather the proletariat class too equally suffered due to the conflagration of the war. In this regard, it is evident that the people from all the strata of society suffered more or less due to the People's War. But the writer's representation of the victims looks to be one-sided. It is because she fails to give a justified representation of the war. The research seeks to probe this very prejudiced standpoint of the writer.

The writer's elite background naturally gives a support for the government. On the contrary, the writer paves a line of her support for the Maoist rebels. It is evident from her representation of the People's War. The research tries to explore the fact that the war narrative *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy* represents the writer's biased view for the government. The research seeks to probe: why does she represent only the atrocities done by the military not by the Maoists? What does she accomplish by showing this one sided representation? Why does she evoke affect of love for the deceased King and his family members? Why does the writer's representation make an affect of hate towards the Government Military and love for the Maoists on the part of the readers?

The writer's elite family background and her privileges in the media make her present a certain kind of historical representation. The research takes into consideration the fact that her soft corner for the royal family and her sympathy for deceased king evinces that she shows a

certain kind of ideology which can be preconceived by the readers without much difficulty. Her soft corner for the Royal family (especially with the King Birendra and his family members) draws her sympathy for the king and his family. Meanwhile, she exhibits negative response for king Gynendra and his family members. It is evident from her response towards the late King Birendra.

From the chapter “The Massacres to come” the writer gives an account of her journey to the hinterlands of western Nepal in the district of Kalikot, Jumla and Deilekh. She makes her journey there to make an objective study of the real condition of the people living under the constant thread of both the warring parties: the Maoist rebels and the government Military troops. The research makes an analysis of the writer’s journey to these areas. It lays more focus on her representation of the victims of the People’s War. In order to make an analysis of her representation of the victims, the fact cannot be overlooked that her certain inclinations should be on the side of the government because of her elite culture. However, her representation is not seen to be aligned with that of the government’s military. Her representation looks to be one-sided in regard to the victims’ trauma experience. The writer takes into account the victims’ suffering at the hands of the government military troops. Throughout the War narrative, the writer encompasses more the brutalities committed by the military forces. She seems to have overlooked the reality that the Maoists can equally be culprit to bring about the brutalities on the people. Their human rights violations cannot be overlooked at this moment. The representation of the brutalities committed by the Military of the Government is excessively presented in the text by the writer. Thereby, she fails to give a balanced representation of the violations of the people’s rights.

The writer's elitist family background and her approach to the media houses makes her assert her identification with the nation as well as the Maoists. Her identification provokes affect of love for the Nation as well as the Maoists. It is evident by her representation of the military, the rivals of the Maoists. Her representation evokes hate for the Military troops whereas it provokes love for the Maoists. Although the military troops take side for the nation, the fact cannot be denied that the Maoists were also revolting against the homogenous buildup of the nation. In that sense, the writer considers the Maoists better than the military and the government which espouses homogenous social hierarchy. Her soft stance for the Maoists is evoked when she asserts:

All my irritation at the Maoists fell away with this. If I had grown up in one of these villages, and were young, uneducated, unqualified for employment of any kind, and as a female, denied basic equality with men-hell, I would have joined the Maoists, too. The other political parties had not offered better options, and neither had the government. Join the Maoists is what any spirited girl would do.

(286)

The above given remarks by the writer shows that she leans towards the maoists. She justifies her leanings on the grounds that the people especially the girls have been deprived of the opportunities. She opts for joining the Maoists at the face of the difficulties faced by the village girls. Her intentions clearly tell that she has a soft corner for the Maoists. Similarly, her negative attitude is further evident when she takes people's remarks which have only vomited venom for the military troops. One of such examples is given below:

‘You are the first outsiders to come here since the state of emergency said one woman. ‘Nobody cares about what we have been through, nobody.’ She spoke at a fast clip, hardly pausing for breath [...] they came in later, and searched up and down for weapons. When they didn’t find any, they told us we shouldn’t run when we see them, and they left.’(245)

The above remark by a woman unburdens the terrifying and painful incident happened to her along with the other villagers. She narrates that the military came rushing and threatened the villagers. She tells the writer that the military are in no way supportive to the innocent villagers. They rather create an atmosphere of fear in the mind of the people. The writer’s projection of this kind of scene indicates that she wants to provoke fear in the mind of the readers. The fear has a certain kind of politics behind. The writer seems to put forth that the similar situation as that of the villagers and the old woman might put the life of the readers at risk of being prosecuted at the hands of the military. The representation is solely made to evoke an affect of hate for the military. The writer further consolidates her position which hinges on the following lines told by a man. The man says, “The government thinks we are all Maoists, but the fact is nobody likes them nobody” (247). The writer presents a villager who asserts that the people do not like the military troops.

The research tries to bring forth the latent mentality of the writer behind her projection of the government military as being the sole violator of human rights. Projecting military as being the victimizers of the people in the countryside, the writer tries to draw sympathy for the villagers. At the same time she tries to camouflage her elitist mindset evincing sympathy for villagers. Similarly, she presents another war incident that further depicts the atrocities of the

Military troops. She presents a narration that shows how security forces killed those people who came to Manma bazaar in order to seek work. She presents her narrative:

This was where, on 24 February 2002, the security forces had shot dead more than thirty-four workers , including seventeen who had come here all the way from Dhading district, near Kathmandu to find work [...] this incident had found the wide coverage in the Kathmandu media, jolting the intellectual to rethink their habitual complacency. (249)

The above lines state that the writer shows an apathetic attitude towards the Kathmandu elite class people. Her alignment is clearly visible in her narrative. The writer remains very critical about the habitual complacency of the Kathmandu elite people who remain indifferent towards the sufferings of the people from the village areas. The writer's prejudiced attitude is yet again visible in her narrative above. The lopsided representation of the thinking of the Kathmandu elite people evokes that the writer is not very happy about the attitude of the elite class. She seems to have a lukewarm response to the fact that it was the Kathmandu elite groups that equally mustered courage to topple down the autocracy of King Gynendra Shah. The writer's representation about the elite class is therefore lopsided.

Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy reflects an intention of the writer that seeks to create an affect of fear in the minds of the Kathmandu bourgeoisie. The writer seems to be moved by the Maoist rhetoric. She presents a Maoist motivator who tries to motivate Chitra Bahadur, Bharat, and Mama— the writer's porters in her journey— along with the writer. He makes them understand the genuine cause of their revolution against the feudal system prevailed in the country. The system is the real troubles for the poor people. The Maoist motivator tries to

persuade them to take the side of the Maoist party. The writer presents the rhetoric of the Maoist motivator in the following lines:

Our movement is aimed at toppling the feudal monarchy. We are not against poor, simple folks like you. Our goal is to end the rich people's oppression. Won't it feel good to be liberated? It will feel good. You know the rich people, they have been oppressing us historically- for many many generations. Our party is very scientific. It will lead the proletariat revolution. (265)

The above mentioned lines clearly indicate the impending danger occasioned by the Maoist revolution against the bourgeoisie society. The writer presents this speech by a Maoist motivator in order to provoke fear in the mind of the bourgeoisie class people. She evokes such fear by creating a sense of loss on the part of the elite people. They will lose the power which they enjoy remaining in the helm always. The motive of the Maoist motivator to lead a proletariat revolution certainly creates problems on the part of the elite people. The writer by creating the fear tries to rectify the mistake of the elite group people (especially the political leaders) in that they always neglected the grievances of the poor and backward people. Furthermore, the fear created on the part of the writer is further evident when she says, "but then this lecture was not meant for the Katmandu bourgeoisie like myself; I would obviously require extensive reeducation to come around to Maoism" (265-266). The writer here tries to denude herself of the fear that the Maoist motivator creates for the elite people like her. The writer's approval to be reeducated in order to fit herself in the frame of the Maoism foresees her tilt towards the Maoist rhetoric. The remarks of the writer suggest that she indeed has a fascination for the Maoist ideology.

Since the writer hails from an elitist class, she shows her bitter hatred for the Royal family's massacre. The writer's close affiliation with the royal family makes her feel closer to the massacred king's family. She expresses love for the Royal family. Her love for the family presents the politics behind her representation of the royal family. The writer sympathizes with the massacred king Birendra and his family members. Thapa's expression of lukewarm response to the king's brother— Gynendra Shah— gives a hint that the writer does not approve of the direct rule of King Gynendra Shah. So she forces the king's direct rule to step down and let the democracy flourish in the country. The writer shows an affect of love for king Birendra. She is moved by the assassination of the Royal family. Apparently she makes a love remark for the family demanding a fair look at the massacre event. The following remarks of the writer suggest that she is demanding the true probe into the killing matter. She states:

The entire event was ridiculous. Not just the ceremony, but the breathlessly orientalist coverage it received the world over: we looked suddenly, like the medieval kingdom that the outside world saw us as [...] the international media preferred to overlook all this in favour of the fey cultural antics of a dying order, antics that confirmed, in their minds, that Nepal was indeed a Shangri-La. (46)

The above mentioned remarks show that the writer wants justification and clear probing of the massacre. She brings forth the national interest on the massacre. This clearly shows that she wants the intervention by the politics and the media to decipher the case of the massacre. Her reference of the presence of the media shows that she opts for a deep investigation of the massacre. Furthermore, the writer makes a comment on the presence of the government in the village areas. She states that the presence of the government is negligible in the village which she takes with high contempt. It is manifested in her remarks: "This was by far the poorest village we

had passed yet. There was not a trace of government here, not a single sign of what the Nepali state had done in all its centuries of existence” (244). She asserts that the presence of the state in the village was not seen at all. The critical attitude of the writer is evident in her representation of the state. She condemns the state. Her condemnation is targeted at bringing forth the negligence of the government towards solving the burning problem of the Maoist insurgency.

Manjushree Thapa’s *Forget Kathmandu An Elegy For Democracy* is a critique of military atrocities upon the innocent victims in the village areas in the remote districts— Klalikh, Jumla, and Dailekh. The writer’s journey is paved to bring into light the genuine war and conflict issues caused by the People’s War. The research takes into account the representation of trauma reference and affect of varying emotional responses in regard to the text. The research’s probing makes an analysis that the text bears a lopsided representation of war and conflict of people’s war. Since Thapa makes the representation lopsided, she has not been able to do justice with the principles of trauma representation. The inappropriate and insufficient trauma representation of the victims has made the text a mediocre war narrative. Similarly, the text’s evocation of hate for the military actions on the people and the evocation of sympathy and love for the Maoists’ ideology and the lukewarm derision of their actions make the writer’s politics tilted more towards the Maoists and their ideology. Thus, the text’s vindication of the actions of the Maoists rests on her inappropriate representation of People’s War.

Trauma Rendition and Cultural Politics of Affect in *Stories of Conflict and War*

The research seeks to probe another war narrative *Stories of Conflict and War*. It is an anthology of twenty six war and conflict related stories. The research analyses the text in terms

of trauma representation and the cultural politics of emotion behind the orchestration of the text. Ten stories have been taken for the analysis for the dissertation. The research looks for trauma conjecture that includes the prominent concepts: acting out, working through as well as emphatic unsettlement. The research analyses these concepts in the war stories. Similarly, along with trauma, cultural politics of emotion plays a seminal role to determine the appropriateness of the text in regard to trauma representation. In the words of the translator and editor of the text, Govinda Raj Bhattarai, the anthology *Stories of Conflict and War* shows “the horrors of the past decade which we survived and traumatic experience that we as a people underwent” (7).

The first story “A Pair of Innocent Eyes” taken for research presents an innocent family meted out by wild behaviour and terrorist activities of the Maoists and the military troops. Birkha Bahadur, a poor and working class worker is slain by some gunmen mercilessly. Not only that Dilmaya, his wife is also raped and killed by them. The son of Birkha Bahadur and Dilmaya is left stranded in between the abyss of life and death because of his age and innocence. The story represents a strong trauma at the predicament of the family of Birkha Bahadur on the part of the readers. The unbelievable and heartrending situation of the family makes the readers feel traumatized at their predicament. The traumatized situation of Bhunte, Dilamya and Birkha’s son is presented and his situation is rendered as a situation of a Muselmann — a living dead. For Agamben, a Muselmann is a mummy-man and remains in between life and death. The situation of Bhunte can be considered as a muselmann. Bhunte remains in between life and death due to the death of his parents. He is a witness to the murder of his parents and has survived closely from being killed himself. The observation of the murder scene is so horrible that he is dumbstruck and becomes traumatized. Thus, his situation becomes that of a Muselmann. In the words of Amery, Agamben defines Muselmann in the following lines:

The so-called Muselmann, as the camp language termed the prisoner who was gang up and was given up by his comrades, no longer had room in his consciousness for the contrast good or bad, noble or base, intellectual or unintellectual [...] we must exclude him from our considerations (Amery 1980:9).
(41)

The above quote defines Muselmann. The lines state that a Muselmann is like a staggering corpse, which does not have consciousness to demarcate between good and bad, noble and base, intellectual and unintellectual. He has consciousness but with no functioning at all. In the story, *A Pair of Innocent Eyes*, the condition of Bhunte is shown as that of a Muselmann. The writer Bikal presents Bhunte as taking 'a shelter quietly in the bed' due to the brutal killing of Birkhe and 'the terrified Bhunte was looking at the plight of his mother as though he were a lifeless plastic doll (30).' The writer makes Bhunte as a lifeless plastic doll thereby presents him as a Muslemann. Similarly, the plight of Bhunte makes the readers feel terrified at the plight of his predicament.

Ramesh Bikal provokes varying emotional responses on the readers. The writer shows extreme sympathy for Bhunte due to his miserable condition. At the same time, the writer exhibits a strong hatred for the military due to their apathy towards Bhunt. He suffers an inexplicable pain at the killing of his parents. When the military troops find Bhunte in a miserable condition beside the corpses of his father and mother, the troops are not moved by his plight. Rather they leave him on the spot assuming that other people will come and look after him. The lines ahead provoke sympathy and hatred for Bhunte and military respectively, "Now what can be done? We cannot sling it out on our neck like a tie, can we? Let it be. Somebody will discover him tomorrow morning. They would give him to the next of his kin. If not, they

would deliver him to the orphanage. Let's go" (32). Bhunte already desperate is even further deserted by the military troops. This provokes strong contempt for the military. The troops take all the ornaments of Dilmaya even if she is dead. It shows how mean the troops are. Similarly, the fate of Bhunte provokes strong sympathy on the readers. He is left deserted alone and there is no one to look after him. Similarly, the writer does a politics of pain here. The writer's politics behind the evocation of the feeling of pain demands a collective as well as individual response for the pain of the victims. The following lines from the story "A Pair of Innocent Eyes" incite pain on the readers:

The second Gunman was gripping and pushing Dilmaya forcibly against the wall. He basely addressed to his friend, "How is that brother! She seems to desire for the male. Shall I give to her? "It's okay. There is a pleasure in wrestling with a stout like this." The first one wiping the bloodied *khukuri* with the *lungi* hanging from the nail [...] they quenched their beastly passion one after another. (29-30)

The above quote evokes pain at the rape of Bhunte's mother Dilmaya. The pain that the perpetrators inflict on Dilmaya makes the readers feel intense pain as if somebody has pricked them intensely. Dilmaya's rape leaves deep wounds on Bhunte as well as on readers. Although the readers directly do not encounter the pain, Ahmed puts forth that "the impossibility of feeling the pain of other doesn't mean that the pain is simply theirs (Dilmaya's), or that their (Dilmaya's) pain has nothing to do with me (readers)" (30). The readers' proximity with the victim draws sympathy for the victim and makes the readers open to listen to or feel the pain of the victim. In line with the postulation above, Sara Ahmed asserts, "An ethics of responding to pain involves being open to being affected by that which one cannot know or feel" (30). Such feeling of the readers is 'bound up with the sociality or 'contingent attachment 'of pain itself'

(30). The attack on Dilmaya draws ethics of sympathy on the part of the readers. Similarly, the conversation shows the plight of her leads the readers vent ire for the perpetrators: “No. Why should we spare the risk? Let’s send her to her husband’s, “the other spoke in a cruel voice. Then, he took the gun from his shoulder and shot at the senseless body, making her completely dead” (30). The heinous acts of the victimizers do not deserve forgiveness for their actions. Instead, they produce the strong resentment on the readers. The story writer’s craft of making both the Maoists and the military troops equally responsible for the heinous crime perpetrated on the victims— Dilamya and Birkha Bahadur, Bhunte makes the writer posit a balanced projection of the atrocities by both the warring parties. In this very vein of balanced projection, military troops are shown as people denuded of morality. It is presented in the following lines:

Having washed their hands, as they were ready to depart, one of the gunmen’s eyes fell on Dilmaya’s ears and eyes with tops and rings and the neck with a gold *tilhari* when they attempt to snatch [...] people will say that the *jungleses*¹ killed them and even bared the nose, ears and neck of the women. (32)

The above lines suggest that the military troops are greedy and beast who even do not spare a corpse and want to snatch rings of gold of Dilamay. The writer’s representation of the Military troops makes the representation all the way balanced since he has also presented the Maoists cruel and unsympathetic.

In a nutshell, the writer Ramesh Bikal in “A Pair of Innocent Eyes” gives an unprejudiced representation of the atrocities of both the Maoists and the military troops. Similarly, his politics

¹ Indirectly hinting at the Maoists who usually took shelter in the jungle or forest.

behind the evocation of pain and the hatred hinges on his alignment with the victims. His genuine representation of the People's War that indiscriminately engulfed the innocent people like Bikha Bahadur, Dilamaya, and Bhunte is evident in the story.

The research takes another war trauma narrative, "Sitas" of Parashu Pradhan for analysis. The story presents a powerful story of abduction of Sita's husband. The story is powerful trauma narrative of Sita, wife of Ram Bahadari. The story is recounted by the writer's narrator- an Inspector. The story shows the life of Sita and her children who are severely traumatized at the abduction or possible death of Ram Bahadari. The writer shows post traumatic situation of Sita. She wonders around to search her husband but to no avail. Her lines for her husband's inquiry suggest her post traumatic situation. She enquires:

Whoever I came across, I would ask: Have you seen my husband? His name is Ram Bhandari. He is a tall man with fair complexion. He is of middle age. He is neither fat nor thin. Some of them would say that [...] I would be embarrassed to meet such a person at some point. There are countless similar incidents and accidents in my life. (49)

The above lines by Sita show her post traumatic situation. She is to some extent becomes able to distinguish her past and present. She understands that she has to remain alive with her present situation. For La Capra, one is able to remember what happened to one in the past but realizes one is living in the here and now with future possibilities in the post traumatic situation. No matter the hope is alive, the victim Sita has to live with the madness. Living with this madness confirms the injury caused by the trauma on the victim.

In the story, “Sitas”, the writer evokes the emotion of pain caused by the loss of Sita’s husband. The Maoists have abducted him and Sita is helpless and traumatized. The following lines show the pain that Sita suffers:

Next morning, I knocked on the doors of neighbours and inquired about him. But nobody had seen him nor hear of him. All suspect the junglese. Later in the afternoon, I hurried towards the garment factory where he used to [...] How are you? Are the children fine? Send them to school at any cost. (48)

The above quote describes a powerful trauma narrative that provokes an affect of pain for the readers. In this vein, Sara Ahmed asserts: “it is not just that we interpret our pain as a sign of something, but that how pain feels in the first place is an effect of past impressions which are often hidden from the view. The very words we then use to tell the story of our pain also work to reshape our bodies, creating new impression” (25). Sara Ahmed’s remark about pain reminds the readers of the painful past accounts of the People’s war. The trauma that Sita faces evokes the similar sort of trauma on the writer as well as the readers. Therefore, the readers are left with a distinct sort of impression about the People’s War. The impressions are left with an unending scar of the atrocities of the People’s War in the mind of the readers.

Parashu Pradhan’s “Sitas” gives a strong social implication of the demand for justice by the state. Sita’s reference to the demand for the justice in the face of her traumatized predicament raises a strong question on the treatment of the state towards the victims. Sita’s remarks question the state’s apathy towards the act of giving her the justice that she deserves. She says:

Now you have learnt how to survive in this society. Inspector Sahib! You may also have your family. You may also have your wife and children. Please do tell

me, how you think I have been managing [...] How come you are so coward and timid. I could not commit suicide. I couldn't die inspector sahib. (49)

The above quote tells a lot about the apathy of the state towards Sita and the figures like her. Sita's strong plea to understand and feel her pain evokes a strong implication for the demand of social justice. Her feeling the pain of her husband's loss makes her feel commit suicide but again she has been unable to do so because of her responsibilities towards her own children. The predicament of Sita evokes a demand for feeling of shame on the part of the State. The research assumes that addressing and listening to the pain and trauma of the victims by a state makes a possibility of reconciliation and proper justice to the victims of the war. Sara Ahmed, in this regard, deserves an apt place worth mentioning here. She takes shame crucial in reconciliation and healing and soothing the wounds of the victims. She asserts: "Shame becomes crucial to the process of reconciliation or the healing of past wounds. To acknowledge wrongdoings means to enter into shame; the 'we' is shamed by its reconciliation that it has committed 'acts and loss for indigenous others'" (101). Sara Ahmed puts forth that the acknowledgement of the pain and trauma of the victims is to come to the terms of the reconciliation of conflicting issues. In this regard, the pain of Sita needs acknowledgement on the part of the state to bring reconciliation and soothing of the pain of Sita and the victims like her.

The story evokes sympathy for Sita on the part of the readers as well. The following lines evoke strong sympathy for her:

I cannot distinguish day from night. Neither does shine any sun in the day nor does shimmer any moon in the night for me. Unending darkness trails in front of me. I feel as if I have entered such a long tunnel with no way come out. I myself

feel surprised when I see how a woman can remain alive after being pierced by countless thorns and crushed by unfathomable pain. (50)

The above quoted narrative shows trauma and intense pain of Sita. Her plight of unending darkness due to the loss of her husband makes her like a living dead. Thus, it provokes a strong sympathy on the readers.

The other war narrative taken for the analysis is “The Silence of Violence” by Padmavati Singh. The war narrative presents the story of Nirmaya’s trauma caused by the loss of her husband and his prospective death. She draws a strong sympathy on the part of the readers. The following lines evoke a strong sympathy for her:

All the villagers would come close to her and return, sprinkling the words of consolation. While she herself was scorched like the grains cast in the glaring sun, those words of sympathy were limited to the realm of formality. Who could extract the nail driven into her heart, smeared with blood, brimmed over! (80)

The above lines manifest the pain of Nirmaya who even does not feel sympathy of the words of her neighbours. Similarly, the narrative of the writer produces sympathy for Nirmaya on the part of the readers. The pain of Nirmaya knows no boundary when she is raped at the hands of the victimizers. The following lines produce sympathy for the victim Nirmaya and resentment for the victimizers:

“Gone missing...Poor little fellow?” one of them clicked his tongue. “If gone missing, what happened then? Suppose we are your husband...! Saying this, one of them knocked her down, gagging the hems of her sari into her mouth and the

other tripped her naked and raped her. Having played coarsely with her body, these two friends took to their heels. (81)

The above lines clearly mention the heinous act of the victimizers. They hurl an abusive rhetoric to Nirmaya and call her their wife and rape her. Similarly, the writer gives an equal focus to military and the rebels when they commit violence on the victim. The story presents the story of Malkhamai. Her story makes the readers and the writer feel extreme pain. The trauma rendition is powerful since the violence is insurmountable and then due to the trauma the mother of Malkhamai goes mad. This is further presented by the writer:

Malkhamai in her late twenties talks with nobody else. She only looks around with her fearful eyes and keeps wailing. Sometimes she bursts out into laughter while weeping and runs around [...] our father was burnt to death in the very fire. Having seen that, my mother was deeply shocked. Then she went mad. (83)

The above story of Malkhamai is deeply unsettling that portrays her madness at the suffering due to her husband's killing in front of her own eyes. Here, the writer makes the policeman victimizers unlike the Maoists victimizers in the life of Nirmaya.

The story "The Silence of Violence" evokes the importance of listening to other's pain and torture. As Sara Ahmed asserts that an act of listening to others' pain and suffering persistently ameliorates the pain and suffering, therefore it is important to listen to others' pain. The story depicts the listening to the pain of the other people by Nirmaya that reduces the impact of her own pain. The writer shows Nirmaya listen to other victims' pain:

All of them are with their own stories each is a heartbreaking tale. Having listened to the harrowing life stories of others Nirmaya felt as if her own anguish had

ameliorated. Some of them were perpetrated by the rebels while others had fallen prey to the oppressive acts of the police [...] the unfathomable pile of suffering of victims of killings, violence, abduction and rape leaves her completely shattered. (83)

The above mentioned quote tells about the hearing of the voices of various victims at the hands of both military and Maoists. Nirmaya listens to their voices and gets cooled. Thus her witness to the other victims' voices makes her assuage her own pain and trauma at the loss of her husband. Similarly, the loss of the memory of Birkha Bahadur due to his sustaining of the wound on his head shows the atrocities of the victimizers that brings the resentment on the part of the readers towards the victimizers. Similarly, Birkha's suffering makes her forget everything in the past. The writer shows the following lines to talk about Birkha's madness. "Masterbaje spoke in his consolatory voice. Now Bam Bahadur does not recognize anybody else. He lost his memory after being deeply wounded in the head in the clash. His part is lost in the fog of his memory" (84). The ultimate situation of Bam Bahadur turns out to be like Muselmaan who simply does not recognize the real situation of his own condition.

The story further evokes a profound truth that hinges on the fact that the war is always destructive and can never be justified at any cost. The following lines in the story show the unbiased point of view of the writer: "This conflict has destroyed the lives of the people: who is benefitted from this conflict? Who will compensate this substantial loss of life and physical infrastructure? When will this series of killings, violence, rape, and destruction cease?" (84). The writer's remarks show the social implication for the demand of justice at the face of the People's War.

Illya Bhattarai's "Biplavi" is another story taken for the research. The story presents revenge upon the innocent. In the story, an innocent girl is abducted and forcefully recruited in the Maoist groups with a great aspiration for the better future. On the contrary, the condition of the girl is just reversed and she is brutally raped, mutilated and victimized. The girl is rendered traumatized and is severely shattered on the pretext of making the war a great success. The writer Bhattarai presents a day to day reality during the People's War. During those days even the innocents were abducted simply with the reasons of having an upper caste. The writer projects the girl as a source of consumption for the so called proletariats' liberators. They force her father to include her in the Maoist army. A strong plea by the father of the girl draws strong sympathy for him as well as for the girl. The following lines of the father draw sympathy for the father and the girl:

Master, my daughter is still young. This young child does not know anything about the world. Then how can she understand what you say? She is even scared of a petty mouse. Master how can this terrible coward fight in your ever so big a war [...] do not say that you will take her with you. (132)

The above lines make the readers feel sympathy for both the girl's father and the girl herself. Similarly, it makes the readers feel resentment for the victimizers. The resentment can be reflected when the narrator describes the situation of the girl:

The poor girl! In those days, I knew nothing how much she had to pay for her birth in the higher caste. Her abduction was not for the sake for revolution. Rather it was done in the spirit of revenge against the higher class [...] the more she jerked and wailed with pain, the more he cried with great pleasure. (132)

The above mentioned lines show a strong discontent on the part of the readers for the Maoists since they gloated over the pain of a little innocent girl. This brings a kind of negative attitude for the Maoists and their so called great revolution. The writer's apathy for the Maoist revolution is palpable here.

The writer Illiya Bhattarai's story remains at the forefront to deconstruct the redemptive narrative of the People's War. The redemptive narrative cannot be an appropriate narrative to represent trauma for La Capra. In the same vein, the writer presents the story a sort of reaction against the grand redemptive narrative. The following lines counter the ideology of the Maoists' revolutionary propensities:

However, the revolution she was supposed to bring about was slightly different.

Actually, she did not have to wield a gun for the revolution. What all she had to do was to satiate other's hunger [...] they say the revolution she has brought about in the society is to satiate them with her body and to stir them to participate in the People's War. (133)

The above given quote gives rise to a dark side of People's War. The War fought to redeem the proletariats ultimately turned out to be their misfortune and self destruction. The call for the fighting against the enemies (the government troops) is not for the redemption for the proletariats. The inclusion of the girl in the Maoist army is not for the noble cause as well. Rather the inclusion is a politics of redemptive narrative. The irony of the redemption is that instead of liberating the proletariat class people, Maoists' rhetoric itself enslaves them denuding them of their dignity and morality. It is explicit when Biplavi (the girl) herself instead of getting redeemed of the chains of segregation and injustice gets entrapped into the chains of confinement

and endless trauma emanated from their persistent torture and hardship inflicted by the so called redeemers themselves.

Govind Giri's story "The Maoist" depicts a vulnerable person Rameswor who has lost everything— his property, daughter, and wife. The research sees the story as a critique of the state's apathetic response towards the people's miseries caused by the atrocious war and violence. Thus, the story brings forth the politics of shame for the nation and the people representing it. The representative of the state can be police personnel. In the story, everyone along with the police was aware of the plight of Rameswor but he was constantly denied justice. To get emancipation, he joins the Maoist groups but at the end he is killed at a cross firing between his Maoist group and the military personnel. The writer Giri mainly provokes two affective responses on the part of the readers. The first one is that of fear and the second one is of shame for the state and political parties which favoured the military ways to solve the problems of the People's War.

The writer has made his narrator, a Police Inspector who really sympathizes for Rameswor even if he belongs to military side which represents the state. The response of a police inspector for a Maoist makes the story really balanced. Similarly, the death of Rameswor and his wife makes the narrator feel sympathy. He expresses his pain at the trauma of Rameswor. The writer writes his narrator's feelings about Rameswor: "I held his hand firmly. Shedding tears, he clasped my hand. His world has collapsed, shattered and smashed. The cause of his daughter's death was the gang rape, and his was also fallen prey to rape. She was strangled to death and was later hanged by her sari to the ceiling" (170). The writer has presented the narrator feel sympathy for Rameswor and his family. The plight of innocent Ramesowar not only makes the narrator

feel love for him but also makes the readers feel love for him since the fate of Rameswor can be tantamount to the fate of the readers.

The story “The Maoist” invigorates the concept of national shame. The nation denying the acknowledgement of the pain of the victims of the war brings shame for the nation and its representatives. The lack of shame on the part of the nation intensifies the conflict between the nation and the victims’ feelings. Thus, the nation is considered to be apathetic towards its people. The writer tries to evoke a sense of shame on the part of the Inspector. It suggests that the writer by trying to make his protagonist feel shame and sympathy for the victim, demonstrate the requirement for the shame to be brought into the arena of national reconciliation. The narrator brings forth the endeavours that Rameswor makes to get justice. But even the narrator as an inspector cannot give him justice. The narrator asserts:

He could not get justice, though. Rameswor had to knock the door of the home minister. He also knocked the prime Minister’s door. But no one took any firm steps to provide him with justice. He got nothing more than a sheer unfeeling condolence. This time I felt myself remorseful and humiliated for being unable to give him justice, but what else could a petty police inspector like me do?(171)

The above mentioned quote suggests that the inspector, a representative of the state, feels remorse and gets humiliated for his inability to give justice to Rameswor. His condition exhibits that he is unable to give justice to Rameswor himself alone. He thinks it an imperative to give justice to Rameswor and the people like him. The inspector’s assessment of his inability to give justice to Rameswor bears a significant meaning here. The inspector, the narrator as well as a representative of the government fails to give justice to the victim. It symbolizes that the

government fails to lend justice that is really troublesome especially when from the perspective of human rights. Further, the killing of Rameswor at the hands of the inspector and his troops manifests that the government fails to identify the real troubles of Rameswor and moves to kill the innocent people like him. The inspector's remark shows the killing of Rameswor: "The dead was none other than Rameswor himself" (173).

Another war story that has been taken for the research is "I Heard the Cock Crow" written by Amod Bhattarai. The story "is the interpretation of the people trapped in a scenario from violence, conflict and revolution" (18). The story depicts the trauma and pain of the victims of the People's War. The writer along with his friends visits a camp where the captives of war are kept. The writer tries to listen to their stories of pain and trauma. The writer and his friends, who visit the prison to decipher the real situation of the prisoners, listen to their pain and trauma that opens up new avenues for working out their trauma. As La Capra suggests that working through trauma is apt way to express the trauma and pain of the victim, the writer employs an apt way to listen to their stories. The upcoming words tell the writer's position to open up hope for the future: "At first they felt disinclined to talk to us. However, as they were assured that our organization had been similarly trying to release their kith and kin held captive by their enemies, their mood changed dramatically. Later they started talking with us more frankly" (200). The assurance of rescue of the kith and kin of the people held captive make them respond in a proper manner that leads to open the future possibility to live with a hope.

The story equally evokes an affect of sympathy for the prisoners on the readers. The writer listens to the story of Sammi. She keeps on expressing her wound through endless mourning. The writer makes Sammi retain an expression of mourning. La Capra holds that it is a good way to express trauma through mourning. It is evident when Sammi "hardly speaks" her

trauma ‘and always keeps sobbing, covering her face in shawl’ (200). Similarly, Ann another prisoner draws sympathy for her on the part of the readers:

Ann had delivered a baby just three months ago. She cried, showing her swollen limbs and puffed up face. “May be you think I am getting fat, but my body is inflamed due to cold [...] the poor creature! How would it cry at all? Cry would not fetch him anything. It seems he will not live any longer. Only if I had brought some clothes or quilts from home...!”(200)

The above given quote strikes the readers for its painful description that evokes sympathy on the part of the readers. Ann’s painful description draws sympathy for her. Here, the prisoner gives a painful account of her own condition and the condition of her baby who is really malnourished and is deprived of proper condition of living. The condition provokes sympathy for the child and the lady.

Dhurba Sapkota’s “Other Person” shows a girl Mangali who is tempted and forced to join Maoist’s revolution mostly in order to escape from situation of injustice and oppression she faces in the society. Managli, a character, works in the house of a person ‘He.’ She is shown a character full of tolerance power. The ‘He’ character feels a situation of hopelessness for he fears that Magali might bear a child of someone unknown to him and can accuse the ‘He’ character of fathering the child. Similarly, Managli becomes a character of sympathy for the readers. The ‘He’ character at the end of the story acknowledges his guilt for leaving Mangali in her own home from where she gets abducted. She finally joins the Maoists and gets killed at the hands of the military. The line shows the depressing conditions of the character ‘He’: “The old woman disappeared from the yard. He returned home. Not only him but all his family members were

depressed as well” (109). The line suggests that the narrator feels guilty and thus makes the readers feel sorry for the narrator. The narrator goes to bring Mangali back home but she has disappeared from her house. She has joined the Maoist party. Narrator’s feeling for Mangali draws sympathy for her. The evocation of sympathy of the ‘He’ character for Mangali makes the readers feel forgiveness for him.

“Now You Can Return Home” written by Madhuban Paudel depicts the condition of Nepalese people who are forced to flee the country to go abroad to do all the kinds of jobs. The Nepalese people in abroad wish that peace and democracy prevail in Nepal. The story presents the people who go to search for safety, shelter and money. The story “Now You can Return Home” presents Mukunda and Sarad, the two boys, who are engaged in manual work of driving the heavy trucks. They have been forced out of the country Nepal due to the People’s War. Both the characters- Mukunda and Sarad have a traumatic past. The writer mentions the traumatic past of Sarad:

Sarad feels giddy at the very thought of his gruesome past. Now and then, he would hear that after he left the village, so and so’s frequented his house and threatened his house and threatened his family and even brandished his brother! Sarad [...] the brother had gambled, the sister-in-law had swallowed the tears of anguish, forgetting the misfortune that might befall her children and Rama had wiped her tears for good. (98-99)

The above quote tells about the pain and hardship Sarad felt. He has to separate from his family which is really painful for not only him but for the family as well. The brother of Sarad has to be

separated because of the property feud. The wife of Sarad has to weep always wiping the tears. The pathetic situation of Sarad draws sympathy for him on the part of the readers.

“The Bullet” by Narendra Raj Paudel shows an innocent character Ramnath who comes across “a bullet without the cartridge that had dashed against the wall of his home” (15). He tries to get rid of the bullet by informing the concerned authority. He fears that he might be punished for keeping arms and ammunition. But he fails to get rid of the situation and sustains a very pathetic situation. It makes him act like an insane person. The story exhibits the general panic of the common people who suffer the unexpected encounter with the arms and ammunition. The situation of Ramnath shows a common feature of the people during the People’s War era.

The story along with the trauma evokes an affect of fear in the character Ramnath. He happens to have come across the contact with the influence of the bullet from the gun. He tries to make others informed about the bullet. He tries to assuage his fear of bullet that is associated with the war between the military and the Maoists. But he fails to do so because of his fearful mentality.

The writer by presenting Ramnath wants to evoke the politics of fear in the mind of the readers as well as the characters like Ramnath. The writer, by provoking the fear caused by the influence of bullet wants to bring forth the cause of traumatic mentality. In this line, the writer shows the trauma of Ramnath occasioned by his encounter with bullet. His passing thoughts on the bullet render him along with her wife a panic of the impending danger:

While speculating and analyzing the situation, he startled. All of a sudden, he began to tremble and exude the beads of sweats, called to his wife and began to

tell her the whole story [...] dumbfounded by the unexpected disaster befallen them, the spouse remained panic-stricken for a long time. (88)

The above quote suggests the trauma of Ramnath is because of speculating and analyzing the situation of keeping a bullet. His fearful situation makes him traumatized caused by the fear produced by the bullet. Thus, the bullet makes him feel fear of being punished by the military since he has already disclosed the matter in front of many people along with a soldier and some civil servants. Similarly, the writer evokes a politics of fear. The bullet symbolizing fear and terror keeps Ramnath under a constant grip of the fear of being kept in the prison. The writer here wants to bring forth the politics of fear that aims to show the fear caused by the bullet. The fear is what is worth being condemned for the writer. The politics of fear remains in the remarks of Ramnath who considers talking about the arms and ammunition is tantamount to remaining in the prison. He asserts that, “Nowadays one should not talk anything about the mishap of ammunitions and fire arms to the senior officers. They may throw anyone else into the jail instead, if suspected” (92). The remarks suggest that the environment of the war is so fearsome that one really is in the grip of the fear always. Through provoking the scenario of keeping the arms and ammunition, the writer shows a common condition of the people who are gripped in the constant fear.

“The Sky was Still Overcast” written by Srijana Sharma is “a story of psychological trauma” (17). The story shows the common condition of the policemen who are scared due to the fearful condition. They are in the grip of fear of the Maoists. Similarly, the main character of the story Chandra Lal is innocent and he shows no signs of the prospective impending danger. The policemen “see the dreadful shadows lurking behind them” (17). The story shows a fearful condition of the people along with the policemen— a warring side. The story shows the constant

fear on the part of the policeman. He shows his fearful condition and narrates his sympathetic remarks. The policeman asserts:

My wife is due to give birth to any day now. Mother has grown old. In the present situation, the resignation will not be approved, either. If I run away from the service, I have no other way to live from hand to mouth. And, you never know when we will fall prey to these *Jungalese*. (153)

The above lines show the sympathetic situation of policeman. He wants to resign but can't due to his family condition. The writer here wants to draw sympathy for the policeman for the readers. The policeman shows his wife's pregnant status and his mother's old status. Furthermore, the writer again evokes sympathy for the policeman when he dreams a nightmare. The dream shows that the policeman himself is no exception in terms of the fearful condition. He can equally be trapped in the fear of being killed at the hands of their enemies –the Maoists. The writer describes the dream:

As he woke up, he was drenched with sweats. He got up, quivering. He went close to the policeman of the next bed and said- "Sir I had a nightmare." He told his dream in detail and kept the sign of ill omen. My woman at home is due to give birth to baby any day now. [...] the policeman kept staring and the tears began trickling down his cheeks. (158)

The above dream of the policeman exhibits a painful situation for him. He is in a constant fear of being killed. His sympathetic situation brings forth the sympathy of the readers.

CHAPTER III

Aesthetics of Trauma Narratives: A Cultural Politics of Emotion

The dissertation has taken four People's War narratives— *Palpasa Cafe*, *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy*, *Sipahiki Swasni*, and *Stories of Conflict and War* for analyzing the appropriate trauma representation and hidden political motive of the writer behind evocation of a certain kind of emotional response on the part of the readers for the victims of the war. The research has taken Dominic La Capra's insights— middle voice, acting out, working through, melancholia, mourning among others. At the same time, the research has been carried out taking Sara Ahmed's concept of affective economy— politics of affect. Moreover, the insights about the politics of evocation of certain emotional responses on the readers hinges on a writer's socio-politico-cultural alignment with a certain kind of ideology.

Applying the two theorists' insights to research on the primary war literary narratives, the dissertation has come to certain conclusion that go against the disseminated popularity of the texts among the readers. The two war narratives *Palpasa Café* and *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy* have amassed huge popularity among the readers. Contrary to this, the dissertation unearths something against this popularity when the texts have been judged as war trauma narratives. *Palpasa Café* by Narayan Wagle fails to stand upright as Wagle's position to render vicarious trauma of Drishya is inappropriate. Similarly, Drishya's vicarious trauma itself is not appropriate since true trauma representation is not possible for a victim even if he has gone through the trauma of the war. Although Drishya is a witness of the trauma of Siddhartha, Palpasa and the small girl, his lukewarm reaction for their trauma is what makes him fail to represent their trauma objectively. Furthermore, his narration of his witness to the trauma of the

war victims to the writer Wagle and the writer's appropriation of the story of Drishya give the text a touch of inauthentic and inappropriate rendition of trauma representation in *Palpasa Café*. Giving an excessive voice to Drishya and lack of proper agency given to Palpasa and Siddhartha also make the war narrative short of proper trauma narrative. Drishya's trauma account has been valorized because of his recognized status as a celebrated painter not because of his witness to the trauma of the war victims. The research sees that the popularity the text has got is not because of the quality of the text as a good war narrative but because of the writer's privileged stature as a chief editor of the *Kantipur* daily newspaper.

Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy, a historical cum war narrative by Manjushree Thapa gives an account of the historical narrative of the Shah dynasty. Similarly, the war narrative gives an account of the writer's encounter with various war victims in the western Nepal. The research has been carried out in order to gauge the text's objective trauma representation and to decipher the politics behind the representation. Thapa gets traumatized at the massacre of the Royal family. In order to unburden her trauma she remembers the massacre that took place in the past in the history of Nepal. Since the dissertation has been only focused on the objective trauma representation and the latent politics of the writer behind the evocation of certain sorts of emotion, her representation of the trauma of war victims has been analyzed as a lopsided representation. The writer's war narrative presents more cases of the atrocities committed by the government military troops. Although some cases of the atrocities of the Maoists have also been presented, the fact cannot be denied that to a large extent there must have been atrocities on an equal scale perpetrated by both the warring parties— the Maoist guerillas and the government military troops. Similarly, the writer's trauma representation does not stand tall when she does not show any unsettling response for the victims' sufferings. The writer's

sympathetic stand for the Maoists shows that she has pro-maoist ideology. Her politics behind the sympathy is to make Kathmandu elite people feel sympathy for the Maoists. The war narrative remains to be lopsided in the representation of trauma of the victims.

Sipahiki Swasni by Mahesh Bikram Shah is an anthology of stories. Four stories have been taken for the analysis. Four war narratives taken for the research from *Sipahiki Swasni* draw on the trauma of the war victims. The research has unearthed that although the writer is a top cop of Nepal Police, his stories explicitly show the unprejudiced and more objective trauma representation of the trauma of the victims. Furthermore, the evocation of sympathetic feelings for the victims makes the stories more close to better representation of trauma of the victims. The needed middle voice of the writer is presented in the anthology *Sipahiki Swasni*. In this regard, the recognition that the book has got in the literary corpus is balanced recognition.

Stories of Conflict and War a collection of war narratives has been edited and compiled by Govind Raj Bhattarai. The dissertation has taken ten of the narratives for analysis. The stories have contained various contents: torture, rape, violence, extortion, killing and other human rights violations. The stories have been projected in a balanced and unprejudiced manner since the atrocities of both the warring sides Military and the Maoist guerillas have been presented in a fair manner. Similarly, the writers have duly adopted a middle voice to render the trauma of the victims. La Capra's insights and Ahmed's insights have been appropriately given justice by the narratives in their presentation. The stories have also shown the glimmer of hope of the justice for the victims since the stories have opened up various avenues for the recognition of the trauma of the war victims.

To sum up, the two war narratives *Palpasa Café* and *Forget Kathmandu: An Elegy For Democracy* for the researcher do not stand upright in terms of objective trauma representation whereas the other two war narrative *Sipahiki Swasni* and *Stories of Conflict and War* fulfill the requisites needed for true trauma representation in war narratives.

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