

Review Article

War Allegory in Narayan Wagle's *Palpasa Café*

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the metafictional representations in Narayan Wagle's *Palpasa Café* (2008). The novel's metafictional elements depict the state of the Nepalese people during the Civil War. Wagle critiques the devastating consequences of the Civil War and how it affected the Nepali individuals' psyche. The study elucidates Wagle's use of metafiction as an indirect commentary on the political status quo. The study also uses allegory to explicate the metafictional elements in the novel in order to highlight Wagle's fictional critique. Allegory is elaborated in terms of paradox. Paradoxical allegory reveals the implicit metafictional authorial presence in the novel's narrative structure to accentuate the author's subjective voice. Such authorial presence is conveyed via insinuating self-reflexivity device which allows the author to intervene in his narrative fabric. The study mainly focuses on the authorial metafictional interference within the fictional text through paradoxical allegory. Both allegory and paradox have an interrelation with metafiction which unravels the author's relative perspective on the tragic consequences of the Nepalese Civil War.

Keywords: Allegory, metafiction, narrative structure, Nepal, paradox, self-reflexivity, Wagle

INTRODUCTION

Narayan Wagle is a prominent Nepalese novelist. He incorporates his experience as a journalist with his fictional writings. Being a Nepalese citizen, he conceptualizes the drastic events that stormed in Nepal during the Nepalese Civil War. Wagle accomplishes distinctive

literary compositions about the war and its destructive consequences. In *Palpasa Café*, he tries to depict the political turbulence which had not been given critical journalistic coverage. Consequently, Wagle provides an artistic "literary form which is seen to be a kind of meaning, a description of itself

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which the text communicates to its reader, and has all the complex characteristics associated with meaning: uncertainties, ambiguities and contradictions” (Fabb, 2002). Thereupon, Wagle touches upon the need for live coverage of the war.

Accordingly, the novel serves as an emblematic documentation of the Nepalese Civil War, which disrupted the traditional socio-political balance in the country. Among the critical assessments on this matter is the humanistic propagation of the novel as a genre. It represents real human catastrophic visions and their negative consequences upon the Nepalese society. Nepal has always been a peaceful country and rich in diverse cultures as it has so many ethnic people; and the kings have always been referred to as god, but through politics, he becomes corrupted, and some Nepalese decide to take away powers from the king and the royal government. These Nepalese people represent the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoists, which is always abbreviated as CPN-M. They try to establish a republic, thus rupturing the fabric of peacefulness; and this was done by ingraining in themselves Maoist ideology; a political doctrine that depends on revolutions to overthrow the existing monarchy by force. This leads to a long civil disruption and, in the end, Nepal became a republic (Davidson, 1986).

The war was between the government and the Maoist rebels. It started as a ‘people’s war.’ Nepal Communist Party, which was led by Maoist representatives, planned to dethrone the monarchy in order to impose

the republican system. The result had been a totally civil insurrection and political upheaval. Social instability dominated the status quo, and monarchy began waning as people proved strong will to reclaim republican government. Thus, the origin of the war was due to people’s dissatisfaction against Nepal’s autocratic system, and also the caste system. Consequently, this conflict became bloody where around 17,000 people were killed in a war which lasted for almost 10 years.

Mass media has always portrayed the plight of these Maoists as the victims of a corrupted kingdom yet what Wagle is portraying is that this is not the case as each individual has a different opinion for this atrocities and Wagle sees no point of continuing this war as it destroys the peacefulness of the country, not mentioning the destroyed lives, and war will never end as long as there is politics, as Wagle says at the end of the novel: “all written works are incomplete. Something’s always missing. There’s always more to add.... It’s so sad to see war in our country,’ he said. It’s terrible to see our own people die. Don’t you think so, bhai?”

In essence, the novel calls for peace and stability within the national demarcations. Nepal has witnessed a great deal of devastation which has demolished hopes for stability that is reflected in journalism. However, Wagle endeavours to approach the Nepali crisis through literature. Being a literary therapist, he “strives not to introduce his agenda into a session other than in highly unusual circumstances or

in relation to practical arrangements. The therapist novelist makes efforts to hold back his opinions about difficult issues that the patient is trying to resolve, as the therapist's opinions do not belong in the psychotherapeutic session in which the patient has to try to find his own solution" (Lanyado, 2004). Thus, there has always been lack of this critical voice which Wagle has given in his novel. Hence, Wagle uses metafictional style to avoid being attacked by the official political authorities. In addition, he finds "metafiction a self-reflexive writing modes which reflects his own dissatisfaction with the ongoing political turbulence".

This study focuses on the human aspects of the Nepalese Civil War, and shows how it affected the psyche of the Nepali individual. The study of Nepali individuality will be approached through three objectives; first, it tries to explore the metafictional self-reflexivity of the novel, second it aims to examine the allegorical enactment of the main characters' psyche, and third, it intends to study the narrative paradox, whereby the novel's allegorical narrative reflects the author's real insights regarding the Nepalese Civil War.

Therefore, the significance of this study lies in its incorporation of a political and literary critique of the Nepali national affairs. Politically, the study demonstrates how the Nepali politics is corrupted by unfair revolutions. Such affairs destroy the Nepalese sense of social stability. Literary, it tackles Wagle's *Palpasa Café* as an indirect critique of this political corruption. That being so, the novel might exalt the

Nepalese hope for social prosperity and, thus, building an advanced country. The argument of this study will also be beneficial for academicians who consider the role of fiction to elevate society. In the long run, the study follows a contextual exposure of the Nepali civil war in terms of allegory which has been hardly applied to analyse the novel.

THE NARRATOR'S COMMENTS ON WAR THROUGH SELF- REFLEXIVITY

Palpasa Café hinges on the story of an artist named Drishya during the Nepali Civil War. It portrays romantic love that develops between Drishya and an American Nepali woman named Palpasa. Their love story begins when the latter arrives in Nepal from the U.S.A. shortly after the tragedy of 9/11. In the main, *Palpasa Café* can be chronicled as an anti-war novel because it exposes the negative effects of the Civil War on the Nepali countryside, as seen through the eyes of Drishya. The novel is originally written in Nepali and it utilizes several literary techniques, such as authorial self-reflexivity, the narrator's comments on the plot's subject, and intertextuality. These structural techniques are representative forms of metafiction.

The novel's narrative is recounted through an anonymous person's point of view deflected through a straight forward approach which makes it impossible to identify the narrator. However, what is significant is the metafictional orientation of events. More specifically, metafictional insinuation falls in the category of self-

reflexive devices. The narrator is strikingly introduced in the beginning of this story; “a paper bird” comes to a man called Coffee Guff whose name is revealed through the opening metafictional lines: “a paper bird came flying down from the balcony and landed by my seat in the Birendra International Convention Centre. On it was written, When’s your novel going to be published Mr. Coffee Guff?”.

These lines enhance the metafictional antecedent events of *Palpasa Café*. This is because the most obvious token of metafiction is self-reflexivity (Jweid, Abdalqader, & Termizi, 2015). Metafictional self-reflexivity means that the novel comments on its status as a fictional work and the utilization of metafictional insinuations in literary texts is a trajectory to the self-reflexive quality (Waugh, 1984). As such, by inserting self-reflexive devices, the text draws attention to its status as a fictional work. In *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox*, Hutcheon (1980) argued that “in its most overt form the self-consciousness of a text often takes the shape of an explicit thematization-through plot allegory, narrative metaphor, or even narratorial commentary”. In *Palpasa Café*, for example, the paper bird leaves some notes to the narrator. The core of these notes is an interrogation on Coffee Guff’s novel. From the beginning, self-reflexivity manifests properly in the narrative structure and draws attention to its fictional nature.

To revert to the analogy of self-reflexivity, metafiction is regarded as an indication of critical fiction. In like fashion,

it reconciles the antithesis of chaos and disorder because “metafiction parodies and imitates as a way to a new form which is just as serious and valid, as a synthesis, as the form it dialectically attempts to surpass” (Hutcheon, 1980). Chaos and disorder also appear at the beginning of *Palpasa Café* when the narrator and his friend console each other while listening to music, as an outlet from their tragic surroundings. The narrator, then, passes his notes to his friends. This is a mere adumbration of textual self-reflexivity: “the curtains would soon be raised and singer Deep Shrestha would begin his performance. Seconds before the lights went down, I passed the note to my friends. They read it and chuckled”.

In line with this, *Palpasa Café* directs the reader through textual characteristics. These characteristics link the author’s strategic construction of events with the characters’ embodiment in the text. Waugh draws upon the suffering of the Nepalese people during the Civil War. He deliberately focuses on journalism and its role in reporting the tragic events of war. Furthermore, he emphasizes the importance of fiction in creating a sense of the war. In this manner, he prefers writing fiction to journalism and projects this need in the novel. The anonymous narrator identifies Coffee Guff as a weekly column in a newspaper; it is not his name. The narrator has quit writing his weekly columns and starts to write a novel depicting the war: “I’d stopped writing my weekly column ‘Coffee Guff’ in the *Kantipur* daily newspaper to make time to finish a novel. One of my colleagues joked, ‘You’re a newspaper

editor. What makes you think you can write?' another chided me, 'A journalist shouldn't write fiction (*italics in original*)'.

The narrator's preference for writing fiction is a cogent indication of authorial presence in the novel. In the previous excerpt, the narrator talks about his novel and how he intends to complete it. This is an obvious feature of textual self-reflexivity which is a "process by which texts, both literary and filmic, foreground their own production, their authorship, their intertextual influences, their reception, or their enunciation" (Stam, 1985). The narrator's introduction of the novel embodies Wagle's use of narrative intertextuality. The intertextual peculiarity of fictional works indicates that the text's segments and excerpts are coherent and correspond to each other to carry out the author's intended meaning (Funk, 2015). For example, the narrator accentuates the viability of his novel in dealing with the war status quo. Notwithstanding this, he suffers from what he calls a conspiracy against his fiction. In this way, he exposes the engendered Nepalese individuality. He complains about the current events in his country. Metafictional self-reflexivity emerges when he talks about the protagonist in his novel. The novel's fictional world and the Civil War are a combination of both fact and fiction: "even event in my country seemed to be conspiring against my novel. A series of shocking incidents had occurred at breathtaking speed in the lives of my countrymen and in the life of my protagonist. The line between fact and fiction is blurring".

The narrator continuously remarks on the fabrication of his novel. The authorial comments on the narrative artifact are "a deliberate meta-narrative celebration of the act of narration" (Fludernik, 2003). The narrator further describes the inspiration that prompted the writing of this novel. He asserts that Drishya is the motivation behind the writing of this novel. The novel itself is a "portrait" of the Nepalese individual's wartime suffering. Intrinsically, Drishya is the fictional incarnation of that individuality: "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 only rightful critic. He was the one who'd inspired me to write it in the first place". Accordingly, the use of symbolic depiction of the Nepalese Civil War is transformed through allegory.

WAR ALLEGORY AS SYMBOLIC METAPHOR OF NEPALESE POLITICAL CHAOS

The use of allegory is deemed an indirect manner by which the author expresses some ideological judgments. In *Palpasa Café*, Wagle gives an allegorical account of the Civil War. One of the tragic outcomes of war was the murder of Nepal's king and queen. This event triggers the imagination of the narrator to mourn the present situation. The murder of the monarchs left a national void which brought on much tumult. Subsequently, he begins to mull over the possibility of an end to this crisis: "The King and Queen had been murdered. The helicopter I'd heard was carrying the Prince,

who'd survived, back to Kathamandu. This much I learned from the crowd. How did the murder take place? When? Who did it? Why? So many questions remained unanswered”.

The sudden and tragic end of the monarchy makes it a metaphor for a very unstable Nepal on the brink of chaos and destruction. Wagle critically expresses his perception through an allegorical elucidation. Allegory provides a practical means of symbolic writing as a “way in which a community structures a formative text, then, can expose not only the form of inquiry, but the institutional character of the interpretive community itself” (Whitman, 2003). Here, the instrumental validity of allegory can be handled by metafictional “ultimate and extreme representation of self-conscious fiction” (Rivkin & Ryan, 1998). The typical figuration of allegory with metafiction constitutes a regular narrative potential; whereby “the author distances himself from this common language, he steps back and objectifies it, forcing his own intentions to refract and diffuse themselves through the medium of this common view that has become embodied in language”.

In *Palpasa Café*, the dimensional personification of allegorical objectivity disseminates the common turmoil in the course of the plot. The narrator describes one of his saunters in the streets. He is surprised by a noisy outburst between the police and people. He is flustered by this turbulence wherein people suffered persecution at the hands of the police. The narrator himself experiences violence when he is hit during a demonstration:

It was a cool evening for early June. Evading a police patrol, I entered a narrow alley. Here and there, people were pelting stones at the police. Riot troops were out in force. Some people were arrested. Some were beaten. The police fired over the heads of the crowd but people still refused to clear the streets. I heard the sirens of police vans but couldn't make out which way they were heading. Ambulances roared through the streets. A brick thrown at one of the police officers hit me in the back. I crouched in the doorway of a shop with closed shutters. When a police van sped past, I pretended to be passed out, drunk.

This comprehensive picture offers an integrated impression about the sufferings of Nepalese individuals. The narrator exemplifies the sole Nepalese individual in terms of personal experiences. He directly confronts the outgoing violence. Yet when he tries to escape adverse situations, he ends up conceding to its inevitable consequences. He eventually surrenders to the inimical state of affairs. The narrator's agitated state typifies the author's vision and encompasses the allegorical arrangement of fictional events. By the same token, fictional pieces and real experiences entangle; an “interpretation meant always finding new ways of saying the same thing” (Brittan, 2003). The author's vision is inextricably linked to the fictional events he creates. From an allegorical prospect, the author embeds crucial symbolical hints in the text to express his ideology; only then, “should we ask whether they necessarily carry a further, allegorical meaning”.

The author's allegorical meaning appears most obviously in *Palpasa Café*. Wagle is obsessed with the Nepalese Civil War. His obsession leads him to establish a self-reflexive story comprising both his critical ideology and national concerns. In so doing, "the totalizing symmetry of the substitutive pattern is thrown out of balance: instead of merging into a higher, general Self, two selves remain confronted in a paralyzing inequality" (De Man, 1979). The equivalent symmetry in the novel involves both the fictional narrator and the abstract authorial critique. Furthermore, through allegory, "the categories that are thus being challenged are precisely those of self and other, the ground of the system. If these polarities have only been posited in order to eliminate their opposition, then the failure of the synthesis, the persistence of their antagonism, reveals the fallacy of their position".

The narrator's story is punctuated with authorial comments. As argued previously, metafictional writings allow the author to intervene into his linear narrative. In his definitions of metafiction, in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Baldick (1990) discussed the self-referential nature of metafictional texts. According to Baldick, the "self-conscious" fictional text focuses on the relationship between the text and the reader: "the term is normally used for works that involve a significant degree of self-consciousness about themselves as fictions, in ways that go beyond occasional apologetic address to the reader". Baldick also connects the study of metafiction with

the allegorical contrivance through "fiction about fiction, or more especially, a kind of fictional that openly comments on its own fictional status".

Metafiction and allegory correlate with each other on the textual scale. For example, when the narrator starts writing his story at the beginning of *Palpasa Café*, he affords a straightforward plan of his story. The story's content would tackle the tumultuous disorder in Nepal. He highlights his beginning by introducing lines in italics as a fitting prelude to his novel: "what timing! I picked up a napkin to jot down the story: '*A patrol of the unified command lost contact with district headquarters after being ambushed by Maoists this morning about eight kilometers to the east....*' (italics in original)". Hitherto, metafiction unravels the allegorical references made by the author.

In *Metaphor in Psychotherapy: Clinical Applications of Stories and Allegories*, Close (1998) asserted that allegory connected "stories which address specific different part of the psyche". In like manner, allegorical "stories came easily, perhaps because they involved memories of people". Such stories comprise a metaphorical topology of "several dichotomies". Unmediated dichotomy presence percolates through an "interplay between polarities, the balance between one mode of functioning and another: the heart and the mind; the realistic and the worthwhile; the directions and energy". As a matter of fact, allegory reconciles opposite perceptions of reality in "story fabrics". Similarly, Wagle makes

deliberate use of allegorical nuances in *Palpasa Café* by depicting the Civil War using metafictional topology. On the subject of topology, allegory yields a metaphorical sketch of reality. For example, the narrator wants to dedicate his novel and other works to his beloved Palpasa: "I'd just started a series of works dedicated to Palpasa's memory".

Reconciliation of opposite situations extends to metaphorical meanings interpolated within "allegorical fragments" (De Man, 1979). Notwithstanding this, "sensation" plays a crucial role in discerning the extent to which metaphor is used; and also "can reconcile night and day in a *chiaroscuro* that is entirely convincing". In this regard, allegory initiates implicit statements through passages which "play for higher stakes". Connecting allegory to textual reconciliation "breeds in the passage on reading that has to attempt the reconciliation between imagination and action and to resolve the ethical conflict that exists between them". Allegory, above all, allows metafictional comments to intercept with "metaphorical performances".

In *Palpasa Café*, the tragic consequences of war inflict painful memories. People experience hopeless and upsetting situations. Being one of those people, the narrator talks about his fans who want to support him. But he suffers the consequences of war and could not fulfill his aspirations. This experience is introduced into the novel via subjective comments in a metafictional manner. In the following example, he describes one of his fan's disturbing calls

at night. The man's actions provide a token of metaphorical intervention within the novel's symbolical representation of the Civil War: "'That's not all!' he was getting really worked up. 'I get so many phone calls. Some people call at midnight to say 'I love you'. I even got a letter written in blood! It scares me that some of my fans say they'd be willing to die for me. That's part of the reason I want to leave'".

Whitman (2003), in *Interpretation and Allegory: Antiquity to the Modern Period*, contended that "acts of interpretive allegory are transactions between fluctuating critical communities and formative texts. While these transactions regularly draw upon shared interpretive methods, they are situated in times and places, marked by tensions and polemics that are specific to each historical community and its developing canon". Whitman ascribed the use of allegory to "fluctuate" or changing mode of textual dramatisation of real life in "provisional figures". Allegory, moreover, fulfills an imaginative augmentation through "conditions under which it has developed".

Wagle construes the apparent utilisation of imaginative allegory in *Palpasa Café*. For example, the narrator finds peace following some turbulent events in the country, when he states that "peace returned to my gallery once more". The narrator's predilection for stability has yet to be obtained. The whole political agitation prevents him from pursuing his objectives. Consequently, he is simply contented to be an onlooker to the unravelling drama, from a distance:

"I looked out the window and saw the crowd of young men still milling around in front of the man power agency. If I went down, I'd be sure to meet someone who'd ask me if I could give him work or get him a job by pulling some stings. Coming to the gallery today, I'd talked to a young man who said, 'I've just filled out the application form to go abroad. I sold all my land to do it.'"

The narrator finds solace in his art. He conveys his feelings through harmonic description. In the same way, the use of allegorical implications formulates an "oscillation in allegory between being a hegemonic or recuperative dogma and a mode conveying the emblematic complexity of juxtaposed scenarios and discourses fulfills an important but under examined function in aesthetic projects that narrativize identities" (Sugg, 2008). In addition, because allegory is often considered a "reductive" and even "regressive" narrative mode, it is particularly interesting to note "its growing role in cultural production, especially in minority expression". Civil War allegory, in this regard, manifests properly through the narrator's revelation of devastating political changes (Abu Jweid, 2016).

THE SEARCH FOR STABILITY DURING WAR: THE BINARY FACTS OF ALLEGORICAL PARADOX

The allegorical depiction of the Nepalese Civil War appropriates within paradoxical insights. Paradox suits the allegorical representations in fictional works since the "understanding of allegory as paradoxical and affecting consciousness in new ways

runs counter to its reputation as a "dogmatic" mode of representation that is often "aligned easily with reactionary rhetoric or ideological hegemony" (Stevenson, 1984). Furthermore, paradoxical consciousness provides substantial discerning of particular modes of consciousness" in literary works (Danvers, 2006).

More importantly, the use of paradoxical allegory circulates "the change to which paradox pointed was both spiritual and intellectual" (Godman, 2009). Such spiritual and intellectual aspects of allegorical paradox juxtapose with crafty fictional "images" to create the impression of a refined and rigorous conscience which "involves examining apparently contradictory statements and drawing conclusions either to reconcile them or to explain their presence" (Alcocer, 2005).

Paradox, by definition, is a "contradiction that somehow proves fitting or true" (Mikics, 2007). At the surface meaning, paradox is self-contradictory and impossible, but it is logically true in its indirect meaning. Intellectual and spiritual dimensions of allegorical paradox appear in the romantic remembrance of Palpasa in *Palpasa Café*. The narrator keeps remembering his beloved amidst the political upheaval: "I continued working, paying no attention to her. I was, trying to paint a *tika* on Palpasa's forehead but it looked crooked. I could change a line in my painting by covering it with colour but sometimes that made the paint too dense (*italics in original*)". In addition, Palpasa is remembered more for her virtual attributes which the narrator immortalizes in his art:

“she pointed but I didn’t bother to turn round. I already knew which painting she wanted. It was one called *Palpasa Café*. Café-gallery-resort with internet facilities. I’d decided that each room in the resort would be a gallery in itself. I’d hang my art in these galleries. I wanted my guests to feel they were living in a gallery”.

Here, allegorical paradox culminates in a contradiction when the narrator searches for stability in an unstable milieu. Similarly, paradox is about “impression conveyed in everyday uses of the term ‘moment’ which is of something ephemeral, fleeting and elusive – however poignant or potent it might also happen to be” (Collits, 2005). Additionally, the impressive “effects of paradox [represents] the evaluative question of their relative stature” (Ahmad, 2000). In *Palpasa Café*, Wagle conceptualizes the “everyday” Nepalese life and how it affects them. Yet, the narrator still clings to his imaginary stable and serene life which is an obvious contradiction to the devastating war: “I was going to build two types of rooms: studios and the suites”. The use of secluded “ clichés” in literary works encompasses “connotations became extremely negative” (Ahmad, 1992).

In *Palpasa Café*, the conspicuous dramatic abruptness is discernable in the narrator’s dreamy life. He constantly connects his life to the foreigners who come and visit his art gallery: “I like explaining art to Nepalis more than to foreigners. It’s even more satisfying if they’re young. Foreigners visiting art galleries already have set tastes

and the ability to appreciate art, but very few Nepalis do that. Very few Nepalis visit art galleries for a start”.

Burnd (2004) asserted that in metafiction “categorical fragments could be mingled with paradoxical connotations within fictional mimesis”. The most productive means of metafictional insights result in “moderation of materialist polarisation of extra-meanings in the text” (Swirski, 2007). Accordingly, the latent meaning of metafictional texts “could be inferred in relation to allegorical paradoxes”. Metafictional texts foreground “a multi-relational and a reciprocally illuminating relationship. And it would be another humbling reminder that the interpretative process knows no closure” (Aldama, 2011).

Multi-relational metafictional “fragments” appear in *Palpasa Café* as a postscript. The story of Drishya comes back: “Drishya disappeared long ago. Tired of vainly searching for him, I’ve completed this novel based on whatever information I’ve been able to piece together. I haven’t been able to stick to the traditional style of most novels since this is the story of a man’s life”. In essence, the essential token of metafictional fragments is the authorial comments on completing his novel and annexing it to Drishya’s presence in the narrative fabric: “after completing my novel, I went to spend the evening at a restaurant in Thamel”. Very explicitly, Wagle concludes *Palpasa Café* with a direct metafictional description of the novel which he intends to publish: “and I handed her the manuscript,

printed on A4 paper. She took it, and looked at it, incredulous. On the first sheet inside the transparent plastic cover was written in big bold letters – PALPASA CAFÉ (capitals in original)”.

CONCLUSION

This study has examined the portrayal of the Nepalese Civil War. It has focused on the tragic consequences of the war upon the Nepalese individuals' psyche. The main rationale for the study has been the human relations in Wagle's *Palpasa Café*, relations that range from romantic to humane reciprocal affairs. The core conceptual methodology has been the use of metafictional elements in the novel and how they harmonise with allegorical and paradoxical depiction of such affairs.

The discussion of authorial self-reflexivity distinguishes Nepal “as a culture, we are enamored of freedom, self-determination, and variety, and we are reluctant to give up any of our options” (Schwartz, 2004). Most significantly, authorial self-reflexivity reveals the latent authorial nuances and relative perspective on the Civil War and its catastrophic consequences on the Nepalese people. Correspondingly, the discussion has exposed the authorial intervention within the narrative structure which accentuates his viewpoint on the ongoing events.

The analysis of the narrator's psyche is studied in relation to “individual creativity which can only be measured by the presence of norms, whose task it is to discipline

subjectivity, to enable it to communicate both with others and with options untaken within its own self” (Nielsen, 2002). Thus, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the allegorical depiction of the Nepalese Civil War and the paradoxical discrepancy between the turbulent homeland and the narrator's predilection to seclusion and serenity.

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