

I. Demystifying Postmodern Self in Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love*

Samrat Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love* is the story of the male protagonist Ramchandra, who is represented as a character having a fluctuating and contingent self, Upadhyay tries to present him as a postmodern subject. He is a person who is less vital, less heroic and less significant than the average people. He behaves and talks as if he has lost his way, lost faith in himself and in his own future, but he is trying to persuade himself. He is driven internal forces. He enjoys what ever is possible to obtain in his lives. He knows that his life is almost insignificant in the post-modern societies. He defies the natural laws and conventions.

By presenting Ram Chandra, the protagonist of the novel swings between his desire and duty. He cannot abandon his extramarital affair nor can he forsake his wife. He is such a person who does not want any assistance from others and labours his best to be self dependent. Ram Chandra finds himself trapped both in his house and his city, where secrets are impossible to keep and family matters dictate, but ultimately his only escape is to let go of someone he loves.

Upadhyay's debut novel *The Guru of Love* encompasses the unrest resided in the lives of the characters that he has presented in his book and also depicts the inevitable human drives to love and lust. However, some of the consequences presented seem to be somehow different and unbelievable in context of the Nepali society. Apart from some instances, it unravels the existing Nepali society entangled with varied troubles; political and personal.

Ramchandra whirled in hand-to-mouth problem residing in a small thatched rented room with his lovable wife Goma and two children Sanu and Rakesh, is a mathematics teacher and has been tutoring some other students at his room to belittle the economical problems. Goma being a true wife of the protagonist, has given up all

the luxuries of her mother's home and is determined to have devoted whole of her life assuaging the wounds of family as well as extra marital problems and living with relish in extreme poverty. Ramchandra develops his affair with his tutee Malati, an unmarried teenage mother deserted by her beloved taxi driver. It no longer remains secret and Goma knows all about it. Being shocked with the news, she leaves for her mother's home. Later, Goma insists her husband to allow Malati to live with them in the rented home and manages the bedroom for Malati and Ramchandra. She shifts to her children's room. The pandeys, in-laws, pass away. Malati gets back her husband. They come back from the Pandeys. They settle in Kirtipur in two rooms with the money they get from selling their inherited house from in-laws.

The novel reveals the middle class family problems; it also unravels the varied cultural aspects of the Nepali society, anti government riots taking place in the 90s. A fascinating novel showing middle class nuclear family entangled with problems clashing with high class in-laws despite some unbelievable peculiarities as such Goma's insistence to allow Malati to reside in their home and share bed with her husband, which Nepali woman shows such open minded attitude. She is such a great guru of love, not Ramchandra.

With a novelist's eye for inclusiveness, Upadhyay studies relations within an extended family, within a neighborhood, within a workplace, and finally, on the stage of Kathmandu, where political dissent and demands for democracy are painfully, often violently acted out. The narrative turns in this novel are anything but predictable. Goma is one of the wiser, more forbearing wives the reader is likely to encounter in fiction. Upadhyay ably gets under the skin of his characters, developing compassion for everyone caught up in this moral tale of apparently dysfunctional family deadlock. Take petulant daughter, Sanu. She tells off the Pandeys-as only a

tactless child can. Yet we care about her when overprotective Ramchandra begins to lose it once Sanu has her first crush on a boy.

Ramchandra, of course, remains center stage. The idea of a teacher seducing a student might easily spin out as simple-minded lust. But Upadhyay keeps up reader tension about why Ramchandra strays. We see the teacher often makes choices roiled by feelings that leave him exhausted, nauseated, and vulnerable. Certainly, Ramchandra's marriage is fire-tested, but that also sets the stage for him to realize durable love.

Upadhyay closes *The Guru of Love* with an epilogue that marks the passage of eleven years. The novel was evidently written before the royal massacre in 2001, but the epilogue rightfully incorporates that wrenching experience in an update of not only Ramchandra's family, but the country as a whole, which Upadhyay accurately depicted on an inevitable path toward devolution from autocratic rule.

Despite an uncreative plot, Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love* is an enjoyable book. The story centers around a married character named Ramchandra who finds himself attracted to one of his young math students named Malati. Ramchandra's wife Goma senses the attraction and she tries to teach her husband a lesson by letting Malati move in with their family and sleep in Ramchandra's bed. Unsurprisingly, Ramchandra struggles with his physical desire for Malati and his emotional desire for his wife. Unless the reader has never seen a soap opera or is too young to recall Bill and Hillary Clinton's marital saga, he or she will conclude early on that Goma stands by her man.

This novel is notable not for the boring love triangle but for its descriptions of Kathmandu and the many Hindu holidays and festivals that the family celebrates. The reader is transported to a city where an extramarital seduction in a temple means

having monkeys wander in on the scene to watch Ramchandra and Malati consummate their desire for one another. There are also a number of descriptions of Hindu religious practices which include animal sacrifices, prayers to goddesses, and funeral services. Most interesting are the descriptions of modern Kathmandu as Ramchandra tries to adjust to his life in an overcrowded city that is on the brink of a political revolution. You won't walk away from this novel having learned ancient Nepali love techniques like the title implies, but you will have been transported to another culture and it may leave you feeling so intrigued you find yourself planning a vacation to this region of the world. Overall, this is a very quick read and I believe that many people will enjoy this novel if they look deeper than the basic plotline.

Previously, the author has published the collection of short stories *Arresting God in Kathmandu*. With this novel he takes the opportunity of treating in more depth the problems that he explored in his short stories. We accompany Ramchandra, a disillusioned schoolteacher in Kathmandu. Because of his meager salary he tutors students for the School Leaving Examination. He takes a liking to one student, a young woman with a kid but no husband; a start to cheat on his wives, and later confesses to her. She moves out but, for reasons that are not quite clear, moves back in later, where Ramchandra, his mistress and her son, and his wife and their two kids are now living together in utter breach with tradition. How might this come to a conclusion?

In contrast to one might expect the book isn't so much a character study of the three, very different, protagonists, but a social study of Kathmandu. The surroundings are described to some detail and it is easy to follow the characters on their wanderings though the city. The story is very much at odds with traditional, and probably also contemporary, Kathmandu. How Ramchandra, his wife and his mistress act is

sometimes hard to understand, and their reasoning is even stranger. The final justification for Ramchandra's wife's staying with him is unbelievable, even though it gives a nice reference back to the title of the book.

The novel set against the background of political upheavals is viewed from psychological, historical and socio-cultural perspective. Upadhyay's portrayal of Kathmandu in this novel remains outrageous to the Nepali readers who are familiar with culture and tradition, and they even accuse him of portraying Kathmandu that exists solely in his mind. Middle class people and their plight on the backdrop of pro-democracy movement reflect the general perception of Nepal to some extent but Upadhyay largely sketches social practices, targeting his publisher. The novel maintains appealing quality through its description of Nepalese festivals and family life painting in colourful and inspiring way.

Some section of Nepali readers find the novel shocking as it shoes the women as merely sexual objects by exposing sometimes awesomely divine as Goma and sometimes projecting women as no more than a sexual object. Goma allowing her husband to bring his mistress, Upadhyay makes sweeping generalization of women.

Various critics have reflected their own perceptions on the book with different issues, none of them have comprehensively dealt with the issue I have raised. In my research, I want to prove that Samrat Upadhyay's protagonist Ramchandra as a person having a fluctuating and contingent self by applying postmodernist theory.

II. Postmodernity and Self

Postmodernism is a complicated term or set of ideas, one that only emerged as an area of academic study. It is hard to define because it is a concept that appears in a wide variety of disciplines including art, architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communication, fashion and technology. It is difficult to locate it historically because it is not clear when postmodernism began but the agreed assumption is that it started after the second world-war fetching multiple meanings.

Jean Francois Lyotard believes that it is the period of slackening reality. The act of experimentation is the spirit of questioning. In the contemporary time knowledge has become the phenomenon related to TV games and petty narratives. Petty narratives are always local, specific and small. They go against the universalizing tendency of realism. Lyotard's "The Postmodern Condition" (1979) attacks Habermas's formulation of universal pragmatics of discourse as a means for realizing project. In his essay he states:

The breakdown of the grand narratives of progress must give way to loss average little narratives that resist closure and totality and above all rules out or final authority that can speak for all human beings from a universal perspective without already invoking some dialogical formation. Thus, comprehended postmodernism "is not modernism at its end but in the nascent state and this state is constraint". (212)

Here, Lyotard insists that postmodern should be described from the perspective of knowledge which has not emancipatory power. He questions the grand narrative and the questioning of grand narrative generates the small narratives. He is in favor of small narratives.

For the issue about postmodernism Lyotard should be studied in relation to Fredric Jameson. For Jameson postmodern is a cultural logic of late capitalism, one produces what consumer wants. Sell and finish is the essence of late capitalism. Beauty is lost. According to Jameson, objects lost emancipatory power. There is not any originality. Late capitalism focuses on consumerism.

It is generally acknowledged that postmodernism isn't a philosophy as we typically think of philosophies. It isn't a single, well thought out philosophical system which seeks to define and answer the big questions of life. Postmodernism is more of a report on the mindset of western culture in the latter half of the twentieth century. Some call it a mood. We might say it is a report on the failures of modernism along with a hodgepodge of suggestions for a new direction of thought and life.

Writer Walter Truett Anderson gives four terms postmodernists use to speak of the self which address the issues of change and multiple identities. The first is 'multiphrenia'. This refers to the many different voices in our culture telling us who we are and what we are. As Kenneth Gergen, a professor of psychology, says, "For everything that we 'know to be true' about ourselves, other voices within respond with doubt and even derision" (9). Our lives are multi-dimensional. The various relationships we have in our lives pull us in different directions. We play "such a variety of roles that the very concept of an 'authentic self' with knowable characteristics recedes from view" (10). And these roles needn't overlap or be congruent in any significant way. As Anderson says, "In the postmodern world, you just don't get to be a single and consistent somebody" (11).

The second term used is "protean". The protean self is capable of changing constantly to suit the present circumstances. "It may include changing political opinions and sexual behavior, changing ideas and ways of expressing them, changing

ways of organizing one's life" (12). Some see this as the process of finding one's true self. But others see it "as a manifestation of the idea that there *is* no true, stable self" (13).

Thirdly, Anderson speaks of the "de-centered" self. This term focuses on the belief that there is no self at all. The self is constantly redefined, constantly undergoing change. The subject is not the speaker of language but its creation. Thus, there is no enduring "I". We are what we are described to be.

Anderson's fourth term is "self-in-relation". This concept is often encountered in feminist studies. It simply means that we live our lives not as islands unto ourselves but in relation to people and to certain cultural contexts. To rightly understand ourselves we must understand the contexts of our lives.

If we put these four terms together, we have the image of a person who has no center, but who is drawn in many directions and is constantly changing and being defined externally by the various relations he or she has with others. All these ideas clearly go in a different direction than that taken by modern society. It was formerly believed that our goal should be to achieve wholeness, to find the integrated self, to pull all the seemingly different parts of ourselves together into one cohesive whole. Postmodernism says no; that can't happen because we aren't by nature one cohesive self.

So there is no "I", no inner self to wrestle with all these different roles and determine which I will accept and which I won't and, ultimately, who I really am. How, then, do changes come about? Who decides what I am like or who I am? According to postmodern thought, everyone is shaped by outside forces and is socially constructed.

Up till the early 1980s the debate on postmodernism remained almost exclusively confined to architecture and to the arts, even if some of the critics involved were more than willing to diagnose a new *Zeitgeist*. But all of that would change dramatically in the course of the 1980s when postmodernism began to engage the serious attention of professional philosophers and of leftist critics of a more traditional persuasion than that of Douglas Crimp, Hal Foster, and others. Between 1981 and 1984 postmodernism became an indispensable concept in theories of the contemporary—to borrow from the subtitle of Steven Connor's book on the postmodern. Jürgen Habermas, Jean-François Lyotard, Fredric Jameson, Jean Baudrillard, and Richard Rorty definitively put postmodernism and postmodernity on the theoretical map. The contributions of Habermas and Jameson mark the long overdue participation of the traditional left in the debate, Baudrillard emerges as the champion of the radical left, and Lyotard and Rorty, in spite of their important differences, paradoxically come to represent a domesticated postmodernism, a safe and respectable postmodernism to which even liberal humanists, although they might not share all its premises, cannot very well take exception without giving the appearance of puritanical intolerance.

Recently, having turned his professional attention away from philosophy to take up a position as professor of humanities, Rorty has in his latest book, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, directed his message at a new audience, the world beyond the academic specialists in departments of philosophy. The result is a provocative, entertaining, informative, and often irritating work, which should quickly and deservedly find a place on many lists of required reading. It should also initiate some lively and significant debates, not only about the central cultural questions Rorty raises but also about the author's real agenda.

In *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* Rorty has a threefold purpose: first, he offers a summary of his philosophical position, a portion of the book which holds no particular surprises for those familiar with his earlier writings; second, he explores some of the social and political implications of the stance he favours; and, thirdly, he demonstrates in practice how someone who finds his recommendations persuasive might proceed. Having devoted many years and a large number of publications to making his case before professional peers (most notably in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*), Rorty is here less concerned with detailed argument--or, more pertinently, given his hermeneutical cast of mind, with a very scrupulous narrative--than with surveying the high ground and charting the territory from carefully selected vantage points (although the extremely useful footnotes throughout will enable the reader easily to review a great deal of the most pertinent recent literature). The topographical metaphor is appropriate because Rorty's style reminds one of nothing so much as a very stylish, articulate, witty, and confident tour guide, conducting his audience magisterially through the ruins, controlling our perspective on what there is to see, and not afraid to shoot from the hip at any celebrated bust still left tottering on its decaying pedestal. It's a bravura performance.

Rorty's account of our present situation rests on the by now familiar neo-Wittgensteinian contention that there is no permanent access to the truth; all can have the vocabularies that are created:

Truth cannot be out there--cannot exist independently of the human mind--because sentences cannot so exist, or be out there. The world is out there, but descriptions of the world are not. Only descriptions of the world can be true or false. The world on its own--unaided by the describing activities of human beings--cannot. (5)

Thus, it is difficult to discover the Truth; truths are created with languages. And since no language is privileged over any other, all languages being contingent in their origins and not mediums for expression or representation, our "intellectual and moral progress [becomes] a history of increasingly useful metaphors rather than of increasing understanding of how things really are" (9). The epistemological problems of mind cannot be solved simply by transferring our attention to language, since that tactic leaves us:

Standing between the self and the nonhuman reality with which the self seeks to be in touch, we have made no progress. We are still using a subject-object picture, and we are still stuck with issues about skepticism, idealism, and realism. For we are still able to ask questions about language of the same sort we asked about consciousness. (11)

Rorty thus rests his argument, more than anything else, on Nietzsche's well known image (to which he refers repeatedly) of truth as a "mobile army of metaphors." Historical irony goes all the way down and undercuts all Truth claims. The Enlightenment project has served us well, but we no longer should preoccupy ourselves with trying to ground it in universal ahistorical principles: "democracies," Rorty urges as a central message of the book, "are now in a position to throw away some of the ladders used in their own construction" (194).

Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity answers the question: How can you aim to undermine the foundations and the telos of the West while also wanting to defend its core liberal values? Another version of this question is: How can you have Heidegger and Dewey in your pantheon of heroes, Nietzsche and Habermas? The quick answer is that you can have both desires only when you realize that these values do not need the traditional buttressing, and can have both sets of heroes when you realize that each

was heroic in a distinct way. In his new book Rorty wants to have it both ways, though not at the same time. He wants to keep distinct questions about politics or institutions from questions about pleasures. In other words he distinguishes between the private and public without giving one priority over the other. Of course, this distinction is not natural: the world does not present us with essentially private and public aspects. But Rorty redescribes modernity in such a way as to encourage liberalism as a public doctrine and irony as a private pleasure which is compatible with that doctrine. Much of the support for this public-private split comes from a particular picture of western history. It is historicism which freed us from the need to appeal to foundations, and it is a kind of historicism which Rorty hopes will provide us with the possibilities of solidarity even as it leaves room for the irony-riddled search for personal autonomy. Rorty's versions of Western history are very general, and he makes no claims to originality in this regard. But I think we can see that his use of history is crucial for his establishment of the pervasiveness of contingency, the context and content of irony, and the hope for and extension of solidarity.

Pointing out the contingency of the public/private description so important for *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* opens up important parts of its presentation to historicist redescription. Doing so confirms more than it undermines, of course, the central claims of the book which, after all, are put forward as elements of a conversation. The book depends on even as it calls for historicist narratives which will provide liberal culture with a sense of itself-with a strong, but contingent, meaning and direction. Although he has not presented these narratives here in any detail, Rorty has provided an important stimulus to the kinds of redescription in which they would be engaged. The stimulus comes, in part, from the crucial moral, political, and

aesthetic functions which he gives to these redescriptions, despite an ironic acknowledgment of their contingency.

In *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Rorty has written a brief but powerful work which forcefully expands on the critical task of *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, enriching the idea of philosophy as conversation by engaging some of the most important questions raised about his views. His ironic historicism has set new standards for how philosophy can speak of language, self, and society without speaking only to philosophers.

In the essay called "Contingency of Selfhood" Rorty deconstructs the very idea of human truth and self as a transcendental and divine one. He is against a temporal/universal self. Human self is changeable and vulnerable. Rorty must be understood with the thinkers like Gadamer, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Foucault and Derrida. Rorty says self is a construct and it is constructed along the lines of language and historicity. Self is not something to be discovered but invented our self is conditioned by time and space. Rorty draws the ideas from Nietzsche, Harold Bloom, and Sigmund Freud in this essay and argues that human self is not a given nor a necessary thing but contingent one. It is constructed, invented and constituted of language and the historical experiences. He draws from Nietzsche the idea of truth of a mobile army of metaphors from Bloom the notion of a strong poet who strives to express his impression in his poetry and from Freud the idea of human self as the product of fantasy, idiosyncrasies and the irrational impulses to argue that human self is not a fixed and a determinate entity. He opposes imaginative thinking to rational philosophy to deconstruct the stable notion of self embedded in western philosophy to deconstruct the stable notion of just "out there". It is changing and always becoming. Just like the human self truth it knows can also never be a fixed and a stable one. With

these ideas Rorty is proposing the poetic analysis of a self and rejecting the rational and philosophical concepts that have ruled the western metaphysics right from Plato.

Jameson was really the first major critic to insist on seeing postmodernism as a manifestation of certain political and historical circumstances. Late capitalism, a phrase Jameson adopts from then economist Ernest Mandel, represents a new economic logic, the third phase of capitalism development that has gained ascendancy over the older capitalism forms sometime after World War II. It follows that there will be a new cultural logic. Indeed, as far as Jameson is concerned, “postmodernism” is “something like a literal translation” in cultural terms of the economic descriptor “late-capitalist”.

To say that my two terms, the *cultural* and the *economic* thereby collapse back into one another and say the same thing, in an eclipse of the distinction between base and superstructure that has itself often struck people as significantly characteristic of postmodernism in the first place, is also to suggest that the base, in the third stage of capitalism, generates its superstructures with a new kind of dynamic.

(21)

In other words, here, characteristically, the traditional vocabulary of Marxism (where base straightforwardly determines superstructure) is combined with a more Althusserian version (where the distinction between the two is much more problematic); which is also seen in Jameson’s distinctive Marxism all along.

But more to the point, there is little virtue in being “for” or “against” postmodernism, except in the very general sense in which a Marxist can be “against” capitalism (the same capitalism that shaped realism and modernism).

“Postmodernism”, as the cultural logic of late capitalism, is it needs to be understood, analyzed, demystified, not skittishly “embraced” or tetchily “condemned”.

The point is that we are *within* the culture of postmodernism to the point where its facile repudiation is as impossible as any equally facile celebration of it is complacent and corrupt. Ideological judgment on postmodernism today necessarily implies . . . a judgment on ourselves as well as our artifacts. (62)

Ideology explains the way in which individuals abandon their desires for the sake of some illusory higher end. Ideology gives a negative and repressive account of power. Against the idea that desire is repressed by some separate power that is other than desire, Deleuze argues that desire produces terms which it can then (mistakenly) posit as powers to be obeyed. Affirming desire does not mean doing away with power, but does require that we see any supposedly separate law or point of judgment as part of one immanent plane of desire. Revolution begins, not with the removal of power to reveal what lies behind power, but by seeing power as productive, creative and with no ordering or external end: this means seeing power as desire not as law. Logically, there can only be one being. Being must be univocal. Any attempt to think a world divided into higher and lesser beings would have to posit a point of order or reason outside being, a point of judgment. But any such point is itself part of being and life. From the affirmation of one single being thought expands to an ethics of pluralism, where each becoming is an expression of life. Ethically, the task for both philosophy and art is the creation and maximization of becoming against the recognition of becoming in any of its actualized terms. This is an ethics of the simulacra: the affirmation of variation without ground, of the repetition of difference with no end or reason outside itself.

Deleuze's entire project set itself against lack and negation. It is already seen how, from the camera to life as transcendental experience, he provides a positive definition of the image. Images are not pale replicas or second-rate versions of a real world. Images are fully real, from the images produced by a camera to the images produced by the eye that expects what lies beyond its immediate viewpoint. Desire, for Deleuze, is also positive and productive, and this allows for a radically new approach to politics and the relation between politics and the imagination. Desire does not begin from lack – desiring what we do not have. Desire begins from connection; life strives to preserve and enhance itself and does so by connecting with other desires. These connections and productions eventually form social wholes; when bodies connect with other bodies to enhance their power they eventually form communities or societies. Power is, therefore, not the repression of desire but the expansion of desire. Against the notion that social wholes are formed through ideology – some repressive idea to which we submit – Deleuze argues for social wholes as positive and productive. Social wholes take *desires* – or those connections which enhance life – in order to produce *interests* – 'coded', regular, collective and organised forms of desire. The mouth that connects with the breast produces and enhances life and desire, but the socially ordered image of this connection – as motherhood or the family – produces that local *desire* as a general *interest*. The problem of the usual explanation of social power is, for Deleuze, that it begins with interests: assuming that we come in to the world with ready-made ideas or desires *for* some specific end. The task of his method is to explain how *interests* – such as humanism, individualism, capitalism or communism – are produced from *desires*: the concrete and specific connection of bodies.

Jameson's engagements with the cultural phenomenon of 'postmodernism' began to appear in the early 1980s. An article entitled 'Postmodernism and consumer society' was published in a collection of essays in 1983; this essay, considerably revised, appeared as 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism' in the British journal *New Left Review* in 1984. It is this article that has been more often cited and probably more discussed than anything else Jameson has written. Douglas Kellner has called it 'probably the most quoted, discussed, and debated article' of the 1980s, and Hans Bertens describes it as having been "immensely productive and . . . seminal in getting the more traditional, that is non-poststructuralist, left involved in the discussion" about postmodernism (160). This article then appeared in book form as the first chapter of Jameson's enormous 1991 book, *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. This chapter is going to examine this famous statement on the boundaries and logic of postmodern culture, partly with a view to positioning it in the discourses surrounding postmodernism out of which it grew, and partly to try and explain just why it has been so influential. But the first thing to note is the way in which Jameson's approach to the postmodern condition has always been thoroughly Marxist. Where previous theorists had looked at postmodern poetry, or art, or architecture, as a style or a series of styles, Jameson was the first to link it directly to socio-political circumstances – to history, in other words. Just as realism was an embodiment, in terms of literary form, of nineteenth-century capitalism, and modernism was the expression of the reified, post-industrial capitalism of the early twentieth century, so what postmodernism is (for Jameson) is the expression on an aesthetic and textual level of the dynamic of 'late capitalism'. Clearly, late capitalism has a particular economic logic, one which is different in various ways from the old capitalisms of the nineteenth century (fewer workers have old-style factory jobs, for

instance; more are working in service industries; less emphasis is placed on manufacturing actual things like tables and cars, more on knowledge and the exchange of knowledge with TV and the Internet). Just as capitalism has this economic logic, so it also has a cultural logic, and the cultural logic of late capitalism is what we call “postmodernism”.

The original ‘Postmodernism and Consumer Society’ essay limited itself to describing "only two of [postmodernism’s] significant features" which Jameson called "pastiche and schizophrenia." With the enlargement of the essay to the piece that was published in *New Left Review* (and which is reprinted as the first chapter of *Postmodernism*) the analysis is considerably expanded, to dwell on "the following constitutive features of the postmodern" (6). Jameson sees as postmodern “a new depthlessness, which finds its prolongation both in contemporary ‘theory’ and in a whole new culture of the image or the simulacrum” as well as a “weakening of historicity, both in our relationship to public History and in the new forms of our private temporality” (6). Postmodern culture exhibits a whole new type of emotional ground tone (Jameson refers to this as ‘intensities’). He also identifies the deep constitutive relationships of all this as grounded in a whole new technology, which is itself a figure for a whole new economic world system.

This is a lot to take on board of a sudden, but it can be described easily enough as an elaboration of these two categories “schizophrenia” and “pastiche”. In turn, these manifest a shift away from time and towards space as the dominant mode of structuring cultural experience: sight, the most distant of the senses, becomes “supreme”.

This term, which crops up frequently in discussions of the postmodern, does not invoke the traditional psychiatric-clinical definition, where schizophrenia is a

distressing delusional state characterized by loss of internal relation with one's own mental process, such that thoughts and impulses are thought to derive from "voices" or "visions" external to the mind, with a resulting apathy, eccentricity and isolation. Jameson uses the phrase as shorthand, via Lacan, to be specifically opposed to *paranoia*. Clinically, "paranoid" individuals see the world around them as a giant conspiracy, centered on them – perhaps in the form of "everybody is out to persecute me". Lacan used the term in a more theoretical sense: as he puts it, in a manner of speaking, all of us are paranoid. Our only way of apprehending the universe around us is to construct an "I", an ego, around which we orient all our knowledge. For some critics, the "paranoid" model can be thought of as modernist: a text such as *Ulysses* follows the ordinary day of an ordinary Dubliner, but everything that happens in the novel is related to a secret grand design, whereby the ordinary Leopold Bloom is on another level the heroic Greek Odysseus. In place of this closed pattern, postmodernism can be thought of as an opening up, a breaking down of tied narratives. Instead of relating the ego to one grand narrative, the "schizophrenic" in this mode opens him or herself to a multiplicity of inputs, all on the same level as the ego. Lacanian schizophrenia represents "a breakdown in the signifying chain" (26). The term is particularly associated with the European theorists Deleuze and Guattari, who's *Anti-Oedipus* (1983), celebrates the potential of this schizophrenic model in characteristically florid terms:

Taking a stroll outdoors. . .he is in the mountains, amid falling snowflakes, with other gods or without any gods at all, without a family, without a father or a mother. . . everything is a machine.

Celestial machines, the stars or rainbows in the sky. Alpine machines –

all of them connected to those of his body. The continual whirr of machines.

The point here is, as Jameson says, when schizophrenia "becomes generalized as a cultural style" it loses the "morbid content" it would possess as an individual pathology and "becomes available for more joyous intensities" (29).

The postmodern subject for Jameson, determined as ever by social circumstance, necessarily reflects the increasing reification and fragmentation of late capitalism. We witness, he says, "the end of the bourgeois ego" in the sense of a unified ego-construction; in its place people's sense of their own subjectivity is much less centered or focused. Moreover this release from "the centered subject" involves "not merely a liberation from anxiety but a liberation from every other kind of feeling as well, since there is no longer a self present to do the feeling" (15). This is a radical thesis indeed; not that people like you or I are incapable of feeling anything, but that there has more generally been what Jameson, in a famous phrase, calls a "waning of the affect" (10), a fading-away of emotional content. Postmodern art is characterized by irony and cynicism, by a modish detachment from feeling anything – because, Jameson thinks, we no longer have the sort of subject that is very good at feeling. This has many consequences: we regularly see movies, for instance, which are enormously violent, enormously sexually explicit, without finding ourselves much moved by either, although our grandparents' generation found much milder representations of these things quite unacceptable on the screen, or anywhere else.

III. Anticipating Postmodern Self in Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love*

This chapter focuses on the instances of expressions and elaborations which display the characteristic traits of post-modern fiction such as celebration of fluctuating, contingent self, and desire. This chapter will make a detail survey of the text on those aspects which bear relationship with the hypothesis of the thesis. By using post modern theories, as elaborated in the previous chapter, the text will be analyzed.

The Guru of love, Upadhyay's famous and important novel is full of post-modern features. It is different from previous novels from modern or pre-modern time in terms of setting of the play, plot-construction, and characters implication. Upadhyay not only describes what the places look like, what periods in history and what times of the day his novels located, but also what the characters look like.

Fragmented, frustrated, alienated, self-reflected, disseminated, simple, ordinary and limited characters are the characters of Upadhyay's novels that are enigmatic and apt in post-modern sense. His characters don't have a clear-cut heroism or villainy. Instead, his protagonists lose public leadership qualities. His characters are modest in being conceived from ordinary public life and confess their psychological traumas more pessimistically.

Less vital, less heroic, less significant than the average people, Upadhyay's characters behave and talk as if they have lost their way, lost faith in themselves and in their own future, but they are trying to persuade themselves that, in some indirect and general sense in his prominent novels. Most of the Upadhyay characters are driven by internal forces. They enjoy what ever is possible to obtain in their lives. They know that their lives are almost insignificant in the post-modern societies. They defy the natural laws and conventions.

Upadhyay's characters fall on great dilemma. They think that life is not meaningful, rather meaningless, they can't do anything important. So, they become pessimistic one. They express their views pessimistically in day to day life and think that their lives on the earth or in post-modern societies are fragile and worthless. They can't do anything significant, so they sometimes lose their all hopes and stay with hopelessly and without working. Upadhyay's characters can't be satisfied with their present life and their present conditions. They hope unfulfilled desires or they have great dreams that can not be fulfilled. This event causes them to make pessimistic, hopelessness and worthlessness in the post-modern world.

On the other hand, Upadhyay's characters have their own existence; none of them resembles others. Fragmented and frustrated characters attached to disappearing past or they live in present with the past and the future. None of Upadhyay's characters in the novel can achieve satisfaction or plenitude. Their existence on the earth is empty, or bare, or senseless because they all burn with intense desires, or hopes or wants. In their own ways, they all search for a better quality of life, emotionally and socially, but their societies block their energy. They are hyper vital people in a lethargic world. They are forced to live with passionate desires. They have not given up by their unfulfilled and unworthy desires or hope to be better. They feel strange, lonely, empty and helpless themselves.

In post-modern condition, Upadhyay's characters are suitable or apt in his novel. Fragmentation, frustration, fluctuation, contingent, alienation multiplicity, simple, ordinary, limited, pessimistic, polysemic, heterogeneity, and self-reflexive are the basic features of post-modernism. All these post-modern features can be heavily found in his novel. His characters are also dominated by post-modern characteristics or features. The daily life conditions of the characters are miserable and tenderness or

lovable because they have no sort of energy to do any thing significant and important works in their lives. The existence of characters is in worst condition, but they don't lament for that. They work and enjoy if they have a lot of pains and sorrows or problems in their daily lives.

Loss after loss, suffering after suffering, and cry after cry never cease in this tragic world. However the tragic, fluctuated, contingent, fragmented individuals go on working so that their sufferings would bring peace to the posterity if not to them.

Upadhyay's fictional approach to the human subject seems to go beyond the modernist perception of a core subject, and to approach the endlessly split subject of postmodernism with its evanescent selfhood. To understand and recognize in Upadhyay's fiction a divided postmodernist self as a complex, chaotic, and vast entity, it is better to go back to the origins and definition of this critical movement. Thus, the materialization of these two initial aspects is only a mirage, whose conceptualization becomes a hopeless enterprise. The ambiguity that characterizes postmodernism as an intellectual movement materializes in its perception of the self, which is different from that of modernism. The departure point is the idea of essence and totality. It is a truism that, despite chaos and fragmentation, modernism transcends them in its search for an absolute truth, unique identity or essence; on the contrary, postmodernism accepts the chaotic identity of the subject, and it does not offer any answer about the existence of an idiosyncratic identity to each subject.

The main character Ramchandra is married to Goma. He is a lowly wage earning math teacher working in a school in Kathmandu. He has two children, Sanu who recently has her first pubescent, and Rakesh, the younger one. One can experience from the happenings in the life of Ramchandra and Goma that life cannot function as smooth as one wants to be. Experiences of life are not at a reflective

distance but swept away by it; at least so is in the case of this couple. They were not financially well-to-do, but were living a decent life, away from the pomp and glamour of their rich in-laws, and poor and rural background. Ramchandra tries to adjust to his life in an overcrowded city that is on the brink of a political revolution:

He and Goma and the children were living on the top floor of this old house, with its rickety stairs and cracked ceilings, its cramped, dank rooms that never got enough sunlight, this house controlled by a landlord who came rapping on the door if the rent wasn't paid in time, where deafening traffic from the street penetrated the thin walls, shook the rooms, and made reasonable thinking possible. For years he'd been harboring the dream of buying some land and building a house in the city, if only to silence his in-laws. (2)

Self-in-relation is often encountered in feminist studies. It simply means that we live our lives not as islands unto ourselves but in relation to people and to certain cultural contexts. To rightly understand ourselves we must understand the contexts of our lives. So has happened to Ramchandra who had often wondered, why Goma, a good-looking lady from a wealthy family accepted him as her groom. The novel's another feature is Ramchandra, a middle aged male teacher's dilemma of why had Goma married with him. Ramchandra, who teaches math at an impoverished school in Kathmandu, is one the best example of difficulties of urban life of a low-wage earning teacher. "Listening to Mr. Pandey, Ramchandra couldn't help going over the reasons his in-laws considered him such a failure. He'd never made the career leap they'd expected when they joined their daughter's hand with his" (39).

We can have desires only when we realize that the value does not need the traditional buttressing, and can have sets of heroes when we realize that each was

heroic in a distinct way. The heroic aspect of Ramchandra is the dream of saving to build a modest house for his family, though he doesn't have that much enough money to save and build. Adding to his burden, Goma comes from a wealthy family and the Pandey's, his in-laws are openly critical about not having being able to buy a house of his own. A private house of one's own is Ramchandra's cherished dream.

For years he'd been harboring the dream of buying some land and building a house in the city, in only to silence his in-laws. For the past three years, he and Goma had been putting away five hundred rupees a month. Or at least trying to; some months, especially during the festivals, not only could they not save, but they had to dip into their savings, which troubled Ramchandra constantly. (2)

Pandey's offer some assistance to Ramchandra in order to build a house of his own, thinking that he would not be able to built with the meager money that he earns. But Ramchandra, filled with pride and self dignity, rejects all the help made by his in-laws. "Occasionally, Mr. Pandey had offered to help, but Ramchandra's pride had stepped in, and he'd told his father-in-law that he'd find something through his own merit" (39). He is also told to do other things to make good money by his student but he also rejects his offer saying he doesn't want to become rich. "Sir, why don't you start a business? I could help you. This teaching will get you nowhere. But you could be rich in a short time." 'Becoming rich is not my ambition,' Ramchandra said" (59).

However, things are not easy for Ramchandra and Goma and their children. He has to live under the constant shadow of hatred of his in-laws, who keep on reminding him of what he was about and, that he was not able to provide them a decent living. The class status and the pride of wealth come hard on him. "They expected Ramchandra and Goma, with the children, to visit their palatial house, an

expectation that irked Ramchandra, because his in-laws didn't treat their other son-in-law, Nalini's husband, Harish, the same way" (33). The Pandey's constantly treated him like an outsider in their home. They didn't give him the warm welcome or the treatment that a son-in-law should get. "During the gatherings when Harish was present, Goma's parents doted on him, Mrs. Pandey constantly plying him with food and drink, Mr. Pandey scolding his wife for not catering to Harish properly, While Ramchandra sat in the same room, ignored" (33).

Every time Ramchandra thinks that he would be backed up by Goma to the mistreatment of the Pandey's. But she shows no signs of that. Instead she remains quiet in that matter which makes Ramchandra distress every time. "Whenever the Pandey's brought up the subject, Ramchandra turned to Goma for support, but Goma, despite her complete agreement with Ramchandra in the privacy of their bedroom, preferred not to argue with her parents" (41). Despite these things he wants a reasonable answer from his wife but in vain which also expands the dilemma and the frustration growing within him

He knew she never would, so each time he'd nod with a bitter sense of understanding. He also knew that Goma's parents would never stop their criticism of him, even if he built a grand four-story house and taught at Tribhuvan University. "Are you unhappy with me?" he'd once asked Goma. "Tell me, frankly. Are you, having come from a big house and now living in this dump, are you unhappy with me?" (41)

Ramchandra's daughter, Sanu, knows that the Pandey's were harsh on her father. Sanu openly rejects the offer of Gold ear-rings, as she finds that they were bias against them, especially, father, as he was poor and hardly met their demands come true. The grandmother says, "I've been carrying in my bag day in day out, just for my dear

granddaughter" (110). But Sanu flatly refuse the offer, even at the request of Goma. She says, "I don't want them" (110). She insist that she would take the ring if, "I'll take them only if Hajurba and Hajurma stop saying those things to my father" (110).

This quarrel flamed by Sanu is supported by father, Ramchandra. He has been fleeing his in-laws house for years, as far as possible, because he was clearly given a lowly treatment than other son-in-law. A quarrel breaks upon in the house upon cause. Ramchandra who has always felt the same way, is enflamed by Sanu's revolution. Sanu thinks that his maternal grandparents were bias against her father, to which Goma rebukes, but to no fruit. This even leads Ramchandra to enter into the controversy, as he too, has been noticing the same for years.

The lives of people are multi-dimensional. The various relationships that people have in their lives pull them in different directions. In the postmodern world, they just don't get to be a single and consistent somebody. The protagonist, Ramchandra in this novel is not who goes to be a single and consistent somebody. Like many other frustrated and confused middle-aged man in a funk, he falls in love and starts an affair. The recipient of his affection and the source of his runaway fantasies is a new tutee, Malati. She is an attractive, unwed, teenage mother with a baby. Ramchandra finds the relationship with Malati, the impoverished girl, whom he fancied out of sympathy have soon turns into a serious:

As he was about to fall asleep, he thought again of Malati, and for a brief moment, he entertained the notion of employing her as a servant. That way, she would get out of her step-mother's clutches, and he could tutor her more. But on second thought, the idea seemed ridiculous. Malati would probably balk at the idea of working as a

servant in anyone's house, and, in fact, the idea made him uneasy' it was as if he were contemplating bringing home a second wife. (51)

Desire does not begin from lack – desiring what we do not have. Desire begins from connection; life strives to preserve and enhance itself and does so by connecting with other desires. These connections and productions eventually form social wholes; when bodies connect with other bodies to enhance their power they eventually form communities or societies. The out come of this is that Ramchandra is not able to hold control of himself. He becomes too much obsessed with his new tutee. Day and night he thinks of her and only wants to get her physically and emotionally. He is even questioned by his wife what is going on with him and the relationship between him and Malati. He rejects the idea of an affair between him and Malati saying it nonsense but admits that he is helping her because she needs help:

"I feel sorry for her. She has problems. She doesn't have anyone in her life."

"Sometimes, these days, you seem to think about her more than about us, about Sanu and Rakesh."

He reached out and touched her arm. "What nonsense. You are my family. I just feel some compassion for that girl and want to help her."

He added, "Want her to feel that she too has someone she can rely on."

(103)

We have the image of a person who has no center, but who is drawn in many directions and is constantly changing and being defined externally by the various relations he has with others. All these ideas clearly go in a different direction than that taken by modern society. It was formerly believed that our goal should be to achieve wholeness, to find the integrated self, to pull all the seemingly different parts of

ourselves together into one cohesive whole. Postmodernism says no; that can't happen because we aren't by nature one cohesive self. In fact, Ramchandra's infatuation to Malati is so because he loses his center and tries to escape from his burning heart that has been living with the feeling that he is inferior to his in-laws. Every thing has its own entrance and exists, so is in the case of Ramchandra, who was feeling lonely and alone in life, finds some charm by the arrival of Malati a girl facing the difficulty; he had faced back in his adolescent age.

The truth cannot exist independently of the human mind. The world is out there in the form of society and country. The different activities of human beings cannot be kept secret and unknown to the outside world. The matter of affair between Ramchandra and Malati reaches from one-ear to another and finally to Goma, who initially rebukes the matter, but soon discovers that the rumor were more than true. She warns her husband, but it is too late. Unable to endure Ramchandra's obsession, his wife, Goma fled to her parent's home, "Pandey Palace", with pubescent Sanu and her younger brother, Rakesh. It is a palace that belonged to the Rana family long ago, a residence which Mr. Pandey inherited from his grandfather.

The days crept on, and Goma and the children didn't come home. He felt their absence in his bones, his chest, and the membranes of his throat so that at times it was difficult for him to speak. He has become infatuated with the 19-year-old single mother Malati, who is his student. Ramchandra struggles with his physical desire for Malati and his emotional desire for his wife. "And he knew, even as Malati brought him so much pleasure, that she would never see him the way Goma did, that even if Malati began to love him, there'd be gaps and holes in her perception of him that her love, no matter how genuine, could never fill" (96).

After a long time gap between Ramchandra and Goma and his children, he suffers so much. Their absence makes him too much tensed and confused about what to do and what not to do. After thinking so much he goes up to Goma and pleads in front of her to help him and return back to their own apartment. "Ramchandra said, in a tearful voice, "I need help. I can't live without you and the children. What happened was because something's not right with me, and only you can help me. No one else" (160).

Standing between the self and the nonhuman reality with which the self seeks to be in touch, people have made no progress. Life goes on without finding a proper solution or without any progress or prosperity. This also frustrates Ramchandra as time and again he goes up to Goma and pleads in front of her because nothing progressive work is done by him without his wife. He does this to keep the identity as a good husband and as a good father in front of his wife and children which was about to collapse. He even says her to forgive his mistake which has happened unwillingly. "He'd plead with her; he'd tell her it was all a mistake, that he'd slipped in a moment of confusion. But he wasn't sure that it would happen again. Even now, as he rehearsed what he'd say to Goma, his thoughts linked themselves into a chain that led him to Malati" (130). At first she didn't pay any attention to his words but after so many days she was agreed to do this but she proposed a condition, in front of Ramchandra, in doing that. She says to him that he has to bring Malati to live with them.

At first he refuses to do so. But thinking that he would get both of his desired things, he agrees to her demand. The wheel of fate moves around Ramchandra in a strange way. Ramchandra cannot make out what is happening. He has recently

brought his wife and children home from the in-laws house. As per the condition, he goes up to Malati and tells her to go with him.

She eyed him carefully. "Why are you saying this? Why do I need to get out of my house?"

"Things are not right for you there."

She was about to say something, then shrugged and said only, "Sir you needn't worry about me."

"I want to be better for you." (67)

He tells her all the things and brings her to his apartment. Now they all live in the same apartment and Ramchandra and Malati shares the master bedroom which belonged to Goma at first. Ramchandra becomes upset to this but he agrees in the matter. After a long physical and emotional attachment with Malati, his desire for her decreases. Ideology explains the way in which individuals abandon their desires for the sake of some illusory higher end. Ideology gives a negative and repressive account of power. Against the idea that desire is repressed by some separate power that is other than desire. The power that had captured Ramchandra earlier has now vanished. He is not succumbed to his desire now. After this, he wants more attachment with his wife and children and does want Malati all the time, as he has felt before. He is also in the suspicion that Malati also has loosened her intimacy with him and she is more interested in Amrit, her former lover with whom she goes to spend the time. "He felt that he'd lost touch with Malati. He felt awkward with her. She hadn't mentioned Amrit again, but he suspected that when he was at Pandey Palace in the evenings, she went to see him" (222).

There is no "I", no inner self to wrestle with different roles and determine which "I" will accept and which "I" won't and, ultimately, who "I" really am. All are

shaped by outside forces. They are socially constructed. They have to do according to the society. In the case of Malati it is rightly justifiable, who finds back her lover who has left her initially, and goes with him and gets married with him because it is not accepted by the society to live herself with Ramchandra, who has his own wife and children.

Ramchandra does not like this act of Malati as he thinks that Malati was only for him and his physical needs. Now he again feels the lack in his life as he is not able to see Malati. He has a lot of anxiety within himself. He thinks to find out where she lives and have a view of her. "How would he find Amrit's house? And what would he say to Malati? He had no answers, but the only way he could lessen his anxiety was to see where she was, how she was going to live from now on" (235). He is not too much happy within himself as he has lost the most beautiful person he had admired and loved, with whom he has physical relationship. After her marriage with Amrit, Ramchandra also leaves the thinking about her but the anxiety sometimes makes him crazy to get a single view of her.

Human self is the product fantasy idiosyncrasies. The human self is not a fixed and a determinate entity. The stable notion of self embedded in western philosophy to deconstruct the stable notion of just "out there". It is changing and always becoming. Just like the human self truth it knows can also never be a fixed and a stable one. In the novel, the anxiety is vividly seen in Ramchandra by others. It becomes impossible for him to keep the secret of his anxiety. He swings between his desire and duty. He regards his personal problems are attached with the on going country's problems when he talks to his colleague. "So, Ramchandra-ji," Shailendra said, " You mean to say that your personal problems are more important than the country's problems?" "My

personal problems are my country's problems," Ramchandra replied. "My history is this forsaken country's history" (242).

Self is a construct and it is constructed along the lines of language and historicity. Self is not something to be discovered but invented our self is conditioned by time and space. Human self is not a given nor a necessary thing but contingent one. It is constructed, invented and constituted of language and the historical experiences. People's sense of their own subjectivity is much less centered or focused. Moreover this release from "the centered subject' involves "not merely a liberation from anxiety but a liberation from every other kind of feeling as well, since there is no longer a self present to do the feeling. After all, the sense of subjectivity is known by Ramchandra. this brings the liberation from anxiety within his as his vision for Malati vanishes and he begins to think only about his family. Now and then he only thinks about his family thinking that they are the only things he has got in his whole life. He misses them a lot when they are away to Pandey Palace, after his mother-in-law dies. This is the realization of subjectivity in Ramchandra.

Ramchandra began to miss his children and Goma and even his mother. He remembered the hardships she and he had endured during their first few years in the city, and how close he'd felt to her then. He remembered the joy Goma had brought into his life, despite the criticism from her parents, and how happy he'd been when both Sanu and Rakesh were born, their tiny faces shining at him. (277)

Ramchandra, of course, remains center stage but the novel revolves around the changing Nepali society. The idea of a teacher seducing a student might easily spin out as simple-minded lust. But Upadhyay keeps the reader in tension about why Ramchandra strays and how it comes to a logical conclusion. We see the teacher often

makes choices roiled by feelings that leave him exhausted, nauseated, and vulnerable. Certainly, Ramchandra's marriage is fire-tested, but that also sets the stage for him to realize durable love.

The use of history is crucial for the establishment of the pervasiveness of contingency, the context and content of irony, and the hope for and extension of solidarity. Self may include changing political opinions and sexual behavior, changing ideas and ways of expressing them, changing ways of organizing one's life. Some see this as the process of finding one's true self. But others see it as a manifestation of the idea that there is no true, stable self.

The contingency is vividly seen in Ramchandra as he does sex with Malati in an abandoned temple near the Pashupatinath Temple, a most sacred place for Hindu devotees. Amid all the happenings in the life of Ramchandra, on the other hand, the writer also hints the political movement taking place. It was the era of change coming to the Nepalese political scenario. It was Ramchandra, who was fighting to keep his dignity intact, by maintaining his family, but, the entire nation was struggling to breathe in a fresh air of democracy and liberalism, so was Ramchandra. What he thinks of his life and family goes parallel with the situation of the country.

The word buzzing through the city was "khattam"-finished or stopped or gone-and after a while it acquired a special currency, rolling off citizens' tongue like a mantra. The country's situation is khattam; the prime minister, appointed by the king, is khattam; the pothole-filled, accident-prone roads are always khattam; the king, with his English education and his royal sideburns, is maha-khattam, super-gone. (37)

Like the country, his family was also in "khattam" stage. The sufferings of his family and the country, is same. Though the democracy solves the problem, so is not the case

in his family where problems are still there though Malati leaves him and he lives with his wife and children.

Upadhyay closes *The Guru of Love* with the protagonist Ramchandra following Malati with whom he wants to have a talk but is not successful enough in doing it. This shows that he doesn't have forgotten her and has a desire of her, though he lives in Kirtipur in his own home with his wife and children.

Postmodernity in a way is to encourage liberalism as a public doctrine and ironism as a private pleasure which is compatible with that doctrine. Much of the support for this public-private split comes from a particular picture of western history. Historicist narratives provide liberal culture with a sense of itself-with a strong, but contingent, meaning and direction which is the outcome of the crucial moral, political, and aesthetic functions. Thus, human self is changeable and it is rightly proved by the novel *The Guru of Love*.

IV. Conclusion

Samrat Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love* depicts the story of the protagonist's who swings between his desire and duty. He cannot abandon his extramarital affair nor can he forsake his wife. He teaches math at an impoverished school in Kathmandu, is one the best example of difficulties of urban life of a low-wage earning teacher. He lives in sympathetic conditioned apartment with his wife and two children. He has to live under the constant shadow of hatred of his in-laws, who keep on reminding him of what he was about and, that he was not able to provide his wife and children a decent living. The class status and the pride of wealth come hard on him. Ramchandra dreams of saving to build a modest house for his family, but his meager amount cannot afford so. Adding to his burden, Goma comes from a wealthy family and the Pandey's, his in-laws are openly critical about not having being able to buy a house of his own. A private house of one's own is Ramchandra's cherished dream. Goma being a true wife of the protagonist, has given up all the luxuries of her mother's home and is determined to have devoted whole of her life assuaging the wounds of family as well as extra marital problems and living with relish in extreme poverty.

Ramchandra develops his affair with his tutee Malati, an unmarried teenage mother deserted by her beloved taxi driver. It no longer remains secret and Goma knows all about it. Being shocked with the news, she leaves for her mother's home. Later, Goma insists her husband to allow Malati to live with them in the rented home and manages the bedroom for Malati and Ramchandra. She shifts to her children's room. The Pandey's, in-laws, pass away. Malati gets back to her husband and eventually, the crisis is solved. They come back from the Pandey's. They settle in Kirtipur in two rooms with the money they get from selling their inherited house from in-laws.

Like many other frustrated and confused middle-aged man in a funk, he falls in love and starts an affair. The recipient of his affection and the source of his runaway fantasies is a new tutee, Malati. She is an attractive, unwed, teenage mother with a baby. Ramchandra finds the relationship with Malati, the impoverished girl, whom he fancied out of sympathy have soon turned into a serious.

The Guru of Love also depicts the inevitable human drives to love and lust. Ramchandra's affair is the outcome of it. He is also such a person who does not want any assistance from others and labours his best to be self dependent. Ram Chandra finds himself trapped both in his house and his city, where secrets are impossible to keep and family matters dictate, but ultimately his only escape is to let go of someone he loves. Thus, by presenting the character Ram Chandra, as a person having a fluctuating and contingent self, Upadhyay tries to present him as a postmodern subject.

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