

## Chapter I

### Misrepresentation as the Writing Technique of Upadhyay

Subaltern was a word used to denote a junior officer in the British army of a rank below captain, especially a second lieutenant. The same concept is adopted in the understanding of the theoretical practice of the term as any person holding a subordinate or inferior position in the society. To further substantiate the point the citation of the words from Gramsci would sound much better. Gramsci was much interested in the historiography of the subaltern classes. He opines that subaltern refers to “. . . those group in the society who are subject to hegemony to the ruling classes” (215). His idea is clear at this point of argument that subalterns are always subordinated and subject to the ruling groups. They have less access to the means by which they can control their own representation, culture and social institutions. So the issue of representation and misrepresentation becomes vital in the study of subaltern people.

While talking about literature, Subaltern Studies talks about the true representation of oppressed and ignored people. But, with the publication of Spivak widely discussed essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” in 1988, there comes another problem for representation. In this essay, Spivak makes a remarkable discussion on the problems involved with representation. Here, she argues that: “Subaltern people cannot speak for themselves. Instead, they have got to be represented. There can be no representable subaltern group” (71). The main problem with representation is that the subaltern’s voice gets overshadowed by the very investigator’s voice. There is a very much chance that the knowing subject will erase the voice of the ignorant object. The elite intellectuals can represent the subaltern voice filtered through an elitist perspective. In other words, the privileged position of the elite intellectuals limits their

integrity to work as a spokesperson of the subaltern classes. In this way there is very little chance to get true representation of subaltern people which goes parallel to misrepresentation of the subaltern group of people. Elite intellectuals are always guided by their subject position which makes them to present ignored subaltern through their own eyes. In this way, subaltern does not get true representation, they are always misrepresented.

The study of any piece of literature from the lens of subaltern studies makes us know something about the misrepresentation of the characters in the text. In it the author basically tries to appropriate the ideas that he discusses not caring the need of the characters for their betterment. Green expresses, “The interpretation and appropriation of ideas and concepts to the point of triviality, semblance, or incoherence can be considered ‘abuse’ . . . can be considered misrepresentations” (2). We find the case of misrepresentation in the study of the story collection *The Royal Ghosts* by Upadhyay because he seems to have his soft corner for the subaltern group of people in making them the protagonists in his different stories, but he does not give them the agency and voice. Instead he makes the elites talk for themselves, which is what we talk as misrepresentation.

Gayatri Spivak talks about subaltern as the oppressed subject whose voice has been silenced. She however thinks about consciousness that “. . . consciousness, here is not consciousness — in general but a historicized political species, subaltern consciousness” (338). Spivak talks to have the environment in the social conditions where there is subaltern consciousness that talks and advocates for the betterment of the people who belong to the subaltern class. It is the author of the creative writing who should work on helping the characters from the margin to have subaltern consciousness but when the author does not take the matter very seriously then the problem of misrepresentation occurs. Exactly similar case happens with Mr. Upadhyay

in his writing *The Royal Ghosts*. In the story collection, the author tries to represent his subaltern characters as the protagonists but he fails to do so. Subaltern studies tries to find out the history, consciousness of oppressed and marginalized and those people who are ignored by mainstream culture and politics. In the book *The Royal Ghosts*, the writer presents the ignored people as his characters and tries to give voice and history to them. But, unfortunately the subaltern characters are presented by the sympathetic gaze of the writer. The writer tries to give voice to his characters but unfortunately he fails. Because of the different circumstances, the writer does not let his oppressed characters speak about what they feel, what they experience but these characters are denied any voice and agency. The writer himself or his mainstream characters speak on behalf of the marginal characters which clearly lead to the misrepresentation. He does not let his oppressed characters come out of such pitiable situation. But by representing them the writer creates 'a prose of otherness', which clearly shows that mainstream intellectuals always try to represent oppressed people but at last in spite of representing them truly, they misrepresent such characters and portray as if these characters are weak, subordinate, incomplete and not confident about their own self.

The word 'Subaltern' denotes marginalized people and oppressed people whose actions and deeds are not recorded in the historiography. Subaltern classes may include peasants, workers and other groups denied access to hegemonic power. Subaltern refers to those groups in the society who are subject to hegemony to the ruling class. They have less access to the means by which they can control their own representation, culture and social institutions. Since, the subalterns do not have the means and strategy to get access to the hegemony; it is the role of the intellectuals to show them the way.

The purpose fo the Subaltern Studies project is to erase the imbalance created in the academic work by a tendency to focus on elite culture with the recognition that

subaltern cannot be understood except in binary relationship. Subaltern Studies forthright claims about the subaltern subject and sets about demonstrating how the agency of subaltern in history had been denied by elite perspective. Subaltern Studies aims to promote a systematic discussion of oppressed group of society through new historiographical perspective that rewrites history from the marginal perspective.

Upadhyay, a Nepal born US writer, has written and published his works of literature among the western readers. He has used Nepalese contexts and Nepalese characters as the base for the writing. Talking about the particular text *The Royal Ghosts*, the royal massacre that occurred in Nepalese Royal Family in 2058 BS gave impetus to him to write it. The political turmoil of Nepal caused by the Maoist revolution in Nepal also worked as the contributing factor for the emergence of *The Royal Ghosts*. The gradual change of cultural practices in Nepal and the increased political awareness in the people can be the idea for the author to make the people from the margin to be the protagonists in his writing but he becomes failure to represent them with their proper position simply because a great part of his life in Nepal remains absence caused by his stay there in US. It cannot be the single reason for the misrepresentation of the characters from the subaltern but his statement in one of the interview published in his private Facebook page titled “Samrat Upadhyay” Mr. Upadhyay responds a question if he had any responsibility towards his home country, Nepal, saying, “I don't feel compelled to be the representative writer of my home country . . . The major impetus for my writing is to try to tell a good story, to keep my readers engaged with my characters and the story's happenings” (n. pag). If the author himself admits that he does not feel compelled to be representative writer being responsible towards Nepal how can we expect the sound representation of Nepalese characters in his writing? In many instances the author himself states that he has given his personal touch in the writing that also can be a contributing factor for us to argue

that he, being an individual from middle class family, cannot understand the true nature and the sufferings of the subaltern people. So, he missed the sound representation of these people in his writing.

He includes an erotic content in his writing which tells that he is somewhat oriented toward grasping the attention of the readers from the west. In an interview with Samrat Upadhyay, “Kitaab’s” fiction editor Oindrila Mukherjee states, “Your fiction is very erotic. There is a lot of sex in this latest novel” (n. pag.). We can very subtly argue that he remains slightly insensitive towards the suffering of the characters from the subaltern in the purely Nepalese context where the political transition and the upheaval caused by the royal massacre and Maoist revolution in Nepal have brought the traumatic effect in the characters and the author, being the permanent resident of the US, cannot capture the real essence of the Nepalese context at the time period of political turmoil and transition thereby missing to make sound representation of the characters from the subaltern.

By presenting stereotype images of subalterns, Upadhyay indirectly shows his male elitist attitude. Being dominated by the elitist attitude, he does not give agency to oppressed subalterns. Here, by creating the stereotype subalterns, he is making the characters as they are created in Western writer’s text. By doing this, he is trying to establish himself in Western literature.

Being an intellectual of twenty-first century, the author should give agency and space to subaltern characters. But, here in Upadhyay’s stories, we find the subalterns who do not have their autonomous individuality. He presents the subalterns from the perspective of elite. His subaltern characters are always silent about their own situation which pushes them towards margin again.

In five different stories, Upadhyay presents subalterns as his main characters, but they lack agency. In “A Refugee”, the main character Kabita gets presented as if

she does not have enough strength to live her livelihood alone. In “The Weight of the Gun”, Janaki has been presented as if she does not have her autonomous individuality, who is just a puppet in the hand of elite male. In another story “Father, Daughter”, Shanti has a role of a weak subaltern female who cannot take right decision and she needs the help from elite in every step of her life. Jeevan, in “A Servant in the City”, plays the role of a weak subaltern who cannot take decision on time and simply he becomes puppet in the hand of elite. And in “The Royal Ghosts” homosexual Dharma has been presented as a criminal of society who is going to destruct the society by his unnatural behavior.

Subaltern female Kabita, in “A Refugee”, is alone in the city without any work. At that time what she needs is a good job but Pitamber brings her in his flat without knowing her wish. The author does not give enough space to Kabita to establish her autonomous identity. In another story “The Weight of the Gun”, Janaki gets rejected by her husband Ananda to enjoy his extra marital affair. But later Ananda convinces Janaki to take care of his child from his second wife. Here, the author presents Janaki as a subordinate character who moves according to the wish of a male.

In “Father, Daughter”, daughter Shanti is treated as criminal because she is having an affair. Her father Shivaram believes that his daughter cannot take right decision. So, she has to accept her father’s decision to marry another man. Jeevan, in “A Servant in the City”, has been placed away from his ill mother who always dreams about her and wants to meet her. But the author does not give enough space to express his wish and fulfill his dream. His wishes remain only in his thought and cannot speak them out. In this way, the author intentionally pushes his subaltern characters towards margin again.

Dharma, in “The Royal Ghosts”, plays a role like of a criminal where his own brother treats him so because he is homosexual. Here, in this story too the subaltern

Dharma does not get enough space to establish himself as autonomous individual. From the beginning to the end, Dharma is presented as destructive virus of society who damages the whole society. Here, the author is supporting the behavior of society towards subaltern homosexual.

Upadhyay is famous for his effortless storytelling. In his books like *Arresting God in Kathmandu*, *Guru of Love* and *The Royal Ghosts*, he has traced out the lifestyle of the ordinary urban people of Nepal. Basically his stories present the current Nepalese society which is going through the transformation period. In his stories, he talks about the contemporary issues like gender, caste, class and even homosexuality, which is really a new issue for Nepalese society and people. In his stories, he mainly focuses on what people think about such kind of burning issues and what kind of changes Nepalese people are facing and how they are reacting for these things.

Upadhyay's stories are famous for their moral themes as well, which share the ideas like social norms and family pressures which shape lives of Nepalese people. But his moral stories are not like traditional allegories because he is not instructive rather he is elliptical, where he is trying to say more than what is directly presented in the story. It is said that Upadhyay's stories often end where they started. One renowned critic, Tamara Strauss, comments on Upadhyay's stories as follows:

Physical desire, the search for order, societal fear that leads to transgression and brutality and joy are what make Upadhyay's stories transcend their cultural details. Like Chekhov, he constructs an ordinary incident and sends his characters on a kaleidoscopic journey of emotions through it, with the result that their inner and outer worlds are exposed. (79)

Physical desire, search for social order and social fear of the people in the phase of transition are the main and common themes of Upadhyay's stories for Tamara. Tamara

finds out that how his simple characters go through the complex emotional journey and highly praises Upadhyay for this unique quality. Here he compares Upadhyay to Chekhov since he constructs the ordinary incidents and allows the characters take the emotional journey which results in the exposure of inner and outer world.

Upadhyay himself feels highly flattered because of being compared with Chekhov. He was called “Buddhist Chekhov” by some critics. In an interview on Times he says “I am interested in the cyclical nature of life but I would not attribute it solely to the Hindu-Buddhist philosophical outlook because I believe many Western writers also display similar interests” (10).

Upadhyay believes that Rushdie’s metaphor of a ‘broken mirror’ applies to most South Asian writers writing about their homelands. The concept of fragmentation, dislocation haunts many writers like him. He further states:

When I began writing, I was greatly influenced by writers such as Rushdie, Anita Desai, R.K. Narayan and Amitav Ghosh . . . There are other writers who are my spiritual kin: Irish story teller William Trevor and the South African Nadine Gordimer, who has tremendous influence on my approach to the short story. (10)

Upadhyay himself believes that he is highly influenced by renowned writers like Salman Rushdie, Anita Desai, R. K. Narayan and Amitav Ghosh. He says William Trevor and Nadine Gordimer are his spiritual kin because he is highly inspired by them in his approach to write short stories.

Upadhyay highly admires and praises Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight Children* because the day when he read this book is the real turning point of his life. This book changes his idea about what a serious writing means.

A well known critic Amitav Ghosh praises Upadhyay after reading his texts by saying that “signals the arrival of a major new talent. A terrific book, full of



tenderness, compassion and rare insight” (5). Here, he is impressed by the tenderness of the characters which are the rare sights and says that Upadhyay himself is not aware about his own talent. Upadhyay’s books have been appreciated not only by notable people but also by the newspapers like New York Times for his special portrayal of current situation of Nepal. Upadhyay certainly gives a realistic look regarding the current situation of Nepal though his works are entirely fictional. Several critics have praised Upadhyay for the minute details and rich imaginary.

He has started to write not to be famous but to show his love to language. He believes if one loves language and starts writing, then success comes in front of that person. He feels uneasy and difficulty while writing novels and finds easy to write short stories because he considers that short story is something live and unique. Short stories are something of a passion for Upadhyay himself. He takes his works as exercise to be perfect and healthy and whatever he gets is the result of his engagement with language.

*The Royal Ghosts* is the third book by Upadhyay where we can find nine different stories about contemporary Nepalese life. Stories of this book are set in the backdrop of royal massacre and Maoist insurgency. Upadhyay’s storytelling is often compared to that of Rohinton Mistry which is simple and straightforward. Quan, praises Upadhyay for the richness of themes in his stories. For Quan, Upadhyay is famous for his multifaceted stories. He further writes:

In his new collection of nine stories, Upadhyay brings readers more tales of Nepalese life, again featuring characters caught up in distress stemming from issues of gender, caste, material status, political affiliation, and/or their expression of sexuality. His stories explore male/female relationships and question the concept of individual rights and the quest for love in light of cultural mores and restrictions upheld

by the caste system. The title piece broaches homosexuality; through Upadhyay's adept storytelling, readers also take a serious look at familial bonds. (118-123)

Quan appreciates every story for multifacedness and states that much can be glanced in a single reading. Here, author presents different stories focusing on different issues like gender, caste, material status, political affiliation and the idea of sexuality. He praises Upadhyay for addressing different issues from politics to homosexuality and the changing belief in caste system. Upadhyay focuses mainly on familial bonds. Here, the writer presents such familial bond which never ends by destructing situation. He shows the bonds between father, mother and daughter in the story "Father, Daughter", and the bond between brothers can be found in "The Royal Ghosts", the title story. He presents a destructive situation where the relationship can end but strong familial bond never let the relationship end up.

Another critic, Seaman, finds Upadhyay drawing the cultural lushness of Kathmandu and presenting the bloody political turmoil of Nepal. She says:

A master at depicting strained relationship, Upadhyay is especially adept at revealing how the conflicts of the greater world- in this case, the violence of Maoist rebels—invade the personal realm. [. . .] Alluringly matter-of-fact, mesmerizingly supple and tenderly humorous, Upadhyay's stories at once intimately depict today's Kathmandu and embrace the entire human experience. (31)

According to Seaman, Upadhyay's stories closely depict today's Kathmandu. It makes the readers feel that what he/she is reading is the true picture of contemporary Kathmandu. Here, the author combines the human experience with current events. Seaman finds humor, emotion and entire human experiences in Upadhyay's book. Upadhyay being far from Kathmandu situates his stories as if he himself is observing

such situation. For example “In the title story, one brother finally faces the truth about another on the very day Nepal is rocked by the murders of its royal family” (31). This is Upadhyay’s quality of fictionalizing the reality and joining it with another totally different issue like homosexuality. For Donna Upadhyay’s *The Royal Ghosts* is the true and identical picture of contemporary Nepali situation.

Similarly, Dixier opines as follows:

The Maoist insurgency that has raged in Nepal for a decade is never far away, and the region’s tense politics have a way of filtering into even the most personal dramas. This is particularly true in the powerful title story, which follows a lonely, embittered taxi driver around Kathmandu on the day in 2001 that Nepal’s crown prince murdered his family and committed suicide. As the taxi driver struggles with his recent discovery that his beloved brother is gay, his inner turmoil finds tragic echoes in the family drama taking place in the place. (5)

Here, Elsa likes Upadhyay for his parallel presentation of current event and personal dramas. In the title story, he presents the taxi driver’s discovery that his beloved brother is gay with another accident taking place in the royal palace of Nepal. He successfully handles the tragic happening of the palace and the life of taxi driver. Law makes following comments:

The setting for these subtle stories is contemporary Kathmandu. [. . .] By taking pity on a young widow whose husband was killed by Maoist rebels- -and bringing her and her young daughter into his home--a good-natured family man is himself provoked to violence that almost kills his son. [. . .] These are stories about resistance and conflict, but also about acceptance and surrender. A young boy from mountain village, who comes to work in the city as a servant to the lovelorn

mistress of a married man, is so captivated by the woman's helplessness and misery that he ends up feeling responsible for her, bound to her for eternity. (12)

Law states that Upadhyay's stories like "The Refugee" are about resistance, conflict, acceptance and surrender. A young widow is struggling for her resistance in the city. Her appearance in a good natured family creates conflict in her as well as other's life. In another story "A Servant in the City", a lady surrenders herself to a married man and later accepts her reality that she is all alone.

Carl Reiner, says Upadhyay's not-so-simple stories are lucid and often luminous. For him, Upadhyay mainly focuses his stories on the domestic side of Nepali life. He further comments:

The title story takes place in June, 2001, on the day Nepali Crown Prince Dipendra murdered his entire family before killing himself; its focus, however, is a rough-around-the-edges taxi driver coming to terms with his brother's homosexuality and his own intense loneliness. In "A Refugee", Pitamber offers to take Kabita and her daughter into his home and family after Maoist rebels killed her husband; his kindness backfires when he [his] generous act alienates him from his son, wife and even another family he was trying to help. (39)

Upadhyay's stories are set in the urban environment of modern-day Kathmandu where people's lives advance, or not in the shadow of the country's turmoil. The title story talks about the accident that took place in the royal palace of Nepal in 2001 where Prince Dipendra murdered his entire family before killing himself, but the author's focus is more on the intense loneliness of the taxi driver. In another story "A Refugee", Pitamber's kindness backfires him by destroying his and Kabita's life. It means

Rainer observes the every movement of the story and analyzes the connection of the plot.

However, none of them have addressed the issue of representation of subaltern characters in his stories. Many critics praise Upadhyay for his attempt to depict the true picture of Nepal and Nepalese society. For the true depiction he presents common, oppressed and marginalized people who are highly affected by contemporary Nepali situation. They are only limited their criticism on the situation of Nepalese society and people but are never conscious for the representation of common oppressed people. So this research will be based on how writer represents subaltern people, how he creates the image of such oppressed people and what his politics is in representing subalterns from elite's perspective.

To prove the hypothesis of the researcher this dissertation has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter is the introduction to the research and the background of the author and his works with the different perspectives of the critics on the text. The second chapter is about the methodology that deals with the theoretical approaches of subaltern studies and representation. These concepts are further analyzed along with the reference to great thinkers and their theories. Textual analysis is in the third chapter, which reveals the concept of subaltern and representation of subaltern in the text. Finally, the chapter four will conclude the explanation and arguments put forward in the preceding chapters.

## Chapter II

### Subaltern-A Theoretical Tool

We can trace the origin of the term 'Subaltern' back to medieval age. In the medieval age, this term applied to vassals and peasants. By 1700 AD, it, however, came to denote lower ranks in military suggesting peasant origin. The historians and writers began writing novels and histories about military campaign in India and America by 1800. Finally, this term got a rather authentic voice when Antonio Gramsci adopted it to refer to those groups in the society, who were subject to the hegemony of the ruling classes. Antonio Gramsci, the Italian Marxist, introduced the term in social theory, using it to denote the people marginalized by power. Subaltern classes may include peasants, workers and other groups denied access to hegemonic power. As a Marxist, Gramsci is very much concerned with the proletarians whose voice remains unheard in the history. Subaltern Studies aims to promote a systematic discussion of oppressed groups of society through new historiographical perspective that rewrite history from the marginal perspective.

Supporting this issue, Guha describes the area of subaltern studies in these words. He asserts:

[. . .] the general attribute of subordination in South Asian Society whether it is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way [. . .] subaltern studies group sketched out its wide ranging concern both with visible 'history, politics, economics and sociology of subalternity' and with the occluded attitude, ideologies and belief system in short, the culture informing that condition. (vii)

Here, for Guha the subordination occurred in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way. Because of this, subordinated people are always treated as second class people and are always ignored by so called elite culture. In such situation,

subaltern studies tries to bring out the visible history, politics, economics and sociology of subordinate people including attitude, ideologies, belief, system and culture. So, here, Guha focuses on the study of culture of subordinate people because culture is the backbone of every community and people. By studying the culture, Guha tries to bring out the critical situation of subaltern and tries to bring out the long oppressed voice of subaltern through the culture.

With the formation of Subaltern Studies group, it aims to provide a systematic study of oppressed groups of society through a new historiography that rewrites a new history from below. Guha announces that, “The term ‘Subaltern’ will be used in these pages as a name for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian Society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way” (vii).

Subaltern Studies aims to promote, as prefaced by Guha to the first volume, states, “. . . the study and discussion of subalternist themes in South Asian studies” (vii). Guha suggests that while subaltern studies would not ignore the dominant, because the subalterns are always subject to their activity, its aim was to “rectify” the elitist bias characteristic of much research and academic work” (vii) in south Asian Studies. The act of rectification sprang from the conviction that the elites has exercised dominance, not hegemony, over the subalterns. A reflection of this belief was Guha’s argument that the subaltern had acted in history “on their own, that is, independently of the elite politics nor did its existence depend on the latter” (4). Subaltern Studies claims about the subaltern subject and set about demonstrating how the agency of the subaltern in history had been denied by elite perspectives anchored in colonialist, and or Marxist narratives. Arguing that these narratives had sought to represent the subaltern’s consciousness and activity according to schemes that encoded elite dominance, Guha asserted that historiography had dealt with “the peasant rebel

merely as an empirical person or member of a class, but not as an entity whose will and reason constituted the praxis called rebellion” (2).

Guha includes rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich peasants and the upper middle peasants into the category of subaltern classes. He admits that they “could under certain circumstances act for the elite [. . .]” (8). He claims that Subaltern Studies studies the history, politics, economics and sociology of subalternity “as well as the attitude ideologies and belief system—in short, the culture informing that condition” (vii). Subaltern Studies is conspicuous towards the contemporary history and culture as the historiography of the nationalism had long been marginalized by elitism, colonialist elitism and the bourgeois elitism, both the product of colonialism. Hence, the purpose of the subaltern studies project was to redress the imbalance created in the academic work by a tendency to focus on elite culture in South Asian historiography with the recognition that subaltern can not be understood except in binary relationship with domination. Guha further states that Subaltern Studies has committed itself “to rectify the elitist bias characteristics of much research and academic work in particular areas” (vii).

Since, the history of the ruling class is realized as the history of the state and the dominant group, Gramsci was interested in the historiography of the subaltern classes. For him, subaltern “refer to those group in the society who are subject to hegemony to the ruling classes” (215). He has argued that the history of subaltern group is necessarily fragmented, episodic, as they were always the subject to the activities of the ruling groups. Obviously, they have less access to the means by which they can control their own representation and to culture and social institutions. Only permanent victory can break that pattern of subordination which cannot be achieved immediately. Here, Gramsci is concerned with the intellectuals’ role in subaltern’s political and cultural movement against the hegemony of ruling class. Since, the



subaltern people do not have the means and strategy to get access to the hegemony; it is the role of the intellectuals to show them the way. The intellectuals should mobilize even the subaltern people. Only then they can become the revolutionary figures who can strive against hegemony for their independence.

As Guha sees the contrasts politics of the people with elite politics, he privileges the former over the latter. He thinks that politics of the people “was an autonomous domain, for it neither originated from elite politics, nor did its existence depend on the later” (4). It was proceeding on by adjusting itself to the prevailing condition different from the content despite of colonialism. In spite of the end of colonialism, it continues in different forms. In accordance with elitist historiography, the development of nationalist consciousness has been an achievement either of colonialist administrators, policy and culture or of elite Indian personalities or ideas. Obviously, Guha claims that such historiography fails to “acknowledge or interpret the contribution made by people on their own, i.e. independently of the elite” (3). In other words, it ignores the people’s politics, an autonomous domain, which outlived elite politics. This is to say that the subaltern politics is different from the elite politics. The elite groups mobilize their politics through adaptation to Parliamentary institutions whereas subaltern classes through traditional organization of kinship and territoriality or class association.

The publication of *Subaltern Studies* in 1982 is an important event in the writing of the history from the below. Rather than raising the voice of the exploited people or oppressed people, it tries to locate as they are and their contribution. There is a kind of mental space between the world of politics on the one hand, the economic process of capitalist transformation the other within which the social forms of existence and consciousness of the people are all their own-strong and enduring in their right and therefore free of manipulations by the dominant group. However, much

of the ruling classes may control the theme and content or the sources of history, the subaltern people will manage to make themselves heard. They have their own way to be identified. In other words, this intermediate space represents the subjectivity, the active sources of the political activities of the subaltern people therefore they base their act as subjects of history not as such passive objects acted upon. If the task of the subaltern people's historians is always to keep their antennae directed towards the intermediate space from where comes the voice of the people. Alam in the book *Reading Subaltern Studies* says:

All the contributions are therefore convinced of the autonomy of the peasantry and concerned with demonstrating how in their struggles, whether in the spaces of productive activities or in the more directly political sphere of mass upsurges or revolts, the politics of the subaltern constitutes 'autonomous domain' (44).

Here, Alam states that Subaltern Studies tries to give autonomous domain to subaltern. He mainly focuses on the history where subalterns are always treated as passive object. So, subaltern historians contributed by demonstrating the struggle of subaltern whether it is productive or violent revolt. In this way, subaltern studies brings out the every activities of subaltern people which works as a medium to establish subaltern as an autonomous subject.

The bourgeois nationalists do not see the contribution of the subaltern people rather adopt the legacies of colonialism. In a way, they are successors of colonial regime. The elite historiography equally claims that "Indian nationalism was primarily an idealist venture in which the indigenous elite led the people from subjugation to freedom" (2). It is proved that the elite historiography ignores the roles of the subaltern classes played independent of elite command or head quarter during the anti-imperialist movements. Likewise, the subaltern reworking of colonial Indian history

derives its importance from the fact that it presents the viewpoint of the mammoth subaltern population of India, a point of view of the voice consistently gagged both in the imperialist and notion of Indian in so far as it conceived of India and Indians as active and sovereign whereas imperialism saw only passivity, otherness and dependency. But the movement, which was dominated by the upper and middle class people, also imbibed the premises on which the imperialist notion of India was built. The result was that the voice of the majority of the Indians- Subalterns- remained under erasure in both the imperialist and nationalistic discourse. The subaltern studies seeks to rewrite and redraw the boundary of history and recover the erased/missed history of the marginalized people.

Despite the fact that colonialism perpetuated inhuman violence and injustice on people, the colonialist historiography claims that colonialism was based on people's consent. In fact, it endows colonialism with hegemony in the name of peoples' account. Hence, undoubtedly "the incubus known as Raj was dominance without hegemony" (xvii). Guha, in his essay "Dominance without historiography", asserts that colonialism involved dominance without hegemony. It proceeded on with the help of coercion rather than assent of the people. The colonial historiography however simply overlooks their resistance, always busy in providing the British rule as based on peoples assent and undermines the injustices inflicted upon the people. Above all, there are some native historiographers also falling prey to the discourse of colonialism and it is also called elite project. All these factors are responsible behind the emergence of colonialism as a project of imperialism that involved the assent of the ruled.

Guha asserts that "colonialism was a rule without hegemony" (209). In colonial period colonizers believed that colonialism is the need of that time and people were also satisfied. But they highly suppress the voice of common people by using the

power. People always want to live in freedom but colonizers seized all the freedom and dominate them. While writing the history of colonial period, colonizers avoid all the revolution that occurred against the colonial rule and write the event from their own perspectives. They hide the other side of history and present themselves as rulers who were always praised by common people. But, the hegemony either created out of coercion or simply the imagination of the colonialist historiographers while they wrote Indian history. In fact, they had written only a little portion of history.

Subaltern studies aspires to rewrite the nation outside the state centered national discourse that replicates colonial power knowledge in a world of globalization. Subaltern Studies, therefore, has brought paradigmatic shift in the perspective through revision of elite historiographies. And its outcome, of course, is that the subaltern people are now identified as the agency of change. Subaltern Studies, as a new perspective to look at history, consists of dispersed moments and fragments, which subaltern historians seek in ethnographic colonialism. This kind of historiography, of course, constitutes subversive politics because it exposes forms of power/knowledge that oppress subaltern people and also because it provides liberating alternatives. They, not unlike magical realists, should make themselves free from the shackles of chronological linear time. Indeed, it has developed into a cultural history as it is based on the culture of the subaltern people. In other words, it is not necessary that Subaltern Studies must always talk of Indian historiography. Instead, it can be adopted by the historiographers and theorists of any country to make a cultural critique of his/her country. In recent years, Subaltern Studies School has expanded to include work on other regions and has inspired Subaltern Studies initiatives in other historical and geographical contexts also. In a way, it has acquired a global phenomenon. As a postcolonial critique, Subaltern Studies aspires to restore the integrity of indigenous

historians that appear naturally in non-linear, oral, symbolic, vernacular and dramatic forms.

As we know, Subaltern Studies has already moved away from people's politics to the study of culture of the subaltern people. Now it tends to take resort to cultural as well as literary modes to inquire history. It, too, is a great shift in the people's perspective to know history. "The first emancipator act that the Subaltern Studies project performs in our understanding of tribes, caste, or other such groups", as Veena Das writes in her article "Subaltern as Perspective", "is to restore to them their historical being" (314). In all, its commitment to restore history of Subaltern people is rather genuine aspect about Subaltern Studies. Indeed, David Ludden says that Subaltern Studies has become "an original sight for a new kind of history from below, a people's history free of national constraints" (12).

Subaltern Consciousness is another hotly debated issue about Subaltern Studies. Spivak, in her seminal essay "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography", gives a deconstructive reading to the activities of Subaltern Studies Group up to their third volume. She tries to assess their work in her writing. Like many other critics, she, too, finds problem with their compartmentalized views of consciousness. While assessing their work, she comes to realize that it somehow resembles deconstruction, which puts the binary oppositions like elite/subaltern under erasure. In her view, their project is rather a positivist one as it aspired to investigate, discover and establish a subaltern or peasant consciousness. For Spivak, Subaltern Studies project offers both a theory of change, and a theory of consciousness. Like Guha, Spivak views that 'subaltern' means the colonized/oppressed subject whose voice has been silenced. Spivak, however, thinks that "consciousness, here is not consciousness — in general but a historicized political species, subaltern consciousness" (338). In fact, "Deconstructing Historiography" made an influential

contribution to subaltern and postcolonial studies. For, scholars caught between the desires to deconstruct the concepts such as “the individual subject” as a political imperative to recover the historians of actual subjects. Social and historical agents capable of initiating or undertaking action who had been marginalized by history, Spivak offered a helpful way out.

Subaltern Group writers endeavor to establish the subaltern people as the subject of insurgency. That’s why they propose to focus on subaltern consciousness as their central theme. Otherwise, the subaltern people’s experience of insurgency would be turned into a history of events without a subject. Chakrabarty writes that

The central aim of subaltern studies is to understand the consciousness that informed and still informs political actions taken by the subaltern classes on their own, independently of any elite initiatives. It is only by giving this consciousness a central place in historical analysis that we the subaltern maker of the history s/he lives out. (374)

It suggests that Subaltern Studies mainly focuses its research to understand the consciousness of subaltern because their consciousness is always ignored by the elite historians. But, subaltern studies finds out the clear political actions taken by subaltern classes on their own, independently of any elite initiatives. Here, Chakrabarty states that only by giving central place to the consciousness of subaltern in the historical analysis, the true identity and autonomous individuality of subaltern will come out.

Guha clarifies that the alleged ‘peasant consciousness’ is a strategy they have got to adopt for establishing subaltern people as an autonomous domain having their own history. Spivak finally suggests Subaltern Studies Group to follow “reading against grain approach” because it “would get the group off the dangerous hook of claiming to establish the true knowledge of the subaltern and its consciousness” (356).

In his essay “Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency” Guha, too, depicts tribal revolts as the subaltern rebellion, which is completely different from nationalism. “Subaltern Studies”, in Ludden’s words, “entered the academic scene by asserting the complete autonomy of lower class insurgency” (10). It is equally remarkable that the scholars from inside and outside Subaltern Studies have established subaltern people’s everyday resistance against elite classes as the basic feature of life in the politically decolonized spaces like India.

As subaltern people took order and later resist in their own way, sometimes they have problems because of elite or some educated scholars who head them to nowhere. According to Gramsci, “The death of subaltern classes in history is inevitably fragmented and episodic as they were subject to the activities of the elite groups even when they raise their voice against complacent elite group” (213). The subaltern classes have less to means by which they can control their representation and for this, they have the way or can get rid of subordination in the permanent victory. But it is also clear that the victory is not at hand. The subaltern people need intellectuals to show them the way. In such case, if the intellectuals are from elite group, they might perceive subaltern from their perspective. In the same way, in some cases, it is found that the intellectuals encourage the subaltern people to go ahead for their freedom but later they leave them in such a way that these subaltern people can go nowhere. It is the clear example of their misrepresentation. Whatever we think and wherever we go, bourgeois nationalist and colonialist always seem to dominate or marginalize these people (i.e. subaltern people) despite their great contribution in each and every field. Because of such acts of bourgeois subaltern people never get recognized and never appreciated.

Subaltern and Literature

While launching the project of Subaltern Studies in 1982, the members of Subaltern Studies Group had not thought about literature as such. Their objective was not to prove certain theoretical strategies to evaluate literary works. Instead, they wanted to make an empirical study of the culture of those people who have no access to 'hegemonic power'. In such a context, the Subaltern Studies in their first three volumes, attempted to establish the peasants as an autonomous domain. For this purpose, they also talked of the peasant or subaltern consciousness. After the inclusion of Spivak in *Subaltern Studies IV*, Subaltern Studies entered into a new realm: literature. In other words, Spivak rendered Subaltern Studies with linguistic as well as literary mode. In her essay "Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography", she announces: "that Subaltern Studies is not much concerned with change but with the representation of consciousness or culture of the subaltern classes" (342). She explores the language and textuality of the discursive power. In this way, she prefers representation than politics. Despite the fact that her essay is not particularly focuses on literature, it is supposed to have given the literary twist to Subaltern Studies as it somehow manages to initiate linguistic and cultural modes in Subaltern Studies the way literature does.

Spivak did not render Subaltern Studies with literary mode for nothing. She had another great motive behind it. Actually, Spivak's primary focus was to present woman as subaltern or subaltern woman as subaltern group. She found literature, a good platform and utilized it to render feministic mode to Subaltern Studies. In her translation as well as deconstructive reading of "Mahasweta Devi's Stanadayini" (SSV), Spivak reinforces literary as well as feminist modes of Subaltern Studies. In her text, she has depicted how women are subalternized in colonized and patriarchal society. In this way she makes literature a point of departure for feminist agenda. By



doing this her main intention is to put forth her feminist issues. She exploits literature for realizing her purpose.

Said, while writing foreword to *Selected Subaltern Studies* (1998), had declared that Subaltern Studies is made up of the fragments and pieces of post colonial histories. At the same time, he also recommended that Subaltern Studies should also include writers like Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Salman Rushdie, Faiz Ahmad Faiz and Mahmud Darwish. This announcement becomes the ground breaking moment for Subaltern Studies which reinforced the literary mode to the Subaltern Studies. In her *Introduction to Selected Subaltern Studies*, Spivak repeats the same announcement that she had made in her essay “Deconstructing Historiography”. By this, Spivak confines Subaltern Studies within the Representation of the culture of the subaltern people. In this way, Subaltern Studies not only becomes a part of postcolonial writing but also that of cultural studies. Later on, the writers like Amitav Ghosh contributed his writings to Subaltern Studies. Now the inclusion of the literary writings has been a regular phenomenon in Subaltern Studies. Moreover, if we look into the purpose of both postcolonial literary writing and Subaltern Studies, we can notice a number of similarities between them. They both try to represent the oppressed and marginalized people. Postcolonial literary writings deal with the issues like diaspora, cultural encounter, hybridity etc involved with the third world people.

While talking about literature, Subaltern Studies need appropriate language to give voice and true representation to oppressed and ignored people. But, with the publication of Spivak widely discussed essay “Can Subaltern Speak?” in 1988, there comes another problem for representation. In this essay, Spivak makes a remarkable discussion on the problems involved with representation. Here, she argues that: “subaltern people can not speak for themselves. Instead, they have got to be represented. There can be no representable subaltern group” (71). The main problem

with representation is that the subaltern's voice gets overshadowed by the very investigator's voice. There is a very much chance that the knowing subject will erase the voice of the ignorant object. The elite intellectual can represent the subaltern voice filtered through an elitist perspective. In other words, the privileged position of the elite intellectuals limits their integrity to work as a spokes person of the subaltern classes. In this way there is very little chance to get true representation of subaltern people. Elite intellectuals are always guided by their subject position which makes them to present ignored subaltern through their own eyes. In this way, subaltern does not get true representation, they are always misrepresented.

When Subaltern Studies Group emerged in India in 1982, it was set to undertake empirical study on various aspects of subaltern people irrespective of caste, gender, color, profession, space and class. So when Subaltern Studies Group emerged, it had not taken up the issues concerning woman so distinctively up to the last three volumes. Of course, there were few essays that slightly were also part of subaltern group. However, only after the publication of Subaltern Studies IV in 1986, women's issues get much attention and women are included in subaltern group. In Subaltern Studies IV, Spivak brings up fully new agenda and that is, feminist agenda, while pointing out the vulnerable points of Subaltern Studies, she made it clear that Subaltern Studies, as a discourse to speak on behalf of marginalized groups, has not paid as much attention to women as it should have, doubly colonized both by the patriarchy and colonization. She is amazed at "its indifference to the subjectivity, not to mention the indispensable presence of the woman as the crucial instrument" (338). The core members of the group ignore the impetus the concept-metaphor woman provides in the functioning their discourse.

To support her issue, Spivak, here, not only translated Mahaswetadevi's *Stanadayini*, but also wrote a commentary on it. In her witty commentary "A Literary

Representation of the Subaltern: Mahaswetadevi's *Stanadayini*", she argues how women are denied their subjectivity, their voice. Women's subjectivity and their voice are denied upon male desire. She argues: "Whether woman is looked from above merely as the sexual object or from below as a goddess, she is reduced into the object of the male desire" (98). Here, she pointed out the parallelism between Jashoda the subaltern and Jashoda the Divine. The icon of Jashoda the divine is used to dissimulate the exploitation inflicted on Jashoda the subaltern. On the one hand, she has been turned into an object of male desire; on the other hand, especially as she feeds their children with her milk, she has been turned to an object of worship. After that, she has been equally linked with the mother country. Here, whatever ways she is presented, or perceived, male's desire is obvious in the demonstration of her subjectivity. The male wants to see the woman only as a sacrificial being, who can be a receptacle of various desires. The gaze from the below is only the male's strategy to dissimulate the oppression he inflicts on his female counterpart through his gaze 'from above'. She further views that "Through a programmed confounding of the two kinds of gaze the goddesses can be used to dissimulate women's oppression" (129).

In her widely discussed essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak addressed the same issue of female as subaltern. Spivak posits women in the role of the subaltern questioning the male constructed voice of women within the patriarchal society. Talking of the Sati custom, she reveals how the white men and brown men reduce the brown woman into the object of male's desire. White men reduce the native woman into an object/creature that needs protection. In the same manner, brown men claim that the woman sets herself on fire to death out of her love and devotion to her male counterpart. In this conflict between the white men and the brown men regarding the brown woman, her subjectivity gets ignored. Spivak argues: "There, is no space from which the sexed subaltern subject can speak" (103). Whether it is West or East, the

women are denied the position from which they can speak on their own as both spaces are patriarchies in which women are always turned into the object of male's desire.

According to Spivak, "Between patriarchy and imperialism, subject constitution and object formation, the figure of woman disappears [. . .]" (102). Here she analyzes the problem of the category of the subaltern by examining the position of gendered subjects. She comes up with an interesting conclusion that both as an object of colonialist historiography and as a subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keep the male dominant. Such an ideological reinforcement of male power, in Spivak's view, happens because if "in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and can not speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow" (83).

Colonialism appears to be hazardous to females than to males of the colonized space. Spivak later mentions that woman is doubly subalternized in colonized patriarchal spaces. Spivak strategy of presenting the woman as subaltern clarifies her position in the imperial as well as patriarchal society where women's voices and deeds always remain unheard. This is one of the reasons why the woman issues are so widely discussed in Subaltern Studies.

Marxists have chosen two approaches. Most of them have argued that caste is a feature of the superstructure of Nepalese and Indian society and ought to be understood in terms of its efficacy as an ideological system which reflects the basic structure of material relations, the latter of course being characterized in terms of class relations. Other have suggested that caste, especially in Nepal and India, is a form of material relations at the base, with its own historical dynamic; in Ramakanta Chakrabarty's words, "caste is the form in which classes appear in Indian society" (175). Here, he believes that caste system is only a medium to create class in the society.

Chakrabarty further states, “The assertion of Brahmanical dominance in a religious movement which was rooted in mysticism, and which was anti-caste and anti-intellectual, inevitably led to the growth of deviant orders” (324). He believes that Brahmanical dominance does not have scientific base because it was rooted in mysticism. This idea will lead towards anti-caste movement to find out the real politics of caste system.

As the issue of subaltern studies, at the hand demand, it is a theoretical tool and the researcher endeavors to relate the aspect of representation to analyze the text. In doing so, the researcher tries to show the representation of subaltern people who are suppressed, othered and marginalized for a long time. The research is mainly concern about whether the author truly represents the subaltern or not. While writing the text the author is conscious about the consciousness, voice and autonomous identity of subaltern people and if the author misrepresents the subalterns, then what his politics is to misrepresent them? This researcher applies Subaltern Studies in reading Samrat Upadhyay’s *The Royal Ghosts*.

### Chapter III

#### Representation of the Subaltern in Upadhyay's *The Royal Ghosts*

In the short story collection *The Royal Ghosts*, Samrat Upadhyay presents subaltern characters as the main characters in his different stories. By presenting the subalterns as main characters, he tries to bring forward the long oppressed voice of the subalterns, their pains, sufferings, struggles and cultures. But unfortunately he fails and misrepresents them not being able to explore the real condition of the people addressing their needs. To bring out the true picture of the subalterns, the writer should have given the space to the subalterns themselves. But in the place of the subalterns, elite characters speak and try to sympathize them and that can never be true representation. Most of Upadhyay's main characters are the subalterns and they try to speak on behalf of them but the author fails to do so by presenting them as weak and subordinate characters.

The argument that the text *The Royal Ghosts* does not have the real ghosts, but the stories of this collection really haunt you. It seems, in the surface level, that the author does justice to the people from the margin placing them in the position of the protagonist. But in reality he cannot give them the voice they need to get. He does not provide them the agency that they intend to get. This kind of scenario creates a kind of snowball effect that really haunts you. The marginal people remain at the margin even at the concluding remarks of the stories. These characters try to uplift themselves but remain unable to do so. To validate this argument, I would like to cite Jocelyn Kelly who argues, "Every pivotal character in the collection seems to be cursed with a relentless compassion for others . . . a need to help others find their way even if it means losing their own in the process" (n. pag.). It is a clear suggestion that the characters try empowering themselves in the forefront but their effort remains failure simply because of the indifferent nature of the author towards the people from the

subordinate group. This becomes the argument in the present research and this effort tries to explore all these sorts of ills that go on in the Nepali societies.

Upadhyay, being an elite intellectual, presents the subalterns in his stories and through this presentation he tries to rewrite the history of the subalterns. But he commits the same mistake and presents the subalterns as weak who can never speak for themselves and always need an elite character to speak for them. In the place of giving voice to the subalterns, he produces the prose of otherness and presents the subalterns through the view of elite. Because of this the presentation can never be the true representation of the subalterns. Just by presenting a subaltern as a character in a story, no one can present the true life story. The author should give space to the subalterns to speak and express their views then only the presentation becomes trustworthy. To bring them forward the author has to be conscious about the individuality of the oppressed people. But, Upadhyay makes his subaltern characters remain silent all the time. By making subaltern silent about their own situation, the author does not want to be fair in treatment to the subalterns and it clearly shows that he misrepresents the subalterns and makes them the puppet in the hand of elite. To substantiate the argument further Elsa Dixler writes, “In Upadhyay's stories, we find the subalterns as main characters who do not have their autonomous individuality. He presents subaltern from the perspective of elite. His subaltern characters are always silent about their own situation which pushes them towards margin again” (6). It is the clear point for us to argue that the author does not give justice to the subalterns because he brings these characters to be the protagonists in his stories but it is without giving them agency or without giving them the voice.

Elite historians write history making subaltern object of elite people. So the role of intellectuals is to bring out the subaltern in mainstream and give space to their activities, deeds and voice. Only presenting subaltern in a text is not enough to bring them forward. They should have space to speak and elite intellectuals should have to focus their writings on what the subalterns feel, what they think of and what they are doing. But Upadhyay only presents subalterns as main characters but does not give space to their voice and this makes them totally silent through out the story. In the first story “A Refugee”, we can see the same thing that Upadhyay does not give any space to their voice and activities. Because of this the subaltern character becomes weak and subordinated. Here, in this story Pitamber gets a letter from his friend who wants him help Kabita. Pitamber is searching for Kabita who is somewhere in the town. Kabita’s husband gets killed by Maoist and she is there in Kathmandu with her little daughter. Here, Pitamber is convincing Kabita to live in his flat with his family:

“Listen”, he said. “There’s no reason for you to be all alone in this city. I am here, my family is here. Why don’t you come and stay with us while you look for a job? We’ll see if we can find a school for your daughter. And once things fall into place, you can move into a flat of your own.” (7)

Here, the main character Pitamber tries to help Kabita by giving shelter. He becomes so kind to her and wants to help her but that is not necessary because she is not facing that much suffering that she wants a shelter. She is staying in a rented room with her daughter which is not bad. The author should mention the sufferings first before he makes another character to help her. But here we do not see the sufferings of Kabita. Kabita is searching a job and this is a problem but the author does not give importance to it. He suddenly makes his elite character help her by giving her shelter.



Here, the author gives more space to Pitamber and makes him convince Kabita to live in his flat. By this strategy, the author indirectly shows his ideology that subalterns are puppet in the hand of elite. Through the presentation of Pitamber and Kabita, the author tries to show that subaltern are weak and because of this they always need elite's support. In this story too Pitamber does not wait to get response from Kabita but decides to talk to her landlord. This completely misrepresents the subaltern. Kabita is there in city because she had that much courage to struggle in the city. But suddenly the author makes Kabita shift into the flat of Pitamber and this completely contradicts with author's own presentation. In this way by making Kabita move to Pitamber's flat he makes subaltern character subordinate. In this way the author suppresses the consciousness of subaltern and presents the wrong image and tries to show that subalterns are unable to govern themselves.

In the likely manner, we can find the misrepresentation of subaltern in the same story. Pitamber gets into fight with his own son Sumit. Twelve years old child Sumit blames his father that he brings Kabita as his second wife in his home. At that time, Pitamber highly reacts for what his son says, but Kabita, the subaltern female, remains silent. The words from the text:

“No, I don't want to be a hoodlum,” Sumit said. “Anyway, who are you to speak? You're the one who brought a second wife in our house.”

Shailaja looked sharply at Sumit, then at Kabita. Pitamber pinched Sumit's left ear, pulling his head toward him. “Say that again?”

Sumit shouted, “Why don't you and Kabita auntie go live somewhere else?”

Pitamber felt his left hand tighten into a fist, make a wide arc, and hit his son on the head. Sumit slumped in his seat, his body limp. The taxi driver braked, then continued. Shailaja gasped something like, “What?”

What?’ and Kabita pressed her hand to her mouth. Pitamber shook his son, said, “Sumit, Sumit?” (20)

Here, Sumit blames that Pitamber brings Kabita as his second wife at home. At that time the author mentions the reaction of Pitamber and Shailaja but forgets to mention the expression of Kabita. But at last when Pitamber hits his son Kabita pressed her hand to her mouth. Before, when Sumit blames Pitamber for bringing second wife, we do not know how she reacted. Here expression of Kabita is more important than other two because she is staying at someone else home losing her individuality and Sumit raises a question over her character. But the author behaves as if her expression is not that much important than other two. It clearly shows that how the author is avoiding to present the true identity of subaltern.

At such complicated time the author makes the subalterns silent about their own situation. On the other hand, by making Kabita press her hand to her mouth the author symbolically means that she is not allowed to speak or react for the situation. This clearly shows author’s misrepresentation of subaltern. Here he presents subaltern as people without voice. Making subaltern silent, the author is intentionally trying to marginalize them again. The subalterns are not weak and subordinated as the author presents. In the same story, the author further writes “Kabita wanted to repay the money Pitamber had given to the landlord, as well as taxi fare, but Pitamber wouldn’t hear of it” (8). It shows that Kabita is conscious about her autonomous individuality and does not want to take money from other as a help. But the author being ignored about her consciousness makes her weak and marginalizes her because he does not let his male character hear her. He forces the subaltern characters to be subordinated and does not give any particular space to their self.

Similarly, in another story “The Weight of the Gun”, the author makes his subaltern characters remain silent and does not give chance to react for the situation as

if they do not have any feelings and choices. He makes the subalterns just the puppets in the hand of the elites. In this story Ananda breaks up his marriage with Janaki for another woman. Here, we find how he tells that he is having an affair with another woman and wants to marry her. The story goes as follows:

[. . .] but a year ago Ananda left her, after twenty years of marriage, for a woman who worked in his office. He'd announced it bluntly in the kitchen, right after they'd finished dinner. Bhola was at the window, watching passerby on the street below and speaking into a pen. "How long?" she'd asked. She meant to ask him how long he'd been seeing this woman, but the rest of the words are remained inside her. Ananda shook his head. "I've known her about a year. Please forgive me, Janaki. I didn't know it would come to this, but Sukumaya and I have decided to live together now." (105)

Here, Ananda announces that he is going to leave his wife for another woman. At that time Janaki becomes silent. She only asks "How long?" (105). Here she does not react for her husband's betrayal. He announces the ending of his twenty year of marriage and gets enough space to express his feelings. In this way, the author plays very interesting role to create a binary between the elites and the subalterns. He gives much space to Ananda to say what is in his mind but on the other hand he becomes ignored about the Janaki's feelings and expression. It clearly shows the male centric attitude of the author, where only males are treated as dominant human being.

"[. . .] but the rest of the words are remained inside her" (105), is the strategic sentence to make Janaki silent. But the situation clearly needs her reaction because she never felt that her husband is betraying her and this news should bring thunder in her life. But the author does not give any space to her to react for the situation. By not giving any space to Janaki, the author shows his politics that the subalterns always

walk on the path shown by the elites. By focusing on Ananda's character, the author tries to hide the autonomous individuality of subaltern Janaki. In this way, female subalterns are presented as if they are not human being and they do not have feelings and individuality which is none other than the misrepresentation of the subalterns.

By presenting strong Ananda who is giving order to Janaki, the author creates binary between them as master and slave where slave has to accept whatever master asks him/her to do. Here, we find the politics of the author in creating characters like Janaki. By creating stereotypical character, he is making himself an elite writer of West who has power to create binary as Western writers do.

Similarly, in the same story author talks about the effect of the Ananda's decision on Janaki later in the story. Upadhyay writes:

A few minutes later, he came to her and gently placed the blanket on her body. She lay still, and he said, "It has nothing to do with you, Janaki."

She didn't speak.

"It's just that...with her I've began to feel a lot of things." In the dark he seemed to be searching for words to explain more, but when he spoke, he only said, "I'll move out the day after tomorrow. Our house will be ready by then." (106)

Here, again the author makes Ananda to convince Janaki that he is not responsible for this and he does not want to do that but something else is making him do this. Nothing is wrong with Janaki but he feels something more to another woman. By giving more privilege to Ananda, the author ignores the feelings of subaltern female. In spite of writing the conflict of Janaki's mind, the author is focusing his writing on Ananda and writes as if subaltern are always in the hand of elite. By making Janaki calm, the author presents Janaki as subordinate one. Here, we can not see her reaction and make

us believe that the subalterns are voiceless and the people without agency and identity. But, that is only the strategy of author to represent the subaltern as voiceless people, who do not have their individuality and choice because he is creating hierarchy between male and female.

Ananda decides to leave his wife as if female is just a cloth and man can change it whenever they want. So by giving more space to Ananda to explain himself the author misrepresents the subalterns as if they can be used by elites the way they like because in this story too the author does not make Janaki express her inner feelings. So by presenting the stereotype image of the subalterns as it was presented by elite historians, the author again pushes the subalterns towards the margin and makes them unheard forever.

In the similar line of argument, Upadhyay presents the subalterns without individual identity, who do everything what mainstream people want from them. In the story “The Weight of the Gun”, Ananda’s wife Sukumaya leaves him and their newly born child. Ananda is trying to find out her and at that time he cannot take care of the child. So, he tries to convince Janaki, his ex-wife, to take care of the child. The author writes:

The baby’s eyes were closed now and he was breathing heavily. Janaki met Ananda’s gaze and knew instantly what he was thinking. “No, no,” she said, handling the baby to him. “Take him with you. He’ll need his mother when you find her?”

Janaki began walking to the door, but Ananda grabbed her arm. The baby, shaken by his move, awoke and began to cry again. “Janaki, I swear to you, it’ll only be a few days. If after three days I can’t locate her, I’ll return. I wouldn’t ask this of you, of all people, if I had anyone else to go to.”

The baby wailed, and she couldn't help but take him from Ananda. "I'll be forever grateful to you, Janaki, please," Ananda said. (120)

This dialogue clearly shows how a male oppresses a female. Ananda makes Janaki agree to take care of the child. The child is from Ananda's second wife Sukumaya but he gives a lot of reasons to convince Janaki and later she becomes ready to take care of child. Despite her unwillingness, Janaki is forced to take care of the child. Here, the author's ideology comes out indirectly by giving full agency to Ananda. It is the ideology of elite to make subaltern subordinate and make them do whatever they want from them.

The author, here, becomes ignorant about the autonomous decision of the subalterns. The author presents the subalterns as the people who do not have any independent decision but he directly makes them dependent on the elites. Ananda indirectly makes Janaki do what he wants from her. By making Ananda convince Janaki to take care of child, the author is showing the dominant character of males. It is his direct intention to make dominant male because he creates binary to oppress females.

The author gives much space to Ananda and avoids Janaki's rejection. Janaki does not want to take care of the child but later Ananda easily convinces her to take care of child. In this way, the subaltern, Janaki's choice is clearly oppressed by author and makes her just the puppet in the hand of Ananda. This is the politics of author to represent subaltern as the subordinated and to create hierarchy between a male and a female. In this way, the author fails to do his fair job and directly makes the subalterns oppressed and does not give chance to raise their status but oppresses them as much as he can.

In another story, "Father, Daughter", we find similar kind of misrepresentation of subaltern. In this story police arrests Mukti and Shova for indecent exposure and

Shivaram comes to know about his daughter's relation with Mukti, who is cobbler's son. Being angry with Mukti, Shivaram goes to his house to scold him and threatens him not to meet his daughter again. The narrator further tells:

When she confessed to him and Urmila that the boy's father was a lowly cobbler; even Urmila became indignant. Shivaram went to the boy's house in Samakhusi, where he confronted the father about what had happened, saying his son had ruined his daughter's reputation. The man apologized profusely, said he too wasn't exactly happy about what had happened, that he too had had to bribe the police to free his son. He hauled the boy, whose name was Mukti, out of his room by his ear and forced him to apologize to Shivaram. "I don't want his apology", Shivaram said. "I want him to promise me that he'll never look at my daughter again." After his father slapped him, Mukti promised, then wrote a note to Shova-dictated by his father- saying that their relationship was over. (152)

Here, the author clearly makes the cobbler the subordinate one, who always feels that they have to remain in lower place accepting whatever elite people say to them. Shivaram, being elite of high caste, shows his superiority over cobbler. Being a father of a daughter he should convince his own daughter to stop meeting the boy. But the author makes him go to cobbler's house and shows his superiority in caste. Mukti's father apologizes for whatever happens, but Shivaram behaves as if he does not need apology from lower caste people. Like Shivaram, Mukti's father also feels ashamed of whatever happens and angry with his own son and believes that Mukti alone is responsible for whatever happens. But in reality both Mukti and Shova are responsible for the accident. Mukti's father's accepting that only his son is responsible for whatever happens. It clearly shows the effect of caste system. Here, the author creates

binary of master/slave where slave believes that he has to accept whatever his master asks him to do and should not speak against his master.

Shivaram, by going to Mukti's house, makes his father and Mukti apologize with him. Here, the author intentionally forces Mukti's father to apologize to Shivaram. This clearly means that the author tries to blame Mukti and his father for whatever happens. We find the dominating mentality of high caste people. There is no need to ask for apology because it is not only their mistake. But, the situation forces Mukti and his father to ask for apology. Here, the author does not give agency to Mukti and his father to express their views about such a critical situation. The author creates such a situation that, they are pressurized. At that time, they cannot express their real view and the author takes advantage of the situation. So, it is the strategy of the author to pressurize them and make them weak, subordinate and puppet in elite's hand and ignore the individuality of the subalterns.

The subalterns are not subordinated but are made so. By presenting the subalterns as weak, the author shows wrong image of the subalterns. It shows how the author tries to marginalize them by bringing the baseless caste system. Author misrepresents subaltern saying that lower caste people still believe in the caste system and they themselves are responsible for the oppression.

In the same story, "Father, Daughter", author tells the story on behalf of Shivaram. The author prioritizes the feelings of Shivaram over his daughter Shova. Shivaram puts the pressure of his ideology over his daughter and wants her to move according to his choice because he believes that what he does is better for his daughter. The narrator narrates:

That was not the future any father would wish upon his daughter, and for nearly a month, Shivaram, worried that Shova would reconnect with Mukti secretly, didn't allow her out of the house unless Urmila was by



her side. He was on constant watch for Mukti, and he monitored Shova's phone calls. When both he and Urmila were at work, he enlisted a relative to stay at home to watch her. (153)

Here, Shova is treated as criminal because of her relationship with Mukti. Shova is not allowed to take the decision of her life because of her gender. She is treated as a subordinate one who cannot take right decision. So, the author valorizes the views of father and makes him express his thoughts whereas he does not for Shova. It shows that the author supports the father. By supporting the father, the author criticizes the decision of Shova. Shivaram monitors Shova's phone calls and there is always someone with Shova all the time as if she is going to run away from the house. By doing this, the father dominates Shova and suppresses her freedom. There should be freedom to every one so that they can take decision of their life themselves. But, unfortunately the author does not give freedom to Shova so that she can choose her way. Her father and mother treat her as criminal and limit her life within home; at this time the speaker does not give agency to Shova to express her feelings. The author gives more priority to Shivaram and his feelings than Shova. The author does not mention what Shova feels when her father restricts her to do things according to her wish. Here author mentions the restrictions only, not what she feels about such restriction. It clearly tries to suppress the feelings of subaltern and tries to support the idea of elite.

The author oppresses the feelings, ideology and intention of the subalterns and presents them as weak and subordinated who always need the support of the elites. In this way, the author prioritizes elite over subaltern and puts his ideology through the elite male characters that males are always right and female should follow male to be right. The author shows his support to the decision of father by showing what Shova

does is wrong and what Shivaram does is right. This is clear binary between male and female where first one is always right and second one is always wrong.

Throughout the story Shova gets presented as a puppet who does not have any freedom to choose her way. Shivaram and Urmila arrange for her marriage with Rajiv but Shivaram does not believe that he has to ask Shova once whether she wants to get married with Rajiv or not. Here, the author further presents the conversation between Shivaram and Urmila:

The wedding had been arranged in a rush-that much Shivaram admitted. He and Urmila had been so afraid that Rajiv might change his mind, especially after it became clear that he was well aware of Shova's past, they'd pressed for an early wedding date and sped through the preparations. Still, it didn't justify what Shova did. "She is lucky we found someone for her," he said.

"What was there to object to, Urmila? Help me understand. Rajiv babu had even started building a house for her so she wouldn't have to live under his parents' thumb. How many newly married women here have that luxury?"(163)

Here, we find how Shivaram does not want to give any freedom to his daughter. He arranges Shova's marriage but he believes that there is no need to ask Shova about her wishes. Shivaram believes that whatever he does for his daughter is right because she could not take right decision. Rajiv is his own choice and wants her to accept his choice.

By showing the father like Shivaram, the author tries to say that whatever female does becomes wrong. So, there is always need of a male's support in every part of female's life. Here, the author intentionally makes his male characters dominating over females. Here, Shova is not allowed to take a decision of her own life because she

is presented weak. Without asking Shova about her wish, Shivaram himself makes a decision that it is Shova's luck to find the man like Rajiv. Here, Shivaram compares freedom with material luxury. It is a politics of the author to suppress the freedom of female subaltern and give priority to male because of his male centric attitude.

So, by not giving space to express her choice, the author makes her subordinate. Before giving any freedom to choose, the father believes that whatever she chooses is wrong. In this way, both author and father make Shova weak and do not give her freedom to explore herself. By doing this, Shova is again pushed towards margin.

Shova does not want to live with her husband Rajiv and wants divorce. But her father and mother both want her to solve the problem and go back to her husband's house. When she refuses to talk to Rajiv, her father orders that she has to do this. At such situation, the narrator tells:

Shivaram fought the urge to slap his daughter; he'd never laid a hand on Shova, and he couldn't see himself doing it even now. Instead, he stammered, "Go prepare yourself for Rajiv babu. He'll come, you two will talk, then you'll leave with him." He took a deep breath. "If you disappointment me again, Shova," he said, the words seeming to float from his mouth, "you can't call me your father anymore." (159)

Shivaram puts his decision on Shova. He says, Shova and Rajiv will talk about what to do, but before talking he already knows the decision, that she has to go with Rajiv. In this way, Shivaram does not let his daughter take a decision of her life. Shova does not want to go with Rajiv, but Shivaram does not want to hear her. He already threatens her that if she will not go back with Rajiv, she is not allowed to call him his father. In this way, the author does not let Shova express her feelings. Before she says anything Shivaram threatens her. It clearly shows how the author is avoiding the individuality

of Shova. Everyone should have right to put forward their ideas and thoughts. Here, Shova does not get freedom because the author supports the beliefs of Shivaram who is a dominating male character. In this way, the author directly oppresses the subaltern female and presents her as the puppet in the hand of elite male. It shows that female should move according to the wish of male, which is the perspective of the author to support baseless binary opposition of male/female.

In this way, by making subaltern a wrong and weak, the author hides the positive side of subaltern and misrepresents them. So, it is the politics of the author to forward the ideology of the elites over the subalterns. By doing this the author again pushes the subalterns toward the margin.

Similar kind of misrepresentation can be found in another story “A Servant in the City”. In this story, Jeevan comes to the city to earn money and repay his debt. He is very small and always remembers his ill mother. Later, he finds Laxmi Memsab and starts working as her servant. Jeevan has not been to his village from the day he left his village. So, here, Memsab asks him whether he misses his village or not. The author further tells:

“Why should I treat you as if you were beneath me when the world treats me like that?” He sat on the edge of the sofa, his hands between his knees. She asked whether he was missing his mother, and Jeevan said, “Sometimes.” Actually, last night he’d dreamt that he learned she had died in the village, and the thought had terrified him. If she died, he’d have no family left in this world. For some time, he had felt weepy. (178)

It shows that the author gives agency to Memsab and highlights her pains more than Jeevan’s. Jeevan, being a servant, always remains silent and only thinks about his Memsab more than himself. He has not been to his village for a long time and he

frequently dreams of his ill mother, but for the sake of his Memsab he does not speak. Here the author makes him forget his own sufferings. Jeevan is going through a lot of pains and sufferings because he has left his ill mother alone in the village and does not have any information about her. But the author makes him remain silent. Saying that he sometimes misses his mother really misrepresents the feelings of subaltern. Jeevan comes to the city to earn money for his mother and for his home. In such situation forgetting his own mother does not seem true. He always wants to ask for a leave to meet his mother but it is the force of the author that makes him stay with Memsab oppressing his own feelings and by not giving space to speak his mind.

The author intentionally makes Jeevan silent and does not let him speak his mind. By doing this, the author tries to show that subaltern can never come to the mainstream. In this way, the subaltern becomes the puppet in the hand of elite character and elite author. Through this the author misrepresents subaltern as a person who does not revolt against master and are always silent whatever happens to them. Here, time and again, Jeevan thinks of going back to his village but that remains only in his thought.

So, by making Jeevan silent about his own situation the author tries to show that subaltern can never come out from their marginal position. It clearly points out that the author is trying to hide the expression of subaltern and he is intentionally making the subalterns the subordinate one. Here, he again postpones his visit and cannot hear his own inner voice. The author tells the story further:

He wanted to tell her, right now, that tomorrow morning he planned to catch the first bus to Dhunche, but as he felt her warm breath on his chest, he resolve weakened. Maybe not tomorrow, he told himself, maybe the day after. Perhaps better to write to his mother first.

Informing her of his visit. (189)

It shows, he always thinks of going to his village and wants to meet his mother but he suddenly postpones his visit saying that may be he will go tomorrow or the day after but later thinks of writing a letter first. It shows his real wish but the author makes him think only. He cannot ask for a leave to his Memsab. Conflict only remains in his mind as if he cannot speak. It shows that the author is intentionally makes him silent because by making him confuse the author takes advantage of it and makes him remain with Memsab. And it is the victory of dominant mentality of elite. He wants to go to his village but Memsab's appearance forced him to change his mind. In this way, the author presents him as a subaltern who moves according to his master's wishes and author presents him as a caged bird that wants to fly but cannot. Mother comes first to everyone but here Jeevan is presented as if he gives more importance to Memsab than mother. So it is a complete misrepresentation of subaltern.

In another story "The Royal Ghosts", we can clearly see the similar kind of misrepresentation of subaltern. Homosexuals are subalterns and they are misperceived by common Nepali people. Here, the author is also appreciating the misperception. In this story, Ganga comes to know that his younger brother Dharma is homosexual. He cannot control his anger. He drinks alcohol and tries to know the perception of people for homosexual. Here, he is having a conversation with his landlord Gaurishanker about homosexual. Both of them are expressing their views about subaltern homosexual:

"Disgusting, that's what I think. They should be rounded up and locked away, that's what I think. I've heard there's even a chhakka club in the city- can you believe that? You konw who's chhakka?" Ganga's heart pounded.

"That Parmendra who runs the Intertnet cafe by the school. His two employee there are his lovers. Both of them. And I've heard he also

likes very young boys, gives them money to come to his shop at night.”

(198)

Homosexuals are treated as if they are not human being and they corrupt our society. The author delivers such message to his readers by delivering comment like “disgusting” to homosexuals through his central character Ganga. He, time and again, repeats the same word “Chhakkas” to address them which really disgusting to the readers. By talking about “chhakkas club” and “internet cafe”, his characters try to say that homosexuals are corrupting our society. By presenting such comments and dialogues about homosexuals, the author creates wrong image of them.

The role of intellectual authors is to wipe out the wrong image and they should try to raise the voice of oppressed and should establish them as a respected citizen and human being. But here, the author presents the wrong image of the subalterns and tries to ruin the reader. In spite of giving agency to the marginal people, the author tries to push them again toward the margin. He does not give space to the subalterns to speak about own self but again treats them as a criminal.

The author tells that Ganga becomes very angry when Dharma comes to his room and even tries to kill him because being homosexual is unforgivable crime for him. Here, author says “He pined Dharma’s arms with his knees and pressed his forearm against his throat, increasing the pressure as he spoke. “What the fuck am I supposed to say to people, huh? Chhakkas’s brother, they’ll call me” (202). It shows that Ganga treats Dharma as a criminal and tries to kill him. In this way, we can clearly see that how the speaker indirectly supports the bad customs and tries to dominate the subalterns because here, Dharma has not got any chance to explain his inner feelings. Ganga gets angry and expresses his anger but becomes ignorant about Dharma’s situation. For Ganga, it is really a crime to be a homosexual.

Females are always treated as subordinate and always blamed that they are the cause of the destruction of society. In this way, people misunderstand female. Females do not get chance to bring out their true identity in society. This kind of wrong identity of female can be seen in the story “A Servant in the City”. Here, in this story Laxmi is having an affair with a married man Raju. Raju makes her believe that he will divorce his wife and will marry her. But, because of this illegal relationship Laxmi faces a lot of difficulties. In this paragraph Laxmi is telling her difficulties to Raju and how her image is damaged by their relation:

“But how long can we go on like this, Raju?” Laxmi Memsab said.

“Everyone is calling me names. My uncle has disowned me. My friends don’t speak to me.”

And so they argued, Raju Sab asking for more time, Laxmi Memsab complaining that she’d given up everything for him and now she had nothing. “A whore, that’s what they call me,” she said. (173)

Here, we can clearly see how women are treated by our community. Laxmi and Raju love each other but it is presented as if only Laxmi is responsible for the love. People start calling her “whore” for her affair with Raju. But, Raju does not face any difficulties. He enjoys his both private and public life. It shows that, only Laxmi is responsible for it and falling in love with a married man is crime for her. Through out the story we can visualize the trouble faced by Laxmi.

The whole story moves around the troubles faced by Laxmi and presents it as if what is happening to her is right. Being a married man Raju is having an affair with Laxmi but for author Laxmi alone is responsible. People only pinpoint her life and name her “whore”. Here, by presenting the character like Laxmi, the author indirectly supports the belief of conservative society where women are treated as the cause of the destruction of society.



The above paragraph shows that how ignorant Raju is for Laxmi's situation. Laxmi faces lots of troubles but Raju is still asking for some time to get married. But, still Laxmi does not understand the real face of Raju. In this way, the speaker intentionally makes Laxmi subordinate. More than four times she is addressed "whore", and she accepts it without any hesitation. This is, not possible because, it is unbearable for woman but the speaker does not bring out Laxmi's anger. Everyone raises their voice against domination but here, Laxmi is accepting such unbearable domination. By making Laxmi accept the domination and not giving any space to express her inner feelings, the author tries to show that the subalterns are such people who should accept the domination of elite. The author, time and again, creates hierarchy to deliver his male centric belief.

The author also talks about the effect of that affair. When the news of the relationship between Laxmi and Raju spreads, Laxmi is treated as a criminal who does not have any respect in society. The author further writes: "Since Raju Sab's firm was so well known in the city, news of the affair spread quickly. Laxmi Memsab's landlord knocked on her door one evening and asked her to move out, saying that because he had a family, he could rent his rooms only to "respectable people" (174). In this way, Laxmi loses all her self respect in society and people start treating her as a criminal. By giving the comment of landlord, the author is creating the wrong image of Laxmi but does not find any need to express how Laxmi reacts in that situation. So, the speaker hides another part of Laxmi's life. Here, Laxmi is treated as the hegemonic object of elite male. In spite of creating true image of subaltern, the author exposes the wrong image. So, this presentation can never bring the subalterns forward because they are always treated as the second class people who always do wrong and are the cause of destruction. So, here the author misrepresents the subalterns as the weak and subordinate one.

People destroy Laxmi's image because of her affair with Raju. The situation becomes so worse that she even cannot walk freely. People call her "whore" even in public place without any hesitation. Here, Mona's sister Ramita finds Laxmi in supermarket and scolds her. Here, the author writes:

Laxmi Memsab and Jeevan had gone to a crowded supermarket in Bhatbhateni. Jeevan was walking behind her, holding a shopping basket, when a large woman approached them and snapped at her, "Whore! Are you happy sleeping with my sister's husband?" Her voice was loud enough so that people stopped and looked at them. Laxmi Memsab stared at the floor. The woman seemed to occupy the whole aisle. "Slut!" the woman barked. (182)

Here, Laxmi is shown as a soul cause of the destruction of Raju and Mona's married life. Ramita calls her "whore" in a public place as if she does not have any status or respect. Laxmi, being a female, becomes the cause of the destruction of the relation. On the other hand, Raju enjoys his life and is in a trip to Singapore. All people believe that Laxmi alone is responsible. But, it does not affect Raju's life. It shows the mentality of common Nepali people. The author does not contribute to change such conservative view. Unfortunately, the author himself is supporting this belief because he does not give any opportunity to Laxmi to express her views. He makes Laxmi very weak and makes her look toward the floor. In spite of giving her agency to revolt against such an embarrassing moment, he makes her weak who accept whatever said by the people.

The author becomes bias and oppresses female subaltern. Ramita is only a medium to oppress Laxmi. Through Ramita, the author is exposing his views that female should not use their freedom because they could not choose the right one. And wrong choice always leads towards destruction. On the other hand, there is not any

problem in Raju's life. He is enjoying his life with his wife and girlfriend. It clearly shows whatever a male chooses is right and they can maintain it. So, by showing such complete differences, the author is oppressing female and misrepresents them as a cause of difficulties and destruction. By making subaltern silent about their own situation, the author gives this conclusion.

Here, in another story "The Weight of the Gun", the speaker does not give attention to the subaltern Bhola, who is mentally disturbed. Bhola asks Janaki for money to buy a gun but she refuses. But, later she finds a gun under his bed. She cannot understand what to do because Bhola does not hear her. So, she wants Ananda to talk to Bhola and solve the problem. In such a critical situation the author writes:

Janaki told him about Bhola's coming to her the night before, about throwing the plate of food and telling her all his ideas of joining the insurgents.

Ananda laughed. "Then they'll really be a bunch of crazies." Janaki was irritated by his casual attitude. "What if he does something to himself?"

"Leave this here with me," he said. "I'll talk to him."

"When? He'll be outraged when he discovers that I stole it from his room."

"Then tell him I stole it, and when he comes here, I'll deal with him."

(111)

Here, Janaki does not seem serious until she finds a gun under Bhola's bed. She has to be more serious before Bhola asks for money. Here, the author does not make his character conscious about the critical situation of mentally disturbed Bhola. But when Janaki finds a gun in his room she gets frightened. It shows, how much ignorant she is for her own son who is going through such difficulties.

Here, the author shows the one side of society where, mentally disturbed person were treated as the mad one. Ananda is still casual for whatever happened. When Janaki tells the story of Bhola's buying a gun, he laughs as if it is nothing. Here, both father and mother are not conscious about how to handle Bhola's situation. By presenting such situation, the speaker again suppresses the individuality of subaltern.

Bhola's situation is very critical. He goes through a lot of difficulties. At that time, the author should contribute to bring him out of the situation. But, we cannot find the reasonable role of the author. The author intentionally makes his subaltern characters subordinate one by not giving any way out to their situation. Only by bringing the subalterns in their text the role of intellectuals does not complete, but they should represent the subaltern in a right way and have to give enough space from where the autonomous identity of the subalterns can be maintained. Here, the subalterns are only the subject of discussion of elite people.

In spite of speaking against the bad perception, the author makes his subaltern character silent for whatever pain they get. The author does not give agency to the oppressed people to express their views. It is clearly seen the intention of the author to avoid individuality of the subalterns. So the author intentionally misrepresents the subalterns as they are the second class people who can never come out of the situation.

To substantiate the argument further, the words from Tamara Strauss, "[s]ocietal fear that leads to transgression and brutality . . . he constructs an ordinary incident and sends his characters on a kaleidoscopic journey of emotions through it" (118). It is true that the characters in the writing of Mr. Upadhyay have the sense of fear of transgression and brutality. At the same time the characters are sent on a kaleidoscopic journey where they suffer the complexity of life and still they remain voiceless even at the end. The author should have thought for the promotion of the subalterns but this particular point of task is what lacking in him.

## Chapter IV

### Conclusion: Misrepresentation of the Subalterns

In his collection *The Royal Ghosts*, Upadhyay brings out new issues which are really relevant in contemporary Nepalese society. In his stories, Upadhyay presents the subalterns as his central characters. Through these, he tries to raise the voice of marginalized and oppressed people of Nepal. But, unfortunately, he fails to represent the marginal people in a right way. He misrepresents the subalterns as if they cannot speak for themselves and cannot take right decision. He presents the subaltern characters as the puppets in the hands of the elites. He only has sympathetic gaze towards them and to their situation. Like the elite historians and intellectuals, he has the same problem that he cannot give agency to his subaltern characters. In spite of giving them agency, he and his elite characters speak on behalf of them and misrepresent them as weak, submissive, surrendering and subordinated.

Upadhyay seems to have forgotten his responsibility towards the subaltern people. From the beginning till the end, he does not let his subaltern characters speak, take decision, never takes back to those powers that marginalize them and presents them as if they do not have any individuality. By doing this, he continues a kind of trend Western writers adopt. He presents the subaltern characters as Western people want them to see. By not showing the true characteristics of the subalterns, he presents them the way Western people want to see, to establish himself on the line of Western writers.

Some people tend to argue that the misrepresentation of the subaltern people in the various stories might lead to a scenario that it opens the way for representation and inclusion of that group of people who are in the margin. The establishment of equal rights is possible through showing them being victimized is the logic of these people. I particularly disagree on this point because literature is the reflection of the society

which works abundantly to expose the evils of the society. The exposition of the evils of the society makes or compels the social forces to change the very kind of social environment that can at least be in the minimal level but the present text of Mr. Upadhyay does not even leave a small trace or a small flicker of idea of hope shown in the lives of the characters who suffer the unjust treatment of the society. The marginal people in these stories are not given even a very small suggestion of hope suggesting the inclusion of such people in the mainstream of the society. So the story collection does not work to bring a relevant change in the society.

Society does not have to guarantee everything for the people who belong to margin. Simply providing the background for their agency is enough. The literary writers are the pillars of the society to change the societal ills exposing them for the orientation of public awareness. The very small effort of a writer can result in a very great contribution in social change with the movement towards inclusion. If we talk for an example Grimm Brothers' fairy tale Hansel and Gretel can be a right text for social inclusion. The woodcutter's family suffers the experience of lasting damage that the parents are compelled to desert the children in the wilderness. Despite the fact that the characters suffer dangerously throughout the story, they are led to a path of hope at the end of the story. This tiny suggestion of hope ultimately led the people of Germany to get victory overthrowing the long term suffering of the peasantry caused by the greed and brutality of feudal system during eighteenth century and prior to that. In the likely manner, if the present text had a flicker of symbolic idea giving the people the ray of hope, it would become a very brilliant text in Nepalese context of minority inclusion. But the effort does not result in providing agency to the people who belong to the margin. If a text is published by an aware writer with the dealings of the societal and cultural factors of a certain locality, that text should work as the pathfinder for

those who are pathless. But if the same text authenticates the pathlessness of the people, what justice, equality and inclusion can we hope from such literature?

So, the author, in his present text, portrays his characters from elitist point of view not letting them even to imagine the idea of inclusion in the equal footing with the people from the center in the society. He does not care about the darker side of the subalterns. The subalterns should get autonomous identity, freedom and voice.

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