



## THE ROAD FROM ELEPHANT PASS: A HISTORIOGRAPHIC METAFICTION

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse the novel, *The Road from Elephant Pass* as a historiographic metafiction; facts within fiction. The study will analyse the plot development and the thematic aspects of the novel on one level. On the other level the paper will analyse how the facts related to the political history of Sri Lanka and the ethnic issues are embedded in the fiction and will also focus on how the writer has manipulated the history and facts in the fiction by creating his own version of history.

The need to relocate Nihal De Silva's *The Road From Elephant Pass* as a historiographic metafiction has arisen as the novel is embedded with certain historical facts which create a suspicion regarding the authenticity of those facts. It seemed that the writer has created his own history for certain purposes. Therefore, this has made *The Road from Elephant Pass* a novel within the novel. This research has identified the metafictional elements in the novel and has proved that the novel is a historiographic metafiction.

Key words: - *Metafiction, historiographic metafiction, paratextual, postmodern.*

### 1.0 Introduction

This research foregrounds that *The Road From Elephant Pass* is a historiographic metafiction. The study will analyze how the facts regarding the political history of Sri Lanka and ethnic issues are embedded in the novel and run parallel to the main story of the novel. The study will also analyze the way how history has been rewritten and will bring forward that certain known historical details are deliberately falsified in the novel. This research will also foreground the writer's self-conscious effort in rewriting his own version of history and the purpose of doing so. The very idea of 'history' and 'fiction' will also be analysed.

Historiographic metafiction is one kind of postmodern novel which rejects projecting present

beliefs and standards onto the past and asserts the specificity and particularity of the individual past event. It also suggests a distinction between "events" and "facts" that is one shared by many historians. Since the documents become signs of events, which the historian changes into facts, as in historiographic metafiction, the lesson here is that the past once existed, but that our historical knowledge of it is semiotically transmitted. Finally, Historiographic metafiction often points to that fact by using the paratextual conventions of historiography to both inscribe and undermine the authority and objectivity of historical sources and explanations.

Historiographic metafictions are novels that are intensely self-reflective. They also re-

introduce historical context into metafiction and problematize the entire question of historical knowledge. Historiographic metafiction bridges the fissure between historical and fictional works by recombining the two genres. They employ a questioning stance through their common use of conventions of narrative, of reference, of the inscribing of subjectivity, of their identity as textuality, and even of their implication in ideology.

### 1.1 Research Problem

*The Road from Elephant Pass* by Nihal De Silva has been prescribed for G.C.E (A/L) English Subject. When I read the novel, it doesn't seem to be merely a fiction. Though it is a heart touching love story certain historical facts and information are embedded in the novel and gives a historical touch. Therefore, a question arises whether the novel *The Road From Elephant Pass* is merely a fiction or a historiographic metafiction.

### 1.2 Problem Statement

The purpose of this research to evaluate whether the novel *The Road from Elephant Pass* is merely a fiction or a historiographic metafiction.

## 2.0 Review of Literature

The history of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is the history of emergence of consciousness among the majority community, the Sinhala, which defined the Sri Lanka society as Sinhala-Buddhist, thus denying its multi-ethnic character. The growth of this consciousness impinged on the minorities in Sri Lanka to the extent that internal resolution of the problems becomes impossible.

Sri Lanka became an independent country in 1948. After the independence, the Sinhala majority began to want the ruling position, whereas the Tamil minority wanted their privileged positions to continue. The Tamils were aggrieved when the Sinhala language was made the official language in 1956. This led to the first communal violence in 1958. This paved the way for the main Tamil political party Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) to voice for a separate State for the Tamils. The party was voted overwhelmingly in the 1977 general elections. Although the TULF may have intended to use the

demand for Eelam as a bargaining device in their politics, a chasm developed between the leaders of this party, who belonged to the older generation, and the Tamil youths, who adopted the Eelam cry with complete seriousness.

Many armed groups started to emerge in the late 1970s and there were confrontations between the Government armed forces and them. However the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) became the most powerful armed group and other militant groups gradually collapsed. Many militant groups laid down their arms and came into the political stream with the signing of the peace pact between then President of Sri Lanka Hon. J.R. Jeyawardhane and the then Prime Minister of India Rajiv Gandhi. However the LTTE realising that the Peace Pact will not be able to fulfil all the needs of the Tamil minorities did not accept it and continued their armed struggle to achieve freedom for the Tamils.

The ethnic conflict has caused many lives including the common people of all ethnicities. Many Tamils migrated to foreign countries as refugees and as political asylum seekers. With the defeat of the LTTE militarily in 2009, the civil war has come to an end. However there is a feeling among the people that the root causes for the ethnic conflict has not been resolved and the needs of the minorities have not yet been fulfilled.

One of the major destructions caused due to ethnic conflict is the burning and destroying of the library in Jaffna. An organized mob of Sinhalese origin went on a rampage on the nights of May 31 to June 1, 1981, burning the Jaffna public library. It was one of the most violent examples of ethnic biblioclasm of 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the time of destruction, the library was one of the biggest in Asia, containing over 97,000 books and manuscripts. Thus, the place of historic and symbolic importance to Tamils was destroyed.

In July 1983, the country experienced a major ethnic violence in which many lives of the innocent people were lost. This crisis is described as the "Black July". The LTTE ambushed and killed 13 soldiers in the North. The Sinhalese security forces in a reprisal ruthlessly rampaged killing 51 people in Jaffna. The anti-Tamil violence that continued then spread over

many areas and even 53 Tamils in custody at the maximum-security prison in Colombo were massacred on 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July 1983.

The memories of the 1983 backlash had an impact on the creative writers in English and they interpreted this issue in their writings. The outcome of the ethnic conflict and the civil war has never failed to get the attention of the creative writers in English.

Jean Arasanayagam, in her poem "Nallur" writes:

*It's there  
beneath the fallen fronds day crackling  
pile of broken twigs abandoned wells of  
brackish  
water lonely dunes  
It's there  
the shadows of long bodies shrunk in death  
the leeching sun has drunk their blood and  
bloated swells among the pilling clouds  
It's there  
death smell in the air... (Wijesinha 2)*

In these lines she portrays her experiences during the communal violence. In her poem "Remembering Nallur-1984", she brings out the imagery of Nallur, the most celebrated temple of the Hindu God of war, Skanda and exalts the conflict to the level of religious sacrifice:

*...now they come bearing weapons  
the spears of Murugan turned  
to guns and grenades in celebration  
of the great festival of death... (Wijesinha 7)*

God Skanda or Murugan is the God of war. Thus bringing the God imagery into the poem Arasanayagam takes the conflict to the level of religious sacrifice.

Kamala Wijeratne, in her poem "A Soldier's Wife Weeps" brings out the sacrifice of a soldier and the plight of the soldier's wife. She writes:

They gave you a hero's burial

*with all military honours  
the band played  
and your body passed from hand to hand  
I saw everything from inside a mist*

*the drone of voices like a plane  
making its uncertain way through the clouds  
I think they spoke of the way of life and death  
I think of bare, barren years... (Wijesinha 82)*

In these lines, she brings out her sympathy towards the soldier who has sacrificed his life to safeguard the sovereignty of his country. At the same time she also portrays the plight of the wife of the soldier and her future without him through the voice of the soldier's wife. Thus, Kamala Wijeratne brings out the outcome of the war in the country.

Similarly, Suresh Canagarajah in his poem "Dirge for Corporal Premaratne", portrays the situation of a military attack on the soldiers and their sacrifices of their lives. He writes:

*When you lay crushed that midnight  
with the other hundreds in uniform  
under the train mined at Mankulam  
I gloated over the destruction  
Not yours but of your uniform  
Not yours but of Oppression  
of Tyranny, of Militarism... (Wijesinha 30)*

Here the poet describes the incident in which many soldiers were killed due to a land mine attack in Mankulam (a place in north part of Sri Lanka). Canagarajah brings out the attitude of the speaker towards the triumph over the enemy. Here the poet cleverly brings out the anger not towards the individuals but towards the military force. The dead soldiers were seen not as fellow human beings but as the symbol of militarism.

Basil Fernando, in his poem "Yet Another Incident In July 1983" describes the darkest moments of the racial violence of 1983 Black July. During the July 1983 violence many innocent civilians were killed and burnt alive by the angry groups of mobs. He writes:

*Yet I remember  
the way they stopped the car,  
the mob. There were four  
in that car, a girl, a boy  
(between four and five it seemed)  
and their parents ...  
then they proceeded  
action, by then routine. Pouring*

*petrol and all that stuff... (Wijesinha 52-3)*

The poet describes how the innocent civilians including children burnt alive in the car in which they were travelling.

Yasmine Gooneratne, in her poem "Big Match, 1983", creates the image of a cricket match to trivialize the situation in the country. She blames both races:

*The game's in other hands in any case.  
these fires ring factory, and hovel,  
and Big Match fever, flaring high and fast,  
has both sides in its grip and promises  
dizzier scores than any at the Oval...  
(Wijesinha 57)*

Here the poet compares the number of lives lost due to racial violence to the number of runs scored in a cricket match. The poet describes how both communities are responsible for the killings during the ethnic violence. The poem is based on the cricket match played annually between two leading schools Royal College and St. Thomas College in Sri Lanka. Poet goes on saying that lives lost in the violence were rather higher than the runs scored in that cricket match.

Similarly A. Santhan, in his poem, "The Bigger Match" creates the image of a cricket match to portray the killings and death caused due to racial violence. He writes:

The toss says neither  
tail nor head, but  
for the players it's  
either life or death  
We don't reckon  
the wickets bowled  
nor do we add up  
the runs' toll  
but we count  
the lives that fall.... (Wijesinha 75)

In these lines also the image of a cricket match has been compared to racial violence in the country. The fall of wickets is compared with the killing of innocent people during the period of racial violence.

In her novel, *An Enemy Within*, Punyakante Wijenaike focuses on a single important event, the Central Bank bomb explosion carried out by the LTTE on 26 January 1996. This incident killed many lives and also affected the economy of the country. The novella opens with a description of the scene after the bomb has exploded:

*I lift my head. Black clouds of smoke come drifting towards me, red tongues of flame dance in between the black smoke to the tune of water hoses, where am I? My eyes getting accustomed to smoke see in the distance, dark shapes of towering buildings. But they stand in darkness like tombstones licked by tongues of fire... (Goonetilleke 103)*

A surreal effect is created by the flames and darkness, actual under the circumstances. Here the writer brings out the physical destructions due to the bomb blast with appropriate use of imagery.

A.Santhan, in his short story, *The Cuckoo's House* depicts the psychological trauma of the victims of war, who have to evacuate their homes and run for safety to safeguard them from bombings and artillery attacks. He writes:

*His own house was in the direction from where the sound of explosions came. The shelling started a month ago. And within this month five or six houses in their village had been razed to the ground. But, luckily, all the people had evacuated their houses on hearing the first sounds of gunfire. That was the only way for them to save their lives. What would happen to his now. To have a house of his own was a long-standing ambition in his life.... (Wijesinha and Fernando 254)*

While the subject of racial violence and atrocities of the civil war have been dealt with serious consideration by the creative writers in English, some creative writers have approached this issue from a different perspective. Some writers have brought out the absurdity of the ethnic cleavage and have also discussed how both the Sinhala and Tamil communities have mingled in the society. The issue of some creative writers is, if the

racial differences are removed and if mutual understanding is rooted among the communities then the unity could be achieved in the country.

Anoma Rajakaruna, in her poem, "I'm Somawathie, Woman of the Borders", writes:

*I am Somawathie  
I take offering to the temple  
on the rock at Dimbulagala,  
without fail... (Goonetilleke 94)*

In these lines Somawathie is identified as a Sinhala Buddhist by her name. But the last stanza of the poem adds complexities.

*I am Somawathie  
Somawathie Yogarajan.  
First born daughter  
to mother Seelawathie Madurapperuma,  
of the father Maheswaran Yogarajan...  
(Goonetilleke 94)*

Somawathie's mother is identified by her name as Sinhalese by race. Her father is identified by his name as a Tamil. This kind of mixed parentage is possible especially in the border villages in the country. Here the poet, by mingling the communities indicates the absurdity of ethnic cleavage.

Ernest Thalayasingam MacIntyre, in his play, *Rasanayagam's Last Riot*, brings out Sinhalese - Tamils relationship. The play is centred on Philip Fernando, a Sinhala graduate, his Tamil wife Sita and his friend of university days, Rasanayagam. The audience who see the play is conscious that it is the Sinhalese and Tamil races struggling on stage to survive in their marriage life. During the July 1983 violence, Rasanayagam takes shelter in his friend Philip's house. In the end, Rasanayagam was killed by the mobs when he was escorted to a refugee camp by the policeman. Philip and Sita finally migrate to Australia. The last line spoken by Sita, "But at least between the two of us there must be something called a Sri Lankan" (Goonetilleke 118), suggests that Sinhalese and Tamils must not think of themselves as separate communities but as Sri Lankans.

The issue of ethnic conflict and war has been viewed in different perspective by the creative writers in English in the all genres of literature,

especially produced during the last three decades. This research focuses on how the issue of ethnic conflict has been dealt with in the novel *Road from Elephant Pass* and will also critically examine the approach of the writer on this issue.

### 3.0 Research Methodology

The applied research methodology is a critical review of literature and a comparative study of two different disciplines: Literature and History.

1. History of Sri Lanka was studied. Various books by different authors were under study.
2. The literature produced during the last three decades (Civil war period) was under study.
3. The novel *Road from Elephant Pass* was under critical study and the historical events in the novel were be extracted.
4. The extracted information was compared with the history of Sri Lanka.
5. After the comparative analysis the conclusion was reached.

### 4.0 Findings

Under the light of historiographic metafiction, the research will analyse how the political history of Sri Lanka and the issue of ethnic conflict are embedded in the novel *Road from Elephant Pass* and will critically study how the historical facts go hand in hand to the main story. The research will foreground how De Silva is self-consciously creating his own version of history and will analyse the reasons for doing so.

The novel opens at Elephant Pass, a key place in the warfront which controlled the Wannai (an area under control of the LTTE) and the Jaffna peninsula. The first chapter opens on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2000, the year in which the LTTE ran over the army base in Elephant Pass and the army had to withdraw from the base with heavy casualties. The novel is centred on this incident. However what should be noted here is that the main characters in the novel are not historical characters. Wasantha, Kamala and Major Kiriela are merely fictional characters. Though the event the

story is based on is a historical event, the main story is merely a fiction. However when reading the novel it could be sensed that there are certain fragmental parts of historical facts scattered within the fiction. Apart from this, when reading the novel a sense of suspicion regarding the facts mentioned could be felt. A doubt is created whether certain historical facts have been distorted in the novel. The aim of this study is to reason out why the writer has created his own history and to prove that the novel is a historiographic metafiction.

During the conversation with Kamala, Wasantha said, "How can 8% of the population justify a demand for one third of this country?" (151). Here the population of the Tamils has been mentioned as 8% only. This novel was written in 2003 and the fact given regarding the population is not accurate. The true figures are, the Sinhalese (74%) constitute the major ethnic group; the Sri Lankan Tamils, who inhabit the North and East form 12.6% and the group known as Indian Tamils form 5.6% of the population. While Muslims constitute the third largest ethnic group (7.4%). The population of Tamils in North and East itself is nearly 13%. Therefore, the total population of the Tamils in the whole country with the Indian Tamils it will come up to nearly 19%. Therefore, the argument put forward here is, that, the facts given by the writer is not correct. After analysing another fact related to this, the study will reason out why the writer has self-consciously done this.

When Kamala said, "Our people have occupied these regions from antiquity. Population numbers today don't come into it... The Sinhala were brought to these parts only under colonization schemes" (151), Wasantha replied:

*The Mahavamsa and other chronicles provide evidence of a different kind..... This country was settled by Vijaya and followers. They were Aryan stock. The waves of invasion that took place over the centuries thereafter brought Dravidians who settled in the north and east... (151)*

Through the arguments of Kamala and Wasantha the writer is clever enough to put forward both the Tamil

point of view and Sinhala point of view. Though both views are presented, the writer reiterates the point of view of Wasantha by saying that the *Mahavamsa* is the history of Sinhalese, covering some two thousand five hundred years, inscribed on ola leaf manuscript. Here the writer is trying to create the point that Sinhalese came to Sri Lanka before Tamils.

According to *Mahavamsa* Sri Lanka was settled by Vijaya and followers. They were an Aryan stock. He married a princess named Kuvanna and used her to secure political power in the land. Once he placed himself in the throne after massacring Kuvanna's people he drove her away with her two children. Before Vijaya landed, there were people living in this land. Therefore a question about who came to Sri Lanka arises.

*Mahavamsa* was written by Mahanama. Sinhalese consider *Mahavamsa* as a source that gives evidence of their history. Indrapala, in *The Evolution of an Ethnic Identity* writes:

*In this unfavourable climate of ethnic conflict, as one would expect, history has been distorted and ancient historical sources have been unfairly used or condemned. One of the notable victims of unfair treatment is Mahanama, the author of the Mahavamsa, the pali chronicle that forms the main source for the ancient history of Sri Lanka. Many have been indulging in what Sudharshan Seneviratne has termed 'Mahavamsa-bashing. While, on the one hand, Sinhala-centrist writers have used Mahanama to present their own misrepresentation of history, anti-Sinhalese extremists, on the other, have abused Mahanama without even reading the Mahavamsa. In between, some others who have engaged in anthropological and archaeological as well as historical research are also guilty of unfairly judging the work of Mahanama. (35)*

What should be understood here is, Mahanama was not writing history the way we in contemporary society want it. The *Mahavamsa* may be described as a chronicle of that famous Buddhist institution Mahavihara. It tells us about its foundation and the rulers who patronized this institution.

Using the *Mahavamsa* as their main source, most historians of Sri Lanka tend to consider this work as a chronicle of the whole island. That they do this is not the fault of Mahanama. The author is quite clear about his purpose and audience, he wrote the chronicle for the serene joy and emotion of the pious. He was not an official scribe recording the events of his monarch's reign for the benefit of posterity.

The arguments like who came first arise from the concerns of present-day privilege and power, rather than from the reading of history. Indeed it is contemporary political motives rather than historical evidence that lie behind the arguments about the ethnicity of the first inhabitants of Sri Lanka. What has become a matter of concern for the future of historical scholarship is that some professional historians and archaeologists are unable to free themselves of such bias.

The argument that is brought in this study is that De Silva is highlighting the *Mahavamsa* and portraying the distorted historical facts in that. The study will now analyze why the writer is trying to create a history that Tamils are only 8% of the whole population and the Sinhalese were the people who were the first to come to Sri Lanka before Tamils. What the study reveals is the writer's attempt is to portray his view on the ethnic conflict. By creating such distorted history the writer presents that the claim of the Tamils for a separate land is not justifiable. Therefore the research brings out the suspicion in the historical facts and questions the authenticity of the facts. Thus the study lays down the first reason for categorizing this novel as a historiographic metafiction.

The next issue under analysis is the portrayal of the characters. In the novel, almost all the characters are fictional characters. The names Wasantha, Kamala and Major Kiriela are fictional names. They do not resemble any historical figures. However the only historical name from Sri Lanka mentioned in the novel is Velupillai Prabhakaran, the leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam (LTTE). The writer's intention in doing so is further discussed.

At the beginning of the novel itself De Silva creates an image of the LTTE through the voice of Wasantha. He said:

*The LTTE, they called themselves Tigers, had grown from a ragged band of youthful rebels in the mid eighties, to what is now recognized as one of the most powerful and ruthless terrorist organizations in the world. But I still believe we can beat them. (4)*

Here the writer is trying to create the image of the LTTE as a ruthless terrorist organization. But on the other hand the minorities Tamils consider the LTTE as freedom fighters and not as a terrorist group. Actually according to Tamils, LTTE is fighting for a separate homeland for them. Further it should be noted how a great importance is given to the news that Kamala revealed. When Wasantha heard this news his reaction to the news has been portrayed in the following lines:

If true, this was an once-in-a-lifetime chance to bring an end to this war. The fighting had, so far, taken some sixty thousand lives and caused untold misery to tens of thousands of innocents. Over six hundred thousand people were 'internally displaced', living in a refugee camps. The leader of the rebels, Velupillai Prabhakaran, is a ruthless and despotic tyrant... (16)

When Wasantha told this news to Major Kiriela, his excitement in hearing the news is revealed through the conversation between them:

"She claims she knows a precise location where her leader will be on a particular day and time..."

"Leader? He demanded incredulously. Do you mean Prabhakaran?"

"Yes."

"When will this be?"

"On the sixth..." (387)

Though the writer has mentioned the historical name Prabhakaran and his organization LTTE, the information regarding Prabhakaran's presence in a particular place and on a particular time is not a true

fact. It is an imaginary incident created by the writer. There is no authenticity for this information.

Now the study will analyze why only the historical name Prabakaran is mentioned in the novel and also the reason for creating a negative image of the LTTE by the writer. As mentioned earlier, the writer is intentionally creating his own history for artistic purposes and thematic purposes of the novel. The main theme the novel foregrounds is that if there is mutual understanding among the communities the ethnic differences could be wiped out. Through the portrayal of the fictional characters Wasantha and Kamala and through their relationship and mutual understanding between them the writer brings out this theme. But by describing Prabakaran and his organization in a negative way, the writer is trying to bring out the political message through the novel. The idea is, if Prabakaran is killed there could be an end to the ongoing civil war. This is the idea that most politicians and the majority of the Sinhalese have in their mind. They never looked at the war as a struggle for the freedom.

Another fact that is under analysis is the writer's mention about another political party called Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). In the novel, the writer describes JVP as a Marxist political party which advocated a chauvinistic, anti-Tamil stance. This is the only information given by the writer about the JVP in the novel. The real history of JVP has not been portrayed in the novel.

The JVP was founded in 1965 with the aim of providing a leading force for a socialist revolution in Sri Lanka. The party was involved in two armed uprisings against the ruling governments in 1971 and during the period of 1987-89. They even killed many Sinhalese who were against them and also killed many police officers and army officers. The JVP was militarily defeated when its leader Rohana Wijeweera was killed in 1989. Finally the JVP entered democratic politics by participating in the 1994 parliamentary elections in 1994.

JVP's full history has not been presented in the novel. The writer wants to only portray the JVP as a party that holds a view against the Tamils. This view of the writer should be connected with his view

towards the LTTE. The writer is cleverly creating negative impressions about the LTTE and on the JVP regarding ethnic issue. The writer has done this self-consciously for thematic purposes. The writer's intention is to bring out the idea that in each community there are good people as well as bad people. Through the comment made by Wasantha, "When you say the Sinhala are vicious murderers, you imply that ALL Sinhala are like that. Surely that's not true. So what you really mean is, SOME Sinhala are vicious murderers! Well SOME Tamils are vicious murderers too" (321), the writer foregrounds his idea.

This attitude of the writer could be clearly understood when he describes the historical event 'Black July'. In July 1983, Sri Lanka experienced a major ethnic violence which caused many lives of the innocent people. This incident is described as the "Black July". The LTTE ambushed and killed 13 soldiers in the north. The Sinhalese security forces in a reprisal ruthlessly rampaged killing 51 people in Jaffna. The anti-Tamil violence that continued then spread over many areas and even 53 Tamils in custody at the maximum security prison in Colombo were massacred and brutally tortured on 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> July 1983. At that period United National Party (UNP) was in power. J.R. Jeyawardhane was the president of the country at that time. The government came under severe criticism from the world for not saving the innocent civilians and for not giving protection for the prisoners in the custody. When describing the 'Black July' De Silva writes:

*July 1983 was a black day in our history. Organized mobs supported by the powerful politicians, attacked the Tamils living in the south of the country. Thousands of people lost their homes and property. Many were killed. That was the real beginning of the war that still rages in our country, seventeen years later. (103)*

Here if the description is crucially analyzed it could be felt that the writer has cleverly avoided to mention the real names of the people or the parties that were behind the attack on the Tamils. On the contrast he has mentioned the historical name



Prabaharan, his organization LTTE and the JVP, former Sinhala militant group which is a political party now.

Another description given by the writer is notable. Through Kamala's words he says how certain Sinhalese helped the Tamils during that period. Kamala says, "My Appa's Sinhala friends came to see us later. Uncle Bernard too. They brought us news of appa... They brought us food and clothes, and desperately sorry for us" (105). What the writer wants to foreground through this description is that not all Sinhalese are bad. Again he points out that in each community there are good people as well as bad people. These certain distorted fragmented historical incidents embedded in the novel makes it a historiographic metafiction.

The last aspect that is under analysis is the information that Kamala unraveled to Wasantha at the end of the story. Kamala told Wasantha that the information that she brought is actually a trap for the Sri Lankan government. She told him that actually Prabaharan would not be at that place and instead Dr. Ajay Devanand, a respected social worker from Chennai would be there. Devanand had criticized the LTTE for human rights abuses. The motive of the LTTE is to kill him. They wanted the government to kill him by bombing attack and put the blame on the government forces.

The above-mentioned event is not a historical fact and Ajay Devanand is also not a historical character. Here it could be clearly seen that the writer has created his own history for a purpose. One reason is to portray the LTTE as a ruthless terrorist organization. And the other is to create a bad impression on the LTTE in the neighbouring countries. There is a huge support to the LTTE in Tamil Nadu. So here the writer seems to create a negative impression on the LTTE across the country. That is, the LTTE is a threat not only to Sri Lanka but also to other neighbouring countries.

Therefore, what the research reveals is, though there are certain historical elements in the novel *The Road from Elephant Pass*, all the facts that are mentioned could not be taken as true. Certain historical facts are distorted. De Silva has self-consciously rewritten the history for the artistic

purpose and the thematic purpose of the novel. The aim of this thesis is to prove that *The Road From Elephant Pass* is a historiographic metafiction. The historical facts that have been presented create a suspicion in the accuracy of the facts. It is merely a fiction which focuses on the developing love and mutual understanding between Wasantha and Kamala who are from different ethnic groups. The writer has self-consciously handled the certain historical events in his own way and with his own interpretations. Therefore, the novel *Road from Elephant Pass* could be categorized as a historiographic metafiction.

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