

## Chapter One

### Samrat Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love* and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*

#### Introductory Outline of the Study

The focus of the study is cultural representation in Samrat Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love* and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Both of the texts share Eastern cultural world which is seen from Western standpoint. Similar Eastern social setting of the novels enriches a comparative study. However, there are various cultures even in Eastern society, which Westerners define from a single perspective. Both of the writers living in Western world present and represent the Eastern culture as they have been shaped from. Samrat Upadhyay discusses about Nepali typical culture, society and thoughts and Khaled Hosseini, similarly, explains Afghan culture, society and people as typical one. For this reason, the Eastern culture is represented from their perspective as a typical culture.

It seems that both writers have applied Western thought to represent oriental culture and society. As they mention in the novel, Easterners suffer from inferior feelings. Moreover, Eastern society has slavish mind regarding gender issue and sexuality. The novels explain females have been victimized from males' dominant roles and dominant patriarchy. Sexual violence, harassment, gender discrimination and lust of women are social problems in Eastern society. Both writers have raised the issues as Eastern social problems have remained unsolved. Stuart Hall focuses on the process of differentiation, the essentializing of otherness by marking difference. Otherness is represented through stereotyping images.

Both Upadhyay's and Hosseini's novels present the Eastern world what West thinks about East. Representing the Eastern society, the authors' own cultures create a

stereotypical representation of East. Upadhyay discusses about birth place, cultures, society, language, religion and relatives aspects which help to create discourse about the East. Both, Hosseini and Upadhyay are diasporic writers, who show their longingness to their culture. Upadhyay's novel focuses more on three major characters; Ramchandra, Malati and Goma and, Hosseini's novel also focuses on three major characters; Rasheed, Mariam and Laila. Both Rasheed and Ramchandra are presented as sexually corrupt persons. In comparison to Rasheed, Ramchandra seems less corrupt. Goma's and Mariam's condition of having a step woman in their husband's lives can also be compared. Malati, having a baby girl with a taxi driver, can be compared with Laila, pregnant with a child to Tariq. Hosseini's presentation of Islamic culture, and Afghani society and, Upadhyay's presentation of Nepali society and culture seem powerful to present cultures respectively. Therefore, the research uses the comparative study of cultural representation.

*The Guru of Love* tells the story of Ramchandra, a maths teacher earning a low wages and living in a small apartment in Kathmandu with his wife and two children. Everything seems favorable and well going, until the day, when Ramchandra engages in an illicit relationship with one of his tutees, Malati, a beautiful young woman. Malati evokes in him sensational feeling of love and desire, which he never has towards his wife, who comes from a privileged social background. The other side of the story depicts the political scenario of Kathmandu and its denizens' reeling under the shadows of modernization and traditional aspect.

Upadhyay exploits the setting of Kathmandu and characters from Nepali society, however, some figures seem to be strange to exist in real situation of Nepal. Goma, wife to Ramchandra, accepts her husband's immoral relationship with his student Malati. It is a rare incident in a largely orthodox society, where females are

supposedly irresistible to the idea of having a co-wife in the life of their husband. In presenting such unconventional and unacceptable relationship, the novel challenges the traditional aspects of love and relations and depicts on entire new horizon of non female association. It dismantles the culture and customs in regard to female behavior. To have comparative study on Samrat Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love* and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, in terms of their portrayal of culture of their native countries is the aim of this research. To search the reason behind choosing the popular issues like framing of Afghanistan and Nepali demographic terrain, illicit love affair and their connection with Western eyes is another objective.

Similarly, Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* also moves around the three major characters and the circumstances that come to their life. The story is set during the tumult of thirty-year transition from Soviet occupation to Taliban Control and post Taliban rebuilding. The book focuses on the tumultuous lives of the two Afghan women and how their lives cross each other. Mariam is a girl with illegitimate birth, who is forced to marry Rasheed, a shoemaker, after her mother commits suicide. Later on Rasheed marries Laila, a fourteen year girl.

Hosseini, like Upadhyay in *The Guru of Love* gives priority to the taste of Eastern or Oriental society. His choice of subject-matter of generalization of characters in the novel is quite similar with Upadhyay's. Rasheed's character from *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is similar to Upadhyay's protagonist Ramchandra. Both characters are represented as illicit and hasty. The same thing happens in the case of Mariam and Goma. Mariam like Goma in Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love* accepts her husband's second wife in an unexpected way and becomes Aziza's (step daughter) teacher at home.

Both *The Guru of Love* and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* represent the culture of

the authors' birth places. Both the authors have represented their birth places and cultures by universalizing the certain demographic terrain, illicit sexual relation and political chaos. In comparison to Rasheed, Ramchandra seems less corrupt. Goma's and Mariam's condition of having a co-wife in their husband's lives can also be compared. Hosseini's representation of Islam culture and Upadhyay's representation of Nepali society and culture look similar. Therefore, the research seems significant regarding the comparative study of cultural representation.

The novels have been analyzed from various perspectives. Like any other text, various interpretations have been made since their publication and they have been interpreted in different ways from beginning to the present. Since the publication, they have been the subject of many critical studies.

### ***The Guru of Love as a Criticism of Nepali Culture***

*The Guru of Love* has drawn a lot of critical attentions. The book has been variously critiqued and interpreted and the body of criticism has done much to highlight the author praising the craft of real depiction. John H. Clarks in *The New York Review* opines that Upadhyay's work is an exposure to earn international fraternity of artists, who assemble through their writing to earn them international brotherhood. He writes:

There is an international fraternity of artist of the middle class exposure in the work of Upadhyay. What animates these artists' moral vision are above all the compassion and love of humanity and the entire mankind. The universality of these themes is demonstrated in Upadhyay's first novel, *The Guru of Love*. (32)

This extract shows that the novel is studied by Clarks as a simple description of class which determines human thoughts of people. He hints that social class determines

level and social prestige as it is mentioned in the novel. Moreover, Clarks appreciates the author's use of universal social phenomena.

In the same way, John C. Howley in *Contemporary Writers in South Asia* takes Upadhyay's writing as one of the inspirations to the people of the Eastern world. He further narrates that the novel has many interpretations as it narrates the east and west in a scale:

As an exciting horn of plenty *The Guru of Love* has given rise to a great numbers of interpretations. Reviewers focus on the sheet breadth of Upadhyay erudition, his treatment of the past, his skill in balancing genre such as the Romance, the Fairy tale, the campus-novel, the detective story and the quest; his ideas about contemporary literary criticism and the evocation of the rich tradition of Kathmandu valley.

(86)

The novel is probably the most complete, though it raises numerable issue is concern to literary genres of fair and fests and love and mysticism. Simply, it explains in relation to author's biography. He focuses on author's reminiscence as writer reveals himself through his writing. The novel set against the background of political upheavals is viewed from psychological, historical, social, and cultural presentation.

Pointing to the middle class people of Kathmandu, Suketo Mehta comments:

*The Guru of Love*, which considers the middle class in a place one would not normally look for it, in the city of Kathmandu, Nepal. Not the Kathmandu of Western seekers of salvation or hashish not the Nepal that exists in the Western imagination principally as a land of mountains to test one's manhood against. This book brings us back to congested, smoggy valley of Kathmandu. (8)

Upadhyay's portrayal of Kathmandu in this novel remains to the Nepali readers who are familiar with culture and tradition, and they even accuse him of portraying Kathmandu that exists solely in his mind middle class people of pre-democracy movement reflect the general perception of Nepal to some extent but Upadhyay largely sketches social practices, targeting his publisher.

Some sections of Nepali readers find the novel shocking as it shows the women in their extremity, exposing women sometimes awesomely divine as Goma and sometimes projecting women as no more than a sexual object. With Goma, allowing her husband to bring his mistress, Upadhyay makes sweeping generalization of Nepali women. Similarly Anagha Neelakantan, a writer based in Kathmandu comments:

This is not to suggest that Upadhyay tells the 'truth' about a certain period of Kathmandu life or "exposes" it. This realism doesn't simply reflect reality that would render much of his work ineffective if only because it might have to be hard to believe the people in them and the things they do. Instead, Upadhyay shows how one understanding of a society or a city can be used to illuminate few of the many possibilities for life and behavior that it throws up. (7)

Upadhyay's misrepresentation of Nepali culture is clearly seen in Neelakantan's comment. According to Neelakantan, Upadhyay misrepresents the Nepali culture by universalizing the certain demographic terrain, illicit sexual relation and political chaos.

### **Afghanistan Presented by Khaled Hosseini**

Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is also interpreted from various points of view. Like the criticism given to Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love*, Hosseini's

*A Thousand Splendid Suns* is interpreted with the words of appreciation and criticism. Some critics argue that Hosseini gives less priority to the taste of eastern or oriental society in terms of readership. The Afghan culture and society in the novel is not presented as its reality. It is presented by universalizing certain characters and situations. Natasha Walter in her review, '*Behind the Veil*' hints the intension of Hosseini, stating:

Hosseini is almost too careful to describe for ignorant westerners, the political background to these women's line from the Soviet occupation that ruled Laila's childhood to the growing strength of the Mujahedeen that her brothers join, amid rising rumors that, after eight years of fighting, the Soviets were losing this war. (16)

In this remark, Walter observes that Hosseini is knowingly or unknowingly concerned with ignorant Westerners. During the period of war with Soviets, Hosseini attempts to meet political concerns of the Westerners.

John M. Formy-Duval, in a review of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* comments that some issues of the Eastern society can be compared with the Western society, but comparison of all issues might not be useful. John writes; "It is difficult to accept that some of what Westerner perceive as 'evil' is Rasheed acting consisted in accordance with century's old Afghani tradition" (14). If we forget the extremist view on social customs and traditions, one cannot believe that Afghani political figures went to escape from modern way of living.

Similarly, Sam Sacks in his review states "What he does possess is upper level literacy, a propensity for cheerfully piling on the catastrophes and the immeasurable luck of having been born in a country with the major English speaking nations have recently gone to war" (2). According to Sacks, the eye glass of looking Afghani

society is not far away from the oriental mindset. With the references of these critical responses from various critics that reflect their own perceptions, some of them have dealt with the issues of representation of culture by universalizing the certain demographic terrain, illicit sexual relation and political chaos.

With the help of representation truth is generalized and it brings truth and knowledge permanently into public discourse. The meaning depends on the system of concepts and images formed in our thoughts which can stand for or 'represent' the world, enabling us to refer to things both inside and outside our heads. Foucault regards the nature of discourse on an event in time since it is not only that which represents struggle of systems of domination, but the object through which and with which we struggle the power we seek to possess.

Similarly, both Upadhaya and Hosseini represent their own culture from Western perspective. Hall calls the regime of representation, the way by which these images speak to each other at any historical moment using a whole repertoire of reiterations and common references. These mediated representations with all their fantasies and desires effectively naturalize and fix the boundary between 'Self' and 'Other'. However, as representations are never fixed, Hall calls for a politics of representation to be able to transcend negative images with new self-appropriated meanings.

The representation of Eastern society develops Westerner's views which help to interpret this society. Moreover, this theoretical perspective creates discourse with the help of representation. Similarly, both these writers explain how the Eastern society is entrapped within narrower and congested social issues. Still, there is strong gender violence as shown in both of the novels. Western ideology has influenced both Upadhaya's and Hosseini's psyche while depicting their birth places and misrepresent



culture and people of their motherland while catering the palate of the Westerners.

Both Upadhyay and Hosseini are authors who observe their own cultures through Western ideologies and their psyche is influenced. Influenced by Western ideology, the writers consider Western culture as mainstream and regard oriental culture and people as inferior or 'other' in comparison to the main stream culture of the West. Both novels present simple story wherein common social problems are described but these social and cultural behaviours reflect the glimpse of the Eastern society.

This research focuses on the comparative study of Samrat Upadhyay's *The Guru of Love* and Khaled Hosseini's *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Basically the representation of Nepali culture and people in *The Guru of Love* and the representation of Afghan culture and people in *A Thousand Splendid Suns* will be discussed on the research. In fact, both novels are portrayal of the Eastern cultural practices as the authors are reminded of while living in the Western society but the presentation of their own cultural background represents overall culture of Eastern world. For this reason, Westerners create discourse, knowledge and truth about Easterners.

The present research work has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter presents an introductory outline of this review of literature present study and the tool to interpret the text. Second chapter analyzes the texts at a considerable length. It sorts out some of the extracts from the texts as evidence to support the thesis of study. The third chapter is the conclusion of this research.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Cultural Representation**

#### **Representation of Reality through Discourse**

The discourse is a system of representation framed by a whole set of forces that bring the non-West into Western learning and Western consciousness. So, the representation of oriental people, geography, culture, religion and language cannot be matched with the essence of the real orient. “Problem doesn’t consist in drawing the line between that in a discourse which falls under the category of truth and that which comes under some other category, but in seeing historically how effects of truth are produced within discourse which on themselves are neither true nor false” (1139). Foucault identifies the creation of truth in society. Individuals would do well to recognize the ultimate truth. ‘Truth’ is the construct of the political economic forces that command the majority of the power within the social web. There is no truly universal truth but creating discourse and knowledge with the help of power it is represented as a truth.

Ideology is not baseless illusion, but a social reality, an active material for it might help to organize the particular lives of the human beings. Foucault further writes, “Ideology has nothing to do with the illusion, with a mistake, distorted representation of its social content” (7). Ideological statements may be true at present but false for blocking of the possibility of transformed state of affairs. It is important to note that one apprehends reality through representation of reality through texts, discourses and images. But because one can see reality only through representation, it does not follow that one does not see reality at all. Reality is always more extensive and complicated than any system of representation that can possibly be compared. Consequently, through the history of human culture, people have become dissatisfied

with language's ability to represent reality and, as a result, have developed new modes of representation. It is necessary to construct new ways of presenting reality as people only know reality through representation.

Said examines the process by which this discursive formation emerges. Said holds the belief that the discourse of orientation has been functioning from the ancient times. There were the lenses through which the Orient was experienced and they shaped the language, perception and form of the encounter between the West and non-West. And the representation of the orient, until now, remained always same because the West inherited and articulated the same images of the orient as 'barbaric,' 'uncivilized,' 'sensual,' 'enigmatic' that needed 'our project of civilizing them'.

Such type of patronizing and didactic qualities of the representation were self-containing, self-reinforcing character of a closed system having no empirical base of analyzing 'other.' The orient is always represented as outsiders in the rhetoric of *Orientalism*. By manipulating certain images of the orient, the Westerners have legitimated the vocabulary which could help them control and dominate the orient. Said further expresses his idea:

Imaginative geography, from the varied portraits to be found in the inferno [. . .] legitimate a vocabulary, a universe of representative discourse peculiar to the discussion and understanding of the Islam and the orient [. . .] the vocabulary employed whenever the Orient is spoken or written about, is assert of representative figures or tropes.

(36)

In this way we need not look for correspondence between the language used to depict the orient and the orient itself. These figures are like stylized character, a discourse has survived and been able to reproduce itself for centuries, resulting in catastrophic

consequences for the victims. This discourse says that the West stands for rationality and modernity, while the orient stands for religiousness and tradition. *Orientalism* is a way of thinking about Asia and Asians as strange, servile, exotic, dark, mysterious, erotic and dangerous, and has helped the West to define itself through this contrasting and dichotomous image. Stuart Hall says:

System of representation', we should observe that what we have just said is a very simple version of a rather complex process. It is simple enough to see how we might form concepts for things we can perceive – people or material objects, like chairs, tables and desks. But we also form concepts of rather obscure and abstract things, which we can't in any simple way see, feel or touch. (3)

The real issue of this research is to show the representation and how power plays important role to make discourse and justify this in relation with representation into the Western world as well as around the world. It makes clear that how the truth is distorted or how the discourse is created.

The discourse is a system of representation framed by a whole set of forces that bring the non-west into Western learning and consciousness. So, the representation of oriental people, geography, culture, religion and language cannot be matched with the essence of real orient.

### **Politics of Culture**

The term 'culture' is difficult to define exactly as it possesses countless meanings. It generally refers to patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activities significance and importance. Culture contains the customs and beliefs, art, way of life and social organization of a particular country or a group. As politics is concerned with numerous manifestations and relations of power at all

levels of human interaction, the politics of culture is concerned with the contestation over the meaning and resources of culture. Different definitions of culture reflect different theoretical bases for understanding the criteria for evaluating human activity. Cultural anthropologists most commonly use the term culture to refer to the universal human capacity and activities to classify, codify and communicate their experiences materially and symbolically.

Culture can be defined as all the way of life including arts, beliefs, and institution of population that have passed down from generation to generation. Culture has been called the way of life for an entire society. As such, it includes codes of manners, dress, language, religion, rituals, norms of behaviours such as law and morality and systems of belief as well as the art. A culture, after all, is by definition at least, a set of cultural objects.

Culture is manifested in human activities such as music, literature, lifestyle, food, painting and sculpture. Although some people identify culture in terms of consumption and consumer goods, anthropologists understand culture to refer not only to consumption of goods, but to the general processes which produce own goods and give them meaning, and to the social relationship and practices in which such objects and process become embedded. For them, culture includes art, science, as well as moral systems. In *Cultural Studies*, Chris Barker views culture as:

The concept of culture does not represent an entity in an independent object world. It is best thought of as a mobile signifier that enables distinct ways of talking about human activity. The concept of culture is thus political and contingent. In so far as a cultural study has a distinguishing take on the concept of culture, it is one that stresses the intersection of power and meaning. (477)

Most of the people have an idea of culture that developed in Europe during the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This notion of culture reflected inequalities within European societies, and between European powers and their colonies around the world. It identifies “culture” with civilization and contrasts it with “nature.” According to this thinking one can classify some countries and nations as more cultured than others, and some people are more cultured than others.

Some cultural theorists have thus tried to eliminate popular or mass culture from the definition of culture. In the essay “Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences” Homi K. Bhabha views:

The enunciation of cultural differences problematizes the division of past and present, tradition and modernity, at the level of cultural representation and its authoritative address. It is the problem of how, in signifying the present something comes to be repeated, relocated and translated in the name of tradition, in the guise of pastness that is not necessarily a faithful sign. (156)

In practice, culture referred to elite activities such as museum, caliber art and classical music, and the “cultured” described people who knew about, and took part in these activities. They are often called “high culture” namely the culture of the ruling social group to distinguish them from mass culture or popular culture.

According to Michel Foucault, truths are constructed and power is created under shared domain of society. For him, society under the system possesses some knowledge. By using such knowledge society creates discourse. This discourse consists of representation, power and truth. Truth itself is the product of power and of the system in which it follows; it changes as system changes. It means, power determines the truth and as soon as the system of society changes the truth also

changes. The power is generated in society by producing the discourse, and by constructing the truths. Foucault says that the subject is always placed in a net like organization, power, knowledge and representation:

Effects of truth are produced within discourses which in themselves are neither true nor false. Truth, then, is itself a product of relations of power and of the systems in which it flows, and it changes as systems change. By the same token the old epistemological subject is no longer of importance except, of course, as a historical product such a subject was constituted historically itself and cannot be presumed as “truth” in any genealogical account. (1134)

In the same way, these novels also represent eastern cultures. Foucault talks about representation which is possible through discourse. These writers represent the Eastern world. Both writers are renowned writers, therefore, whatever they have discussed in the novels, represent Eastern cultures. The society is depicted as a backward and dipped in crisis. The novels represent Eastern societies not free from inner problems. Westerners have preoccupied concepts to look at Eastern society but these kinds of novels reinforce their perspectives.

### **Representation of Fashion**

Both novelists have set typical representation of their own cultures respectively. By giving a cultural overview, both novels represent their world in the text. Fashion is one of the features of human identity; therefore, representation reveals cultural characteristics. Mainly both writers create mental pictures of typical a Nepali and a Muslim fashion respectively in novels.

Fashion is visible cultural attribute which has significant role for cultural identity. Both novels exploit fashion as one of defining features of their culture

respectively. Upadhyay's novel identifies a typical national costume. Similarly, Upadhyay, projects a typical cultural fashion or cultural clothes in the novel. The women's morality and behaviours are observed in terms of their dresses and physical appearances. Sari and Cholo are socially accepted female dresses; even the dress symbolizes marital status. The author has created a image of Nepali woman within this line: "Wearing the same sari to several weddings" (41). This means Sari is public and formal dress for women. It is taken as national dress code, however, people wear informal dress. By giving an explanation of national costume, he also shows cultural significance of it. The author creates a visual image of Nepali woman when he describes Goma with formal costume.

Furthermore, the author tries to make clear about the national dress which is important for us because it identifies all Nepali people all over the world. Likewise, he describes women's way of wearing dresses; "by making petticoats and blouses, clothes for women" (82). It is explained here that these clothes are known as women-dress. Such typical dress code are being disappeared in the modern society, however, the author has tried to reflect for cultural representation.

The author further introduces Nepali male costume which is "daura suruwal" (98). Upadhaya gives significance for cultural surrounding as he explains it in cultural context. He further explains about the Nepali man's outer appearance as he says; "Rachana's father was a taxi driver who had followed Malati from a bus stop near her house to school. He was very handsome with curly hair and a moustache that ran down to chin" (98). It also explains about physical make up of the Nepali males who generally keep moustache. It is also a cultural part of Nepali culture. Furthermore, he explains: "Then, incredibly, in one swift motion Malati's sari was in a large monkey's hand part of it covering its body so that it looked as if it was the one wearing the blue



sari. It ran out the entrance, the sari trailing behind. Malati in her petticoat and her blouse, feebly tried to cover her chest with her hands” (89). By giving a frequent example of women dress code, he mentions a traditional women costume.

Likewise, by describing a typical cultural appearance, Hossenni wants to present us a picture of Muslim female appearance. As he creates a stereotypical image like; “In the morning, Mariam was given a long sleeved, dark green dress to wear over white cotton trousers. Afsoon gave her a green Hijab and a pair of matching sandals” (11). It creates an image of society which helps people to know about them.

Fashion is a dominant feature of cultural identity, therefore both writers have discussed these matters. More importantly, Hosseini frequently uses a word ‘burka’ that means a cultural dress code. In Islamic culture the ‘burka’ is so significant for women. Almost all women have to wear ‘burka’ in public places and it is their cultural performance that women should not show their face to others. This issue has been criticized by women’s right and human rights activists. However; the cultural dress is still being put respectfully in their culture. Hossenni also portrays an Islamic culture in which fashion is one of the defining features because most Islamic people have typical costume which is different from other cultures.

### **Linguistic Representation**

Language is a part of culture because it carries typical and contextual meaning of the particular culture, society and group of people. Language is formed by different symbols which are communicable with the help of some contextual meaning. Hall say; “Any representational system which functions in this way can be thought of as working, broadly speaking according to the principles of representation through language” (5). Therefore, all of the linguistic symbols are interpreted on the basis of cultural and contextual meanings. Thus, language is also supposed as a major part of

culture. In both of the texts writers have exploited several typical linguistic symbols which can be understood within contextual and cultural framework.

Hossenni has exploited typical words and sentences in the novel which can be understood within Muslim culture with particular meaning of them. For instance; the word 'harami' is frequently used but it has negative meaning in their culture. He interprets the word in terms of his culture.

Hosseini has used many words from his own culture in the novel. The typical language and its meaning in the novel are frequently used. He exploits for instance; 'In the name of Allah and with Allah, and in the name of the messenger of Allah upon whom be the blessings and peace of Allah' (95). The frequent usage of god's name in the novel exposes their religious and conservative beliefs they have. Therefore, usage of language also plays vital role in representing particular culture and society.

The author exploits so many cultural, religious and social linguistic symbols which carry the cultural meaning. He mostly and frequently uses such words; "harami", 'kolba', 'shalqam', 'babzi', 'akhund', 'tahamul', 'mashallah', 'dokhatar jo', 'hijab', 'matryoshka', 'surrah', 'ayat', 'nay', 'fahmidi', 'khastegar', 'tashakor', 'azan', 'la illah u ililah', 'hamshira', 'aftwa', 'namoos', 'hamam' etc.

The author has exploited many words, phrases and sentences for giving a contextual meaning of the language. It means all the given words have specific meaning in his culture and society. Therefore, the author has used such language. Moreover, he has revealed the cultural and contextual meaning of the words. For an instance; he has used the word 'harami' which has negative meaning in their culture. In this way using language fashion is a means through which a particular culture is represented. Both of them have heavily used fragmented sentences and words which can matter for representing social class, consciousness, cultural performance etc.

Upadhyay also exploits his own language in the novel. The typical use of language represents cultural as well as social status of human being. He frequently uses a word 'Khattam'. The following extract explains, "The word buzzing through the city was khattam finished or stopped or gone and after a while it acquired a special currency, rolling off citizens' tongues like a mantra. The country's situation is khattam, the prime minister, appointed by the king is khattam" (37). This kind of language use misrepresents social conditions as well. However his use of typical Nepali language also has played important role in representing the situation of contemporary Nepal.

### **Cultural Rites and Rituals**

Regarding cultural representation, rites and rituals have significant role for defining cultural features. Both writers have identified with own cultural rites. All cultural rituals have contextual meanings and these are being celebrated for years whether they favour both culture and people or not.

Upadhyay typically identifies national and racial cultural practices of the Nepali society. All cultures have typical festivals, social practices and rituals as he mentions here:

With his towel, Ramchandra rubbed his belly and his crotch, and looked at Mr. Sharma, who having realized that he had lost his audience, was humming a song. The sacred thread he wore around his chest, a sign of his orthodox Brahmanism, was shriveled, and Ramchandra could not help noticing as he did every morning, the bulge in Mr. Sharma's underwear, unfazed by the cold it had just endured. (55)

He explains about the orthodox Brahmins who wear a sacred thread called 'janai' and

pray every morning. It is a Brahmin culture and every pure Brahmin should wear it otherwise it is believed that they are impure, polluted. Thus, it is a typical and caste based ritual. The author introduces a typical social practice of the Brahmin here.

Furthermore, he discusses about the national festivals of Nepal. Dashain and Tihar are the national festivals of the country. Both of these festivals are celebrated by all castes and races, both festivals represent national unity and social harmony in the country. Therefore, he explains: “Let’s think about this carefully, he said. If we hire someone that means even less money in savings. As it is with Dashain this month we won’t be able to set anything aside. He was about to ask why she had offered them sweets this evening but he remembered the money he had spent that morning and keep quiet” (51). He gives a sense of general thinking of the people who want to wear new clothes during these festivals. Poor or rich all people celebrate these festivals and as far as possible, all of them forget their pain and enjoy it. The author signifies Nepali culture and its importance for their livings, through celebrating the festivals.

Similarly, Upadhayay reflects another cultural performance of Nepali society. So many cultural practices exist in Nepal which proves that the country entertains cultural diversity. Nagpanchami is one of the major festivals of the people which is described as:

It was like the painting people hung above their door during Nag Panchami: two snakes about to eat each other’s tails. This image gave him more energy; the sense that he too was being pursued quickened his pulse. He smiled at a couple of familiar faces, even said hello to a neighbor carrying shopping bags, but he made these gestures elsewhere, in a place different from the one he now occupied with Malati. (66)

More importantly, the author defines such cultural meaning or how do people interpret such cultural performances. Thus, such cultural attributes represent Nepali identity. Similarly, such traditional culture have been celebrated over here to define them.

In the same way, Hossenni also recognizes the Islam cultures and cultural performances. It is one of the major societies of the world, therefore, it has a different history, culture and tradition. It has its own cultural significance which can heal their suffering for a while. All of them feel free and equal during the festivals. ‘Eid-ul-fitr’ is one of the major festivals among the Islams which has been described here:

They went to Sha-e-Nau, where kids romped about in new shirts and beaded, brightly colored vests and compared Eid gifts. Women brandished plates of sweets. Mariam saw festive lanterns hanging from shop windows, heard music blaring from loudspeakers. Strangers called out ‘Eid Mubarak’ to her as they passed. (79)

Islam people celebrate the Eid as a main festival and as the Nepali do Dashain and Tihar. They wear new clothes, eat delicious food and forget all suffering, enmity and sadness among them.

Similarly, Ramadan is another festival in which almost all Islams sit fasting and pray for god. It is believed that the Islams are most devoted for their culture, religion and social practices who cannot upset by their cultural deeds. It is described: “Back at the kolba, on the first of three days of Eid- ul- Fitr celebration that followed Ramadan, Jalil would visit Mariam and Nana. Dressed in suit and tie, he would come bearing Eid presents. One year, he gave Mariam a wool scarf. The three of them would sit for tea and then Jalil would excuse himself” (78). During this festival, it is necessary for them to give and take presents. All of them exchange presents. The

author clarifies that during the Eid all rich people donate some amount of their property to poor people. This is the most generous and human cultural practice because all of them believe that they are offsprings of the God therefore all of them should remain happy. It tries to prove that the Islam religion and culture is the most generous one among different religions.

Furthermore, the following lines explain about cultural performances:

He would bring Mariam chocolate candy wrapped in foil a basketful of dyed boiled eggs, cookies. After he was gone Mariam would climb one of the willows with her treats. Perched on a high branch, she would eat Mullah Faizullah's chocolates and drop the foil wrappers until they lay scattered about the trunk of the tree like silver blossoms. (78)

During the festivals, gift-giving culture is most significant because all of them exchange the gifts. Mostly, rich people give some supportive gift to poor people thinking that poor people feel a kind of support by their donation.

In the same way, the cultural practices show hospitality. The following quote makes it further clear:

But there was little pleasure in this for her Mariam dreaded Eid, this time of hospitality and ceremony, when families dressed in their best and visited each other. She would imagine the air in Herat crackling with merriness, and high spirited, bright eyed people showering each other with endearments and goodwill. A forlornness would descend on her like a shroud then and would lift only when Eid had passed. (78)

In this way both the writers have introduced their cultural, social and traditional rites and rituals for the particular cultural significance for human benefit and happiness. It is cultural uniqueness which recognizes the particular culture among several cultures.

Both of the writers represent their own cultures by explaining their own typical performances and practices.

### **Religious Representation**

Both writers, Upadhyay and Hosseini, explore religion and religious practices of human societies. On the one hand, Upadhyay exposes Hindu religion as it is practiced in Nepal. On the other hand, Hosseini has presented his Islam religion and its rigidity. Mostly Nepali people seem religious, lots of time they spend in religious performances for festivals. In Hindu society, to follow religion, religious performances are observed as a holy job and responsibility of the followers. Even educated urban people have equal respect for God and religion.

The ideal Hindu woman is one who sees her highest good in her husband, is devoted to him with a religious zeal and is good and chaste. In other words, she is under the control of her husband, and the wifely role is one of the devotions whatever may be the circumstances. The frequent uses of image of god and descriptions of religious beliefs convince and project Nepali society: “A yellowed poster of Goddess Laxmi her many hands clasping her trident, conch shell, and lotus, was posted on a door in the corner” (21). It reminds a clear mental image of god and goddess that every Nepali household owns.

Along with religious beliefs, the author explains women’s position within Hindu religion. The woman’s place is primarily confined into the home, her role limited to procreation and upbringing of children and catering to the needs of her husband. Chastity and control of sexual urge are the most important aspects of the role of a wife. The maintenance of chastity requires control of sexual urge and a woman’s sexuality should always be under the control of man. In religious literature woman thus controlled and idealized is deified, idolized and worshipped. Hindu

religion treats woman as an epitome of humanity while the Nepali society and culture treats woman as second class citizen and subordinate to man, which is presented through literature. So Hall mentions:

The stories we tell about them, the images of them we produce, the emotions we associate with them, the ways we classify and conceptualize them, the values we place on them. Culture we may say is involved in all those practices which are not simply generally programmed into us like the jerk of the knee when tapped, but which carry meaning and value for us, which need to be meaningfully interpreted by others. (3)

Hindu women are dominantly focused on males and on articulating the key social relations and obligations entailed by the dominant patrilineal organization of society. Toward her husband the wife's public role is one of respect-avoidance. The young wives rarely address their husbands in the presence of others and then only indirectly through a third party. It means all people have firm religious homage which drives them is explained in the following lines:

All the people in city were praying to the goddess to make them wealthy, Ramchandra prayed to the small picture of Laxmi in his kitchen and lit a few sticks of incense. Every year he had prayed to Laxmi, asking her to do something about his financial situation. As he stood, his palms joined in front of her, he would picture a house, just a small house, with enough room for his small family. (151)

These lines disclose a social reality of Nepali society, wherein all people have deep respect toward Gods and goddesses. Ramchandra is a teacher, who is educated; however, he believes in god and spends his time praying to them. Moreover, it



unfolds superstitious beliefs by which people become slave. Nepali society, still believes in supernatural power and conservative beliefs. Even educated people have not been able to get rid of this kind of social thought and they are being enslaved.

Similarly, the author speaks for Nepali cultural performances. He mostly elucidates the festival *Tihar* which is supposed as funniest and most fascinating of festivals. He frequently describes it. There are lists of festivals in Hindu religions, among them *Dashain* and *Tihar* are greatest ones. People celebrate these festivals with great excitement. The author puts into words:

The city had brightened in anticipation of *Tihar*. Around the outer walls of their houses many inhabitants had already wrapped strings of lights that blinked and winked all evening long. Those people who were rich left them on all night, and the faint glow illuminated the street, sometimes revealing a roaming band of dogs. In Ranipokhari, the entire periphery of the pond was illuminated, and so was the bridge that led to the Shiva shrine in the center. The lights, reflected in the water, seemed to be swaying when a breeze ruffled the surface. A couple of times in the evening Ramchandra stood by the back railings that surrounded the pond and watched. (149)

The given lines depict the real partial of Nepali society during Tihar. At the same time through these lines the author tries to show the darkness hidden behind the dazzling lights, which is the fate of poor Nepali people like Ramchandra.

Hosseini has tried to represent Afghan society and religion wherein women have very poor lives. Mariam's mother Nana works as a housemaid in a wealthy cinema owner Jalil. Jalil casts her out to the shack. Jalil has multiple legitimate wives and children, but Mariam is an illegitimate "harami" or bastard. Mariam's other

friend, Mullah Faizullah, teaches her the Koran and listens to her problems.

As he presents his own country; he represents Afghan culture, society and people through fictional world. In this novel, he has presented cultural aspects through which he shows cultural world of the Afghans. In fact, Hosseini (mis) represents his own culture as lower one where violence on females, social crimes are highlighted in the novel. This kind of fictional representation gives negative images of Afghan society and people.

However, the more difficult question facing reality, as well as its fictional representation, is how to transcend ethnic, religious, and linguistic differences in Afghan society on grounds other than blood relationship and other than a single person's act of benevolence. In other words, what could serve as a common denominator among various ethnic groups, to be constitutive of the kind of cultural and political identity that could bring about not only peaceful coexistence but also social cohesion in Afghanistan? An awareness of blood relation among various people in Afghanistan is not a recent phenomenon. The multi-ethnic texture of the Afghan population is not only a consequence of Afghanistan being at the crossroads of so many conquerors throughout the last fifteen centuries, Afghanistan has fostered the custom to engage in marital relations with various ethnic groups throughout the land in order to win their loyalty.

Likewise, Hosseini's novel treats ethnic and religious affiliations as the source of injustice and socio-psychological imbalance in the Afghan society. The novel offers the present ethnic and religious conflicts in today's Afghanistan that revolve around the Afghan society. Social problems, political problems, cultural as well as class issues are the source of conflict which are represented in the novel.

One of the most difficult challenges with which Afghans have faced

throughout the twentieth century and which also constitutes one of the major concerns of the present socio-cultural struggle today is how to construct a cultural heritage common to all the different ethnic groups living in Afghanistan, when a sense of national identity and unity can hardly be achieved without attending to the history of the recent ethnic, religious, and linguistic dilemmas and traumas.

The conundrum consists in how to provide a common cultural heritage and national identity. Cultural memory, as is well known, is primarily a function of language. Hosseini describes the suffering of his country under different problems, which Mariam encounters when she finally returns home, hoping to help her family. The haunting images of Afghan society are represented in the novel.

### **Representation of Political Condition**

In the novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, Khaled Hosseini explores the contemporary history in the background of Afghanistan. The text paints an eye opening picture of what Afghanistan was and what it has become. It describes vividly how the combination of war can devastate a country and people. The novel also illuminates the most Afghan cultures and law abiding people. Furthermore, the religious and ethnic consciousness shapes the individual mind resulting heart rending domination. It talks to a great extent about the Taliban era in which study of Afghanistan would be incomplete without study of hunger, war, landmines, refugees, and so on.

Hosseini vividly describes Afghanistan, the conflicts with the rule of the Taliban. Hosseini is the first Afghan novelist to fictionalize his culture for the Western readers, melding the personal struggle of ordinary people into the terrible historical sweep of a devastated country in a rich and soul-searching narrative. The novel presents a realistic picture:

As gunfire cracked in the hills, they watched the clouds slide over the moon and the last of the season's fireflies charting bright yellow arcs in the dark. And when Aziza woke up crying and Raseed yelled for Laila to come up and shut her up, a look passed between Laila and Mariam. An unguarded, knowing look. And in this fleeting wordless exchange with Mariam, Laila knew that they were not enemies any longer. (244)

On the other side, this novel explores the activities of the Afghanistan government and how their soldiers patrolled in the street of Afghanistan. Soldiers patrol the sidewalks, no tanks rolling up and down on the streets. There is not peace and rest around the society. Due to the invasion many Afghan people were compelled to leave their homeland and their property and seek for help in other country as refugees. The author, Tariq and his father are also destined to leave their country.

Here, the writer Khaled Hosseini describes how the Taliban is terrorizing Afghanistan and creating a discourse of domination. The fictional character Rasheed describes these things to the protagonist Mariam about the Taliban who had been received initially as heroes. Once, at a soccer game, a man next to him cheered too loudly. A Talib pistol whipped thinking he had made the noise. This is symbolic to the 1992 event in Afghanistan when ethno-religious warlords looted and pillaged Kabul and other cities in a race to see who can amass the most booty. Interestingly enough, in 1994 the emerging Taliban regime banned kite fighting and an assortment of other activities.

Through the character Laila, the author reflects an effect of war. As Laila has been affected, she is handicapped by explosion of bombs. An Afghan is not free from any kind of conflict. They are affected by religious, racial or ethnic war and outer war

and are victimized. Through this novel, the writer tries to reveal the political condition along with people's suffering:

At length about the struggle between Britain and Czarist Russia over Afghanistan. He knew the difference between a stalactite and a stalagmite, and could tell you that the distance between the earth and the sun was the same as going from Kabul to Ghazni one and a half million times. But if Laila needed the lid of a candy jar forced open, she had to go to May which felt like a betrayal. Ordinary tools befuddled Babi. (109)

This description of the picture mirrors the life of the people who are considered to be the affected from Afghanistan, superior to other ethnic groups like Hazara, Uzbeks, and Kuchis, Hosseini engages in nostalgic childhood recreation of a lost Afghanistan during the last days of the monarch Zahir Shah and the regime that overthrew in the novel.

As Hall says, "Representation generally by taking a close look at how documentary, photography operates in relation to images of society. We have examined a particular set of photographic representations of society" (145). Because of political crisis and ongoing horror and terror do not rest people who are compelled to live under terrors. The novel focuses on how people are living under terrorism: "The feeling that at one time, before Ahmad and Noor had gone to war against the Soviets- before Babi had let them go to war- Mammy too had thought Babi's bookishness endearing, that one upon a time she too had found his forgetfulness and ineptitude charming" (109). Hosseini presents the existing social evils and shocking inhuman behavior by human on the basis of religious and ethnic consciousness. Particularly, it presents the heart breaking picture of marginalized Hazara and the

devastating thinking of the so-called upper class. Moreover, it shows a war that has been prevailing in Afghanistan for ages. The religious tussle between Shi'a and Sunni is further cause of suffering.

Khaled Hosseini vividly describes Afghanistan, both Russian invasion and the rule of the Taliban. These lines depict how the Russians attacked Afghanistan.

Mummy showed her the old, crumpled newspaper clippings in it and pamphlets that Ahmad had managed to collect from insurgent groups and resistance organizations headquartered in Pakistan. One photo, Laila remembered, showed a man in a long white coat handing a lollipop to a legless little boy. The caption below the photo read: *Children are the intended victims of Soviet land mine campaign.* (121)

These lines picture the inhuman nature of the Soviets that they even use the innocent children for their selfishness. Hosseini is the first Afghan novelist to fictionalize his culture for the Western reader, melding the personal struggle of ordinary people into the terrible historical sweep of a devastated country in a rich and soul-searching narrative.

The novel presents more realistic picture about Afghanistan:

Laila remembered another fight, and that time, Mummy had stood over Babi and said in a mincing way, that's your business, is not it, cousin? To make nothing your business. Even your own sons going to war. How I pleaded with you. But you buried your nose in those cursed books and let our sons go like they were a pair of haramis. Babi pedaled up the street, Laila on the back, her arms wrapped around his belly. As they passed the blue benz, Laila caught a fleeting glimpse of

the man in the backseat. (110)

Clearly, there was the show of Mammy's dislike towards the involvement of her sons in the war.

Afghanistan had gone overnight from a war problem. Tired of listening to the radio news, all people went to depressed conditions. On the other side, this novel explores the activities of the Russian Coup in Afghanistan and how their soldiers patrolled the streets of Afghanistan: "Russian soldiers patrolling the sidewalks, no tanks rolling up and down the streets of my city, their turrets swiveling like accusing fingers, no rubble, no curfews, no Russian Army Personnel Carriers weaving through the bazaars" (99).

The Russian soldiers exploit the Afghans women psychologically. It is clear through these lines:

She said that the Soviet Union was the best nation in the world, along with Afghanistan. It was kind to its workers, and its people were all equal. Everyone in the Soviet Union was happy and friendly unlike America, where crime makes people afraid to leave their homes. And every one in Afghanistan would be happy too, she said one the anti progressives, the backward bandits were defeated. (111)

Khala Rangamaal, Laila's teacher, praises Soviet Union and supports it blindly whereas she comments the USA negatively presenting America being against progress and peace.

Furthermore he clarifies exploitation of Afghan women sexually through the Russian soldiers at the time of war:

Giti was a tightly wound, bony little girl who wore her hair in twin ponytails held by elastic bands. She was always scowling, and waling

with her books pressed to her chest, like a shield. Hasina was twelve, three years older than Laila and Giti, but had failed third grade once and fourth grade twice. What she lacked smarts Hasina made up for in mischief and a mouth that Giti said, ran like a sewing machine. (113)

It shows that the Russians have not only brain washed the Afghan people about them but their soldiers also misuse their power and victimize the young girl and children at the time of war.

Due to the Russian invasion many Afghan people were compelled to leave their homeland and their property and seek help in other countries as refugees. Likewise, Tariq and his father are also destined to leave their country. The following lines express the Afghan peoples positiveness towards the Soviets:

That's why our Soviet comrades came here in 1979. To lend their neighbor a hand. To help us defeat these brutes who want our country to be a backward, primitive nation. And you must lend your own hand, children. You must report anyone who might know about these rebels. its your duty. You must listen, then report. Even if it's your parents, your uncles or aunts. Because none of them loves you as much as your country does. Your country comes first remember I will be proud of you, and so will your country. (112)

The Russians destroyed villages and burnt the schools, killed the children and destroyed the mine. Even though they were able to make a place in Afghan peoples heart.

Khaled Hosseini's novel *A Thousand of Splendid Suns* describes the suffering of his country under the tyranny of Taliban, Russian invasion in Afghanistan and war of Taliban. It also describes the indirect American support to the Talibans against the



Russians. It causes poverty, cultural disasters, refugee problems, and domination upon the minority ethnicity, ethnic cleansing, hunger, landmine and so many problems in Afghanistan. The novel turns dark when Hosseini describes the suffering of the country under the tyranny of the Taliban. The Taliban destroy not only the cultural heritage of Afghanistan but also cleanse the minority ethnic group creating the discourse of hegemony by using their power. They create the discourse of ethnicity and religion. The Afghans are not the real Afghan people so they want to cleanse these people from Afghanistan.

The hardships of the Afghan people are revealed in passages of power and brutality and especially the long scene in which Tariq's father is being smuggled out of Afghanistan to Pakistan over experiences which is convincing, vivid, terrifying, and sickening. Hosseini delivers an authentic Afghan experience, both in that period in Kabul and in the immigrant community in America. He gives us a vivid picture of the contemporary history of Afghanistan by presenting the real historical events which occurred in the history itself like invasion, rise of Taliban and their decade long rule in Afghanistan, their domination upon the country, people and abolition of the culture.

The fictional character Rasheed narrates the story of Afghanistan by describing the daily activities and fighting which happened in the streets of Kabul and other cities. He describes the prohibited culture of Afghanistan that is kite flying ritual.

Similar to Afghanistan's tumultuous history, Afghan kite flying involves mid-air duels between the rivals. It attempts to show their adversary's kites analogous to the fighting between the Afghan government and Mujahidin guerrilla factions whose hands are cut and bloodied, as is the hand of the kite flyer when the ground grass

coating of the kite string sears through the hands. In most cases, kite flyer is encouraged to kite duel aggressively at high altitudes by the 'string giver' who usually holds the string reel. His role is not much different than the foreign power that instigated all Afghan sides into battle to fight their proxy war by providing arms, training, and intelligence.

Samrat Upadhyay explains about Nepali society where many problems exist. Nepali society is affected by problems like gender discrimination, political unrest, supernatural beliefs, and traditional lifestyles. As the presentation of Nepali society is represented in the global arena all problems mentioned here picturize a composite picture of society. The novel explains:

There was in awkward silence. He expected her to leave, and when she didn't, he was about to say, "Okay, then." But she asked, "Sir, are you from Kathmandu itself?"

He studied her a bit more closely. People from Kathmandu rarely asked each other that question. Only outsiders probed one another, searching for something that bonded them in city. (4)

The narrator, through these lines tries to show that the rural people have more sense of hospitality than the urban people have.

Both writers write about the same thing life, love, pleasures, desperation, anxiety, worries, unions, separations, unfulfilled desires and death. But each experiences life differently, lives it differently, performs a different role as a member of the family or society. Stuart Hall argues:

Representation here is closely tied up with both identity and knowledge. Indeed, it is difficult to know what 'being English' or indeed French, German, South African or Japanese, means outside of

all the ways in which our ideas and images of national identity or national cultures have been represented, without these ‘signifying’ systems, we could not take on such identities and consequently could not build up or sustain that common life-world which we call a culture.

(5)

It is clarified here that cultural images, social representation and constructive truth make a composite picture of society or culture. As all representations do not represent entire truth but partially represent. Similarly, both these writers create images of their societies by narrating stories which show a kind of picture of the society as a whole. The society is represented through narration or fictional world. Both writers weave beautiful stories about their own cultures and societies but these stories reveal and represent their cultural world.

Cultural identity is very much closely related to history and experience of the people. Hall says; “our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes which provide us, as one people with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning, beneath the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history” (Hall 221). It means presenting through fictional writing create discourse upon cultures. These fictional worlds also represent the cultural aspects and change it as a truth for it. Said put into words, “culture with its superior position has the power to authorize, to dominate, to legitimate and validate: in short i.e. the power of culture to be an agent of and perhaps the main agency of powerful differentiation within its domain and beyond it too” (9). Both the theorists emphasize the representation of cultures by which truths are constructed. Similarly, these writers have a powerful position when they write about Eastern society which can be represented through their fictional writings.

Upadhyay creates an image of poverty, people have been facing for years. Nepali people still suffer from dire poverty. He mentions that Nepali people are struggling for living a lower life, which is shown in his novel. He explains poverty as:

General store in a mud house perched dangerously on top of a hill; the biting cold in the morning; the haze that hung over the hills, and the clouds that rolled in and made the house in front of you disappear; the smell of sweet rice cooked in the mud over, the smoke stinging his mother's eyes and making water run down her nose. But, it was the memories of his early years in Kathmandu, the hardships he and his mother had endured. (5)

The author picturizes a society where poverty is killing people. This kind of society represented shows the poor condition of Nepali people who do not have comfortable lives. Nepal is a country full of villages where people work hard but fight hard for sustaining their lives. He mentions further:

That were imprinted on his mind like a religious text. For a long time he had been angry at the city for making their lives difficult. But he had grown to love the city, and although he understood what Malati was saying, he did not want to identify with her sense of helplessness. It has been so many years, he told her, that I consider myself a local of Kathmandu. (5)

Upadhyay mainly reveals gender problem in Nepali society wherein female's position is dominating. Similarly, he represents political situation in which developing countries suffer from poor political system where conflict, crisis and agitation that portrays their political problems. The extract explains the political unrest of Nepali society during the panchayat:

The afternoon newspapers, which Ramchandra had read during tea break at school, reported that an angry mob in the city of Biratnagar had burned two buses and hurled stones at the police, who had fired tear gas, then real bullets, killing two people. One newspaper had run a scathing criticism of the government for the shooting, and talk reverberated through the city that the editor of the newspaper would be whisked away to an unknown destination. (37)

Being a developing country, Nepal does not have peaceful political condition. It represents an unrest political condition which shows common problems of society. Because of poverty and undeveloped condition, people are suffering from different kinds of problems and make political agitations. The country is undergoing multiple problems, people are asking for their rights by going into streets. This does not only show the Nepali society but it reveals a problem of underdeveloped country.

In fact, this novel projects numbers of problems by which people have been affected. Ramchandra says: “Of course, sir, still this city can really make you suffer” (5). His intention behind saying this is to show problems of the country where he hardly makes his living.

The novel covers and presents Nepali culture which is looked from Western perspective, the author having been familiar with Nepali culture describes the culture and society. The story of the novel describes a middle class family. A male character Ramchandra represents a teacher’s life which shows what kind of life a teacher lives in the society.

However, Ramchandra is an individual character; he represents all teachers from Nepali community. Whatever he does, thinks and shows in his behaviour represent all teachers or as a whole teachers are represented by his character.

Ramchandra hardly runs his household by his profession. He lives under acute poverty. By his salary, he does not get enough money to fulfill day-to-day necessities of himself and his family members. Having a reputed job as a teacher, he has to live a dog's life because he is not paid well. His lifestyle has been described as:

He and Goma and the children were living on the top floor of this old house, with its rickety stairs and cracked ceilings, its cramped, dark rooms that never got enough sunlight, this house controlled by a landlord who came rapping on the door if the rent wasn't paid on time, where deafening traffic from the street penetrated the thin walls, shook the rooms and made reasonable thinking impossible. (2)

This extract clearly explains the condition of the employees in the society.

Economically, he suffers a lot and does not live a comfortable life by his limited salary, therefore he has rented a flat in an old house, and he cannot pay the rent to his owner on time. This kind of life panics him time and again.

Being a representative character, Ramchandra represents a poor teacher's life from Nepali community. The narrator focuses that a teacher has to live a poor life who does not have access to property. Moreover, it tries to show that Nepali society is narrow minded therefore they have to face life as a challenge when they are observed from relatives and neighbors. Everyday circumstances of Ramchandra describe poverty of a lower middle class family. What the author intends to show here is, how Nepali teachers suffer from poverty when they are not paid well by the government. A single family also is hardly run. Ramchandra's life depicts all the teacher's lives who do not earn comfortable living that's why, they look for tuition and extra earning just for sustaining life. Ramchandra cannot make his family happy. Sometimes his wife is dissatisfied with him. She complains to him but he is unable to do anything. Because

of economic condition, it leads them to quarrel. The narrator shows:

With her worn out clothes, Malati indeed looked poor, unlike his only other tutee, Ashok, a merchant's son who arrived every morning in a shiny black car, with loud music thumping from the speakers. I do not have a father, Malati told him. "And my mother raises chickens to support the family." "Then perhaps you should be working," Ramchandra said. "Help your family." (3)

The extract explains, teacher's life is poverty stricken that is not free from daily problems and cannot satisfy his family which invites hot discussions as well as quarrel too. On the other hand, it shows a problem of the Eastern society. They live for others but not for themselves. Malati points out Ashok who has luxurious life having sufficient material prosperity. Westerners blame over this kind of narrow minded Easterners who envy at other's lives. Similarly, Ramchandra and his wife observe Ashok's life and become jealous him.

Ramchandra and his wife find neighbors' lifestyle better and prosperous. To escape from the poverty, Ramchandra attempts to have extra earning. He never gets satisfaction in his life; therefore he finds a tuition class in home. So, Ramchandra thinks: "Many people were getting rich in Kathmandu. The country was poor, but in the capital, wealth was multiplying in the hands of those who had opened new business or those with government jobs who did not turn away from hefty bribes" (3). This extract reveals the political background as well as people's thought about the country and its mechanism. Being a citizen of poor country, every man wants to be a rich man therefore they are compelled to take an illegal way to earn money. This exposes a great problem of poor countries where people are compelled to be corrupt.

This seems to be an intentional representation of Nepali society. Being

familiar and involved with society he tries to reveal problems of Nepal like other developing countries. The society is having problem when people have conflict over small and tiny issues. Mostly, in the novel gender problems, dominance of patriarchal society, social conflict, political unrest, supernatural powers and conservative beliefs have been represented.

### **Gender Representation**

The novel *Guru of Love* describes woman character Goma who is victimized by patriarchal society. Similarly, Hosseini also presents Islam women who have miserable condition in the society. Both writers have similar perspective of society because they represent women's miserable condition in the society. Goma and Mariam represent gender position of their countries. Goma is an innocent submissive woman. Patriarchy has left no room for women to practice their freedom and to live life of their own choice in the Nepali societies.

Mariam, a young girl, daughter of Nana, finds it difficult when she is cast out from her father's house. She represents problems of Afghan girls who are deprived of education and suffer from early marriage. She is forced to marry. She does not have option besides getting married at an early age. The society, wherein she lives, does not provide any freedom for girls from patriarchal imprisonment.

Likewise, Nepali women have been very systematically deprived of rights in the part. Patriarchal society marginalizes women in every walk of life in the name of culture, religion, ethnicity, caste and class. The novel describes her condition. Their lack of a servant was another of the in-laws' issues. The narrator states: "My daughter is slaving away in your house, son in-law." Goma's mother had remarked a few times. "How about someone just to help with the cooking and laundry?" They had even offered to send their own servant to help" (50). These lines explain Asian



women's condition in the society. Goma as the wife of Ramchandra has to serve him unconditionally. Ramchandra goes outside for earning but Goma has to stay within four walls. Women do not have freedom who have to remain under patriarchal veil. Which Goma's mother does not like.

The following extract gives an image of Nepali women:

Through half open eyes he looked at her face. Goma was a small, chubby woman only a few months younger than he, and he was reaching forty-two. On her forehead was the small red tika she got every morning at the Ganeshtan Temple in the neighborhood. Before the sun's rays fell upon the streets, she would go to the temple with a plate of rice and with flowers she had picked in the courtyard garden. She had returned home just as the sun's rays lit the window of the house on the opposite side of the courtyard. A large mole sat right below the bridge of her nose, her beauty spot, Ramchandra called it. (9-10)

When Ramchandra's wife Goma finds out about the affair between him and Malati, she has a unique solution – she asks Malati and her baby daughter to move into their apartment. Goma sleeps with the children and instructs the adulterous couple to share the master bedroom. She insists, “Why don't you two go inside the bedroom, and I'll bring you some food.” This license sits uneasily upon Ramchandra, much as democratic liberation sits uneasily upon the old city of Katmandu. *The Guru of Love* is ultimately a sweet, sad look at an indestructible family. Where Ramchandra's wife Goma sometime let her husband have a co-wife in his life, and sometime she discusses with Ramchandra in unnecessary expenses of household. That shows in her a surprising, cunning, and altogether charming heroine.

Mariam is a representative character of the Afgan society which reflects

suffering of all Afghan girls. She is called 'harami' which means bastard child. The society has named her 'harami.' Having a strict and strongest patriarchal domination, females' voices are subdued. The narrator states Mariam's condition and social point of view as follows:

At the time, Mariam did not understand. She did not know what this word *harami*—bastard—meant. Nor was she old enough to appreciate the injustice, to see that it is the creators of the *harami* who are culpable, not the *harami*, whose only sin is being born. Mariam *did* surmise by the way Nana said the word, that it was an ugly loath something to be a *harami*, like an insect, like the scurrying cockroaches Nana was always cursing and sweeping out of the *kolba*. (4)

It picturizes a harsh condition of women living in the Islam society. In this way both Hindu and Muslim women have vulnerable position in the society. Subordination and marginal roles of women represent both of the countries. Women are silenced since their childhood. They are thought to remain silent and to obey others in Muslim and Hindu culture. Hindu culture itself is male dominated which is victimizing women in each aspect of their life by placing behavioral restrictions upon women. Similarly, Islam culture also has similar vulnerable, weaker and dominating roles given to women. Thus women as dominated and muted group have different perspectives on a shared world view.

The problems women face and present are same from the structural point of view. Hindu women are shown religious who are engaged in religious activities. It means society is traditional and conservative. To show it Upadhayay states:

As the day of the wedding approached, the girl, Mandakini, became sadder and sadder. She went to the local temple and prayed to Lord

Shiva to save her from marrying a man her father's age. She visited the local palm reader, and he traced the lines on her hand and told her that she would be very rich but very unhappy. She climbed a mountain and from the top, looked down on the thin, milky white river that ran between two steep gorges, and she closed her eyes and asked the deity who resided there to make something happen so that she would not have to marry that old merchant with the glinting eyes. (83)

Hindu religion says that great dharma duty for a married woman is to serve her husband. But there is no religious provision for male to serve female. There is little number of women who are involved in any profession. Financially too, women are dependent on males. History is also written from male's perspective. Culturally, the image of women in society is portrayed as subordinated to male. A woman can never be free and independent from her birth to death according to Hindu culture. Women's plights, problems, pains and pang, fears, tears, joy, happiness and life-experiences are universal. As Nepal is a Hindu country, Nepali literature cannot be understood in isolation from Hindu culture. Hindu women can be best understood within Hindu culture which is so important in defining how women perceive the world and their proper place in it, and how they are perceived by others.

By this poor reality, Ramchandra compels to take tuition due to the difficult situation he ever faces. Though, he has got desires to live comfortable life, he cannot afford for all these things. Neither he can celebrate any festival properly nor can he spend any holiday with his family. This kind of daily life troubles him: "For years he had been harboring the dream of buying some land and building a house in the city, if only to silence his in-laws. For the past three years, he and Goma had been putting away five hundred rupees a month or at least trying to some months especially during

the festivals, not only could they not save” (2). These lines show the helplessness of the poor Nepali people like Ramchandra, who, having a dreamful life, cannot achieve it in reality. He works for in-laws because it is a matter for prestige when they can build a house of their own. Ramchandra suffers this kind of challenge because he has to show more response to his in-laws rather than his family.

Women are said to be legally equal. It is an irony that dozens of legal provisions are still discriminatory against women. In practice, gender discrimination and violence against women is rampant in Nepal. It is more severe in Hindu society and the women are restricted to the private sphere. Women’s representation is very low in the public sphere. The authority over household and property management rests normally on male in the family. Women’s economic dependence on men and their lack of educational, political, social opportunities are represented in Upadhaya’s novel.

He shows the nature of Nepali women who are like slaves as they are moved by males self interest. Here Ramchandra flirts with his tutee because she is fascinated by him:

Every day he gave her ride and eventually she stopped going to school. They roamed the city all day in his taxi. He took her sightseeing in the valley: the top of the Swayambhunath temple, the woods of Gokarna, even all the way to the Dakshinkali Temple, where they stood in front of the goddess and proclaimed their love for each other. Then they started making love in the jungles of Balaju, a few hundred yards up from the very place where they would come first time she had gotten into with him. (99)

Ramchandra takes benefit of having Malati being fascinated to him as a good teacher

and takes her around the city due to which Malati drops her school and goes with him to different romantic spots in Kathmandu. Eventually it spoils her life and career.

By depicting a character of Goma, the author presents a typical woman character from Hindu cultural society. A girl is under the control of her father before marriage and after her marriage she is under the control of her husband. A woman's husband is her lord, and it is her religious duty to see that he is happy and comfortable by yielding to every wish of him. The woman is defined primarily in relation to her husband and her household, and her interest and active participation in domestic matters is expected of her. The role of wife and mother is the optimal, singular and essential through which a woman fulfils herself.

Mostly, the Islam society seems strict and dogmatic regarding religion which is portrayed in Hosseini's novel. Within Islam society, women do not have respect or any position. They are taken as a child producing machine. Nana, Mariam, Laila are treated in the same manner. Society does not do any justice to them. In the name of Islam religion society practices unequal behaviours. In religious discourses, females are shown as secondary animals.

All male characters manipulate women but no one raises any voice which is silenced because of patriarchal domination. The story reflects the women's condition in patriarchal society who are victimized due to the male violence, domination and oppression. The story shows the women's pains, sufferings, pangs and problem in Islam culture and society which are the same throughout the world. Women are given the marginal and subordinated status; very few of them have raised their voice against patriarchy that has challenged the traditional role of women in patriarchal society. Their strong sense of revolt against patriarchy has been expressed through their intense feelings, thoughts, speech as well as in their different activities, however,

patriarchy has controlled them.

Along with marriage of Mariam, her chain of suffering starts. She remembers her past days before marriage but she never gets relief from problems:

Then there were days when the dreariness didn't seem quite as unrelenting to Mariam. Days when the mere thought of resuming the old patterns of her life did not seem so exhausting, when it did not take enormous efforts of will to get out of bed, to do her prayers, to do the wash, to make meals for Rasheed. (91)

The social status of women of a country symbolizes the social spirit of the age. Age-long patriarchal kingdom has existed so far, therefore, females have to be voiceless under the social system. Rasheed typically represents a traditional patriarchy whereas his wife Mariam represents a typical female character. From these characters, the author has reflected a complete Islamic society.

The writer finds the cause of silence of women rooted in the construction of society. Socio-cultural norms and values are unequal for male and female. Language, ideas, words and action as well are created in favour of male by patriarchy which silences women. Foucault further states that power is repression:

In defining the effect of the power as repression, one adopts purely juridical conception of such power, one identifies power with a law which says no power is taken above all as carrying the force of a prohibition [...] what makes power hold good, what makes it accepted is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no but that it traverse and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. (1139)

Only being born as male, they have the power to dominate, oppress and suppress

women, whereas women have no right to speak against their oppression. If a woman allows her voice to come out as uncloaked by the culture that voice would have been made to speak in ways males around her might never have imagined. But whatever wrong male has done is taken normally.

Jalil and other males have indulged in gambling and drinking. It is taken normally and easily accepted. It has given the ways to males to exercise their power over female. They give more importance to money than to their wives. Therefore, writer shows miserable condition of women in Afghan society.

In the society Jalil enjoys male cultural privilege. There are many cultural codes to tame women. Society puts questions and suspicions on women's behaviour whereas male's bad behaviour goes unnoticed. There is no excuse for female. Because women are not given the equal status, their subjugation becomes real and their protest looks more artificial. So the disruption of female figure continues until and unless women learn to turn away from the conventional cultural forces and stop to tolerate the violence, oppression and domination done by male silently.

Mariam's condition reflects how difficult condition women have in Islam society. After getting married, Mariam never experiences any kind of happiness. She is forcefully married. The narrator describes her condition in the following words:

Mariam lay on the couch, hands tucked between her knees, watched the whirlpool of snow twisting and spinning outside the window. She remembered Nana saying once that each snowflake was a sigh heaved by an aggrieved woman somewhere in the world. That all the sighs drifted up the sky, gathered into clouds, and then broke into tiny pieces that fell silently on the people below. As a reminder of how women like us suffer, she had said, how quietly endure all that falls upon us.

(89-90)

These Muslim women, as well as other women of this village, suffer and have lost their happiness and comfort forever because of their husband's cruel behavior. But they are uncomplaining and silent and keep family life going despite the alcoholic, gambling and beating husbands. So the writer says that it is women's silence and acceptance of bad behavior of their husbands that give more power to men to suppress women. By showing the weakness of women as well as of society, the narrator is making women aware of their rights.

The story focuses on Mariam and Laila who portray the plight of those women who are suppressed and it is also them, who must be taken to be responsible in the eyes of the society for all defects, weaknesses, misfortunes that befall in conjugal life; the male partner is free from all such worries. Mariam is forced to bear the extreme torture given by her husband and mother-in-law towards her. This complicated situation of silence makes her loner in the family and it gives her extreme torture. Because there is no one to share her feelings, she sits by the side of river and remembers the lovely and wonderful days of past and compares her childhood with rocky and painful days of present time. The narrator presents Mariam's grief-stricken memory:

The grief kept surprising Mariam. All it took to unleash it was her thinking of the unfinished crib in the tool shed or the suede coat in Rasheed's closet. The baby came to life then and she could hear it, could hear its hungry grunts, its gurgles and jabbering. She felt it stiffening at her breasts. The grief washed over her, swept her up, tossed her upside down. Mariam was dumbfounded that she could miss in such a crippling manner a being she had never even seen. (91)



Of all the relationships a woman has in her husband's house the most openly and bitterly antagonistic is that with her co-wife or step-wife. Polygamy is socially and religiously sanctioned in the Islam society. Therefore, Jalil has much legitimate relation with women. Government laws forbid polygamous marriage except under certain circumstances. The bringing in of another wife is a constant threat that the husband and his family hold over the new wife. Mariam represents Islam women who have been crushed under patriarchal grinding stone.

This is the reality of Muslim society. In broad sense, it is a problem rampant in Muslim culture and society where a wife is charged with her husband's defects too. Bearing pain and tortures in heart, Mariam gives continuity in family integration. She does not speak against family's will and decision though her pride is wounded by the injustice and betrayal done by her husband and his family. She surrenders under patriarchal society even though she is burning herself in anger within:

Mariam was besieged with anger. It as Rasheed's fault for his premature celebration. For his fool hardy faith that she was carrying a boy. Naming the baby as he had. Talking God's will for granted. His fault for making her go to the bathhouse. Something there, the steam the dirty water. The soap something there had caused this to happen. (92)

Because women's proper place is said to be her home, it is a challenge for a woman to work away from home. But, if she were a son, she could decide herself for her and there would not come any interference from her parents. There is no boundary of work, time and place for a son. So being a daughter living away from home alone and working away from home can be a matter of great discussion in this patriarchal society. Either educated or uneducated, women both in remote village as well as in

urban area are not untouched by patriarchal oppression.

But uneducated women of the villages are victim of domestic violence more and they are living a torturous life. Laila represents the life of women of remote village who are forced to work as a machine to produce children. She was almost dead while giving birth to her seventh child. At that time she was in the jungle collecting grass. It shows that women in the village cannot get a chance even to rest during pregnancy because they have to take care of pets, work to rear up the crops and do all the household works by themselves. So, illiterate women in the villages of traditional society are more victimized by patriarchal oppression. Due to the lack of education and consciousness they give birth to more children thinking them as gift of God. It is fatal to maternal health and economic burden to rear up more children. We can imagine such condition of family and women in the remote villages of Afghan society.

Both Samrat Upadhyay and Khaled Hosseini are culturally dislocated writers who represent their own culture, society and countries from Western standpoint. Both of them realize their dislocated position in Western country. Therefore, they present their own culture and society but they represent a composite picture of their society and culture respectively. The research has focused on how both writers have presented their language, culture, and society and Eastern philosophy from their present situation. The long practice of Western society has affected their mentality and manipulated their perspectives. Thus, it develops a different perspective over them. Therefore, both writers compare Eastern cultures to the Western culture. This kind of experience is reflected in both texts and this research explores the ideas of cultural representation.

Both of these novels depict social problems, people's thoughts, political

unrest, social conflict and typical lifestyles of their countries. The aspects represent and picturize all about Eastern countries. These problems of their countries depict their cultures in global arena. Westerners generalize Easterners' problems through these novels. Similarly, these novels' stories, by narrating typical societies, reflect the composite picture of the East. A good deal of cultural studies is centered on questions of representation. That is how the world is socially constructed and represented in meaningful ways. Indeed, the central strand of cultural studies can be understood as the study of culture as the signifying practices of representation. In these books, the characters are presented as uneducated, poor, traditional, religious which play role in representation, though they have rebellious spirit in them. They are untraditional and somewhat rebellious. Even not educated Mariam kills her husband to save her co-wife represents a thousand splendid suns in Muslim society. She calls for change, by defying the traditional Muslim norms, and values.

## Chapter Three

### Representation of Eastern Culture

The research has undertaken a comparative study of Samrat Upadhyay's *Guru of Love* and Khalid Hussani's *A Thousand of Splendid Suns*. Picturizing social conditions both of these writers represent their cultures respectively. The fictional representation reinforces the preoccupied concept regarding the Eastern cultural inferiority. By depicting their own cultural practices, representing human identities and showing communal problems, the authors have represented their cultures in globalized arena. Both of the novels delineate Eastern cultures, from their negative as well as positive aspects. Upadhyay shows Nepali culture and Hosseini his Afghan culture. These two novels discuss political, economical, cultural and social problems their countrymen have experienced. Their cultures are represented and these novels misrepresent their cultural problems.

Both the authors represent their own cultures in terms of languages, fashions, rituals, genders and religions. All these aspects, as a whole, represent picture of the particular cultures. Every culture has different features which make difference in relation to other cultures. The authors have projected both the Afghan and the Nepali cultures from their perspectives.

Language is one of the basic traits of any culture which can define typical meaning or contextual meaning of the culture. It has contextual meaning which is created on the basis of the culture. In many places both the authors have exploited typical languages and words which have meaning within the culture, which do not have any sense beyond the culture. In order to decipher the meaning of the particular words or language, cultural background is needed. Therefore, both the authors have made representation of their own cultures, through the use of typical language they

have used.

Similarly, fashion is one of the major features which has cultural values. Every culture has a different fashion which has meaning in the culture. It is outer and visible cultural factors which distinctly defines particular culture. In the same way, both the authors have introduced the Afghan and Nepali cultures respectively through the fashion they have discussed. The Afghan or Islam culture has its own dress code to use in social functions or going out for special cultural practices and significance. Likewise, the Nepali culture has defined both male and female dress code. Even more, it allocates different fashion according to the social functions.

Furthermore, rites and rituals are most dominant cultural factors because every society has continued practicing them since the civilization started. They have significance and defining features within the cultural society. Each and every culture has different social functions and way of celebrating lives and ceremonies. In both the novels, it is shown in the context of the particular culture. Islam culture has its own defining features which recognize it for all people. Similarly, the Nepali culture has its own cultural performances which make it be recognized from rest of the cultures.

In the same way, religion is another cultural ideology. It directs the social practices formed on the basis of religious ideology. Religion defines certain ideological philosophy by which people are guided. It has dominant role for developing a typical culture. Therefore, both the authors have given an image of the practices of their religions. The Islam society follows Islam religion whereas Hinduism is the religion followed by most of the Nepali people though there are so many religions followed in Nepal. Both the authors have defined and shown relations between the society and religion in the novels. Hosseini gives a picture of the Islam religion and its relation with everyday life. Likewise, Upadhyay gives a picture of

the Hindu religion and Nepali lifestyles based on or guided by the religion.

Both the authors have discussed about gender roles in their societies. Gender representation is a different issue, however, both the novelists have associated the idea with culture because male and female existence is also an outcome of the cultural and social conditions. Both societies are presented as patriarchal societies which have male dominated ideology. Both Islam and Hindu religions are presented as male oriented which give importance for males. These cultures have developed such male oriented ideologies which have been practised from the time immemorial.

Finally, both novels have picturized their own cultures, societies, and histories of nation which represent their culture as what is shown there. Whatever they have written in the novels distinctly expose composite picture of the countries.

Both the novels have some similar aspects. Ramchandra's passion towards Malati is shown at the end of the novel when he goes to meat shop where he sees Malati and wants to talk and make her believe that he still loves her. Likewise Jalil, Mariam's father, also pretends his realization about his ignorance for daughter and writes a letter of forgiveness to her. Jalil's pretention of realization and Ramchandra's so-called unconditional love for Malati really compel to think once about them. Are they both Gurus of love or not? Both the authors have beautifully crafted the climate of the novel to show the degradation of Eastern culture.

Through the characters of Goma and Mariam both the authors have shown male domination over the other half of the humanity that has been practiced in the Eastern culture. Goma is compelled to accept Malati as her husband's co-wife by situation however Mariam kills her own husband in order to save her co-wife Laila from the tyranny of her husband shows the presence of females' hard existence in Eastern society which cannot be realized in the West.

## Works Cited

- Barker, Chris. *Cultural Studies*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008. Print.
- Bhabha, Homi K. "Postcolonial Criticism." *Redrawing the Boundaries*. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt and Gills Gunn. New York: MLA, 1992. 437-63. Print.
- Clarks, John H. "Oriental Writers." *The New York Review* 12.344 (2004):32. Print.
- Foucault, Michel. "Truth, Power and Discourse." *Critical Theory Since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. New York: Harcourt 1992: 526-27. Print.
- Hall, Stuart. "Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Contemporary Post-colonial Theory: A Reader*. Ed. Padmini Moniga. Delhi: Oxford UP, 1997. 110-21. Print.
- . *Representation*. London: Sage Publication, 1997. Print.
- Hawley, John C. *Contemporary Writers in South Asia*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2005. Print.
- Hosseini, Khaled. *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2013. Print.
- Mehta, Suketo. "The Guru of Love: A Middle Class Social Novel Set in Kathmandu". *New York Times* 23: 7 (2009). 32-39. Print
- Neelakantan, Anagha. "The Guru of Love: For the Love of Guru." *The Nepali Times* 132 (2003):7. Print.
- Sacks, Sam. "Useful Disaster." *Contemporary Literature Review of A Thousand Splendid Suns*. 14: 9 (2013):23-27. Print.
- Said, Edward. "The World, the Text, and the Critic." *Critical Theory Since Plato*. Ed. Hazard Adams. New York: Harcourt 1992: 526-27. Print.
- . *Orientalism*. New York: Routledge, 2002. Print.
- Upadhayay, Samrat. *The Guru of Love*. New Delhi: Rupa Co. 2009. Print.
- Walter, Natasha. "Behind the Veil." *The Guardian: Review of A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini 11:33 (May 2007):16. Print.