

Tribhuvan University

Orientalist Representation in Samrat Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans*

**A Thesis Submitted to the Central Department of English,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in English**

By

Suman Baba K.C.

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

September 2013

Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English

Letter of Recommendation

Suman Baba K.C. has completed her thesis entitled "Orientalist Representation in Samrat Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans*", under my supervision. She carried out her research from 2068/2/21 (B.S.) to 2070/6/6 (B.S.). I hereby recommend her thesis be submitted for viva voice.

(Hem Lal Pandey)

Supervisor

Date : _____

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Orientalist Representation in Samrat Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Suman Baba K.C. has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

Members of the Research Committee:

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head

Central Department of English

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

The present study could never have come into its present form without the scholarly guidance and encouragement from Hem Lal Pandey, Lecturer, Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University.

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Dr. Amma Raj Joshi, Head of the Central Department of English, Kirtipur for granting me an opportunity to carry out this research work. Similarly, I am highly indebted to my respected teacher Mr. Badri Acharya who has provided me almost all the materials needed for this research.

I am also thankful to Saroj Sharma Ghimire, Bal Bahadur Thapa and all my respected teachers at the Central Department of English. Thanks also goes to my friends Muna and Sanjaya and my well-wishers for their support in course of preparing this thesis.

September 2013

Suman Baba K.C.

Abstract

This research is about how Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans* represents Nepal and Nepalese culture in a biased way for economic gain. The author makes use of several oriental stereotypes while representing Nepal and the religious belief of Nepalese people. Almost all the characters of this novel ranging from Bokey Ba, Kaki, Raja, Jamuna and Ganga Da are portrayed as insensible and irrational having belief more in witch doctors than medical doctors. The decisions taken by them are impulsive and eccentric. A mother breeds an infant and abandons near the lake. The government employee takes public fund and constructs his house. Even the entire setting of this novel is represented as exotic, inscrutable and mysterious. The represented Kathmandu valley and Nepalese people hardly match with the real Kathmandu. The place Kathmandu is transformed a lot. People are increasingly conscious of individual rights and freedom but Upadhyay sees Nepal and Nepalese people living in the same dark zone of mystery and backwardness as described by orientalist. The researcher makes use of Edward Said's key concepts from *Orientalism*, Stuart Hall's theory of representation and Foucauldian notion of representation to show that Upadhyay is influenced by the western power. This research shows Upadhyay's desire for popularity and economic gain by writing from the metropolitan position.

Contents

	Page No.
Acknowledgements	
Abstract	
I. Manifestation of Orientalistic Realities in Upadhyay's <i>Buddha's Orphans</i>	1-14
II. Orientalist Representation in Samart Upadhyay's <i>Buddha's Orphans</i>	15-39
III. Politics of Representation in Upadhyay's <i>Buddha's Orphans</i>	40-44
Works Cited	

I. Manifestation of Orientalistic Realities in Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans*

Samrat Upadhyay's novel, *Buddha's Orphan*, represents Nepal in the images of oriental stereotypes. The culture and religious faith of Nepalese people are falsely portrayed in this novel. Several changes and improvements have occurred in the mindset of people and their culture. But the novelist portrays Nepalese culture and mindset of Nepalese people in a biased way. He represents Nepalese people and Nepal in such a way that it could fulfill the interest of the western readers. By doing so, Upadhyay seems having a desire to occupy the central position in the circle of his metropolitan readers. Taking the Buddhist's notion that human beings are all connected to one another in the spectrum of suffering, Upadhaya represents how Nepalese citizens are locked in the iron cage of their respective sufferings.

Kathmandu City is chosen as the setting of the novel. The different glimpses of lives of people living in Kathmandu are depicted in the novel. Nepalese people's struggle for freedom from tyranny, helplessness of orphans, lack of love and care in old age, corruption, clash between the interests of the youths and the old people, constant political agitation are some of the things that are represented in the novel.

The novel mainly concentrates on the birth, nurturing and upbringing of an orphan boy named Raja. Along with this issue, Upadhyay represents other issues that are equally important. Nepalese society is depicted as a typical society in which people's struggle for freedom from their miserable condition is frozen and have become sterile. Nepalese society tries to come out of the cocoon of comfortable convention. But circumstances hardly stand in its favor. A woman, named Mohini, who is the mother of Raja, the orphan, drowns in Rani Pokhari. Her son becomes orphan. When the orphan infant is taken to the child care world run by the government, the responsible person scolds very bitterly to Kaki and Bokey Ba. The

official person says that their child care center does not accommodate the orphan. The irresponsibility on the part of the holders of government offices is the distinguishing feature of Nepalese society. Ganga Da, who works in the Planning Commission, has fallen into the net of corruption. He constructs a large building with the money he takes illegally from the Commission.

There are clear evidences to assert that Upadhyay depicts Nepalese citizens holding government posts as the corrupted personality who could not help misusing a large lump of government fund for their private well-beings and prosperity. Most of the Nepalese youths are depicted as aggressive and impulsive. Raja happens to knock the police who is on his duty. Police also reacts him to the same extent. Raja also quarrels aggressively with Ganga Da. He almost forgets that he is the adopted son of Ganga Da. Ganga Da is soft to his son and Kaki. But he too demonstrates his aggressive attitude and temperamental mentality. This is shown by his success to make the forge birth certificate of Raja by bribing the staff of Patan Hospital. He forcefully snatches Raja from his nurturing mother, Kaki. Worst of all, Jamuna is portrayed as the schizophrenic woman whose marriage with Ganga Da ruined Ganga Da's life. Jamuna is portrayed as the great burden and tension to Ganga Da. Her portraiture as the never curing schizophrenic woman takes Upadhyay to the same path of orientalist thinking.

To conduct the research, the researcher makes use of the tool of orientalism. Edward Said's view that the discourse of orientalism contains the biased attitude of the westerners towards the language, culture, civilization and manners of people of the orient is used to constitute the methodological framework of the research. According to Said, the pride and prejudice of orientalists are reflected in the western scholars' works that deal with the culture and history of the oriental people. The

representation is always affected by the interest of the group who holds influence in the process of the production of discourse. Foucault is of the opinion that there is always the effect of power in the production of discourse regarding any event, phenomenon or culture. Nobody or no institution produces discourses out of the free will. Certain degree of politics is bound to enter the surface of textual representation. In the orientalist discourse, people living in different parts of the orient are depicted as impulsive, irrational and temperamental. In the same way, Upadhyay also describes the Nepalese people as impulsive and impracticable. Ganga Da easily believes that bringing Raja into his home can help him to soften the schizophrenic wildness of his crazy wife. Nilu assumes that she will live a better life by eloping with Raja. All such decisions taken on short time being impulsive and temperamental turns out to be the real causes of their miseries. Following lines shows that how temperamental Ganga Da is, "Ganga Da reached for his wallet, took out five hundred rupee notes, placed them on the mat in front of him one by one and smoothed them. 'Everyone will benefit. My wife will get a son. I'll have peace of mind at home, and you ...'" (73).

When the question of representing the sexuality and passions of the Nepalese people come, Upadhaya sounds orientalist. Nilu's daughter appears to be morally chaste and sober. But she returns from America with a Black man's child in her womb. Other female characters like, Muwa, Mohini, Neelu and Prateema are also portrayed as lecherous creatures only without practical vision in their life. Most of the Nepalese women are characterized by Upadhyay as traditional women attached to the instinct of motherhood. The more they become attached to their instinct of motherhood, the more they suffer. They are less conscious of their individual well-beings. Kaki has nothing to do with Raja, the orphan boy. Similarly, Bokey Ba is also not related to Raja. But they care less about themselves and more for the helpless

orphans like Raja. That is why Bokey Ba and Kaki begin to show affection to Raja. As a result, they suffer. Upadhyay represents Nepalese women as altruistic creatures whose extreme altruism turns out to be the root cause of their misery. The representations of Nepalese people in *Buddha's Orpahns* are full of biases and prejudices. Nepalese citizens are portrayed as hopeless figures trapped in the chaos and agony. They possess the rare chance of achieving escape from their pathetic and difficult experiences of life.

Findings of Upadhyay's mode of representation of Nepalese culture hardly match the ground reality regarding Nepalese society and culture. Nepalese people are frozen in the moment of their struggle and hope. A mother is unable to take her sick son to the hospital for treatment. The frequent political strike and crowd on the road prevent sick patients to go to the hospital on the right time. As a result, they die. In the novel, Nilu struggles to take her sick son to the hospital. But she is unable to take her son to the hospital at the right time due to the strike. As a consequence, her son Maitreya dies. Following citation shows Nilu in helpless condition, when she becomes unable to take her son to hospital due to the Crowd and strike on the road, "The chanting outside grew louder. She heard someone say that there was now a standoff between the police and the marchers. Glass shattered somewhere close. But the guard didn't return. Maitreya's head was on her lap" (229).

The entire Kathmandu City is represented as the shapeless and orderless and full of chaos. Residents of this city have no hope to catch a glimpse of the bright aspect of life. Such a representation is unacceptable. Since the author dwells in the metropolitan world, his mode of perception and analysis is contaminated by the poison of orientalism. As the orientalist biases and stereotypes are represented in this

text through the false description of Nepalese culture, social life and values, he makes his stand as orientalist writer.

There are problems and prejudices in Upadhyay's representation of Nepalese society ranging from the rule of Panchayat autocracy to the restoration of democracy and then people's frequent struggle to check the reestablishment of active monarchy. Only the outer surface of Nepalese society is changing according to Upadhyay. The inner content and core of Nepalese society remains the same. This idea is almost similar to the orientalist interpretation that orient remains unchanged at core though it changes in its surface. So, he finds Nepalese society unchanged from inner core and reflects his orientalist biasness toward it.

Though plenty of reforms and developments have occurred in the history of the medical and health conditions of Nepalese people, Upadhyay depicts Nepalese living in the capital depending upon witch doctors for treatment. The inner cultural values are also affected by the emerging light of modernity. The emerging lights of modernity have touched the circle of convention and superstition. Due to the unexpected development in mass media and communication, people have become aware of superstitious cultural beliefs. And they have become much educated, rational and aware than before regarding such superstitious cultural practice. But Upadhyay still introduces even the capital of Nepal as the city which is no less than the underworld of darkness, illiteracy and deception.

In this novel, a woman named Prateema marries a man whom she loves. Her love marriage brings great sense of satisfaction in her life. But as time passes by her marriage ends in divorce. Suffered by the failure of her marriage, she decides to consult a Lama who is known as 'Janne Manchhe', means a Dharmi, herbalist. In the moment of problem and disaster, most of the women are portrayed as superstitious

who depend upon the superstitious practices and beliefs. It appears that female characters in Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans* are portrayed as superstitious beings who no longer try to go rationally into the root causes of her failed marriage. Guided by the fantasy of superstition, she uncritically goes to consult a Lamaji. Following lines prove that how Upadhyay has represented Nepalese females in this novel as superstitious beings, "YOUR SON IS UNHAPPY', LAMAJI SAID. HE WAS DRESSED IN AN OLD suit, the shoulders and elbows of which shone, and he even had a tie around his neck" (255).

There are many explicit and implicit evidences in the text to support the claim that Upadhyay's method of representing the Nepalese society is entirely problematical. To him, Kathmandu is shapeless, exotic and inscrutable which is isolated from the progressive waves of modernity. To the author, Kathmandu and the country are no less than a shapeless, mysterious and exotic land where people act, think and respond in such a way that it is really difficult to know them. Concerning the novel, *Buddha's Orphans*, Rabi Thapa opines:

Buddha's Orphans is ambitious in a way perhaps no work of fiction by a Nepali writing in English has been. It spans almost the entirety of post-Rana Nepal, ending with the royal massacre of 2001, and in doing so follows the lifelines of four generations in Kathmandu. An abandoned orphan, Raja grows up next to Rani Pokhari, the site of his unknown mother's suicide. (8)

According to Rabi Thapa, this novel is very ambitious Nepali writing in English. It talks about post Rana time of ending with the royal massacre of 2001 and also weaves the story of four generations in Kathmandu, where an orphan boy, Raja marries a girl from privilege, Nilu. Upadhyay's treatment of Buddhist conception of human

suffering is also painted with orientalist biases. In the Buddhist philosophy of sufferings, Buddha points out the paths to the liberation from the inescapable tragedy of life. But Upadhaya sees Buddhist notion of suffering opposite to his view. Upadhyay only shows suffering and pain in the life of character without any resolution. The journeys of the characters in *Buddha's Orphans*---Raja, Kaki, Nilu, Ganga Da, Jamuna, Mohini, Shiva, Ranjana---intersect and intertwine in ways that takes away at the notion that people are self-enclosed entities merely running after our own narrow interests. By the novel's conclusion, it becomes clear that there is no escape from how tightly people are bound to one another, whether they live in prosperous America or poor Nepal, and that there is no escape from suffering. This is what Gautama Buddha discovered under a tree in Bodhgaya, India, ages ago, and this fundamental truth permeates *Buddha's Orphans*.

Samrat Upadhyay is the leading diasporic writer who writes mostly on various subjects like the conflict between tradition and modernism, superstition and spirituality, transitional culture of Nepal. Upadhyay was born in Nepal; later on he emigrated to United States of America in young age. From the metropolitan soil, he has been writing on Nepalese culture, political struggles of Nepalese citizens for democracy, interest of the Nepalese people on abstract spirituality and various other superstitious practices. Upadhyay views Nepalese subjects from the eye of a metropolitan author who is torn between two dual cultural exposures. The main subject matters of his novels range from history, royal massacre to the problems of Nepalese people trapped in immobility of transition. *Guru of Love*, *Arresting God in Kathmandu*, and *Royal Ghost* are some of the popular works of Sarmrat Upadhyay. All of these works deal with the issues like, political disasters, royal massacre, Nepalese style of love and history of Nepal.

Samrat Upadhyay's novel *Buddha's Orphans* has been widely appreciated by many critics and reviewers. It has drawn the attention of a large number of critics. Rabi Thapa is the leading critic and columnist of Nepal. He makes a thorough analysis of Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans*. He views that *Buddha's Orphan* captures Nepalese history from the end of Rana regime to the moment prior to the event of Royal massacre. Thapa makes the following observation as to the novel:

Samrat Upadhyay's fiction has tended to be small in scale, charting the infinitesimal tremors of middle-class angst. Who was born and raised in Nepal, now makes his home — is at times almost incidental. Those Led Zeppelin days are over, friend, a Nepali wife chides her husband in *Buddha's Orphans*, Upadhyay's new novel. You need to get a job so we can start thinking about a child. The fretting, the obsessive nostalgia, the muffled ache: it's all distressingly familiar. We have scaled the roof of the world and met ourselves. (21)

Rabi Thapa is of the opinion that the middle class angst and stress are brought to the center of the novel. Suffering and its universal characteristic are handled by Samrat within the philosophical context. The Buddhist philosophy of human sufferings is dramatized in the broader context of the narrative.

Ligaya Mishan is another prominent critic of Samrat Upadhaya. According to him, the harsh reality is handled in this novel in a fantastic way. Of course, there is a difference between the practical reality and the reality introduced in a work of art. But Mishan argue that Samrat has not given a chance to feel this difference. Ligaya Mishan gives the following remarks:

In ambition and heft, however, *Buddha's Orphans* is a departure for Upadhyay. The story traverses half a century of political and social

upheaval in Nepal, from the 1960s to the present day. From the opening scene, in which a young mother abandons her baby and then commits suicide, the novel takes the aerial view, providing geographical coordinates and historical context. The year is 1962; the child is left on the parade ground, site of future anti-government demonstrations; the girl drowns herself in a pond built to console a queen mourning a lost son. (31)

According to Mishan, Buddha's Orphan differs drastically from other previous novels. Historical sites and monuments are portrayed as though they are the sites where any dangerous and disastrous activities take place. A woman commits suicide in the pond that has historical importance. From common incidence to events having serious political importance are mentioned in the novel.

As Kanak Dixit *Buddha's Orphans* reminds us that there was a Kathmandu before 1990. Upadhyay has gone to some effort to recreate the setting in which his characters take root. And it is instructive to observe how he incrementally exposes the chaos and shapelessness of the modern-day capital. Dixit makes the following disclosure with respect to the novel, *Buddha's Orphans*:

The very strangeness of a tale is often that which warrants its narration.. Whatever charm there is in Upadhyay's straightforward, detailed prose is diminished by the sloppy editing, which is an affront to Nepali audiences. If there is a true orphan in this tale, it has to be the novel itself. Thus we are introduced, obliquely, to Raja, as the foundling is named by his indigent rescuers. In literature, there's something liberating about being an orphan. (47)

The novelist must have been familiar with the surrounding of Kathmandu, people's political struggle and the country trapped in caste system, superstition and spiritual feature. The author has certain degree of familiarity with the culture, social system and political agitation of Nepal. But he depicts all these things as though they are surreal and exotic. The readers are at pains to know this sort of literary treatment.

Wayne Dyer, the noted reviewer and critic, finds out the subversive elements in the novel *Buddha's Orphans*. In the Nepalese society where no woman dares to express her desire for another man openly, Nilu freely begins to live with a man other than her husband. Along with such a immoral act, the fallout of the underground Maoist insurgency is also mentioned in the novel. Dyer expresses the following opinions:

Nilu takes to the streets to hunt her down. Meanwhile, Nepal shudders as caste lines and gender roles break down and protesters jam the streets. Occasionally Upadhyay seems to be hurrying through a checklist of major events: the Maoist rebels, "with their old, clunky rifles," make a brief cameo appearance, as does the crown prince who gunned down his entire family, precipitating a constitutional crisis.

(17)

The sober and sacred views and norms are sharply mocked by Upadhyay in *Buddha's Orphans*. Tradition no longer works as the burden. Most of the people with awakening have started crossing the lines. The restrictive and suffocating forces of society are challenged by most of the youths. Such emerging acts and spirit show how the Nepalese society is walking towards liberation from the burden of tradition.

Sajan Kumar Karna is a popular columnist and literary critic. He puts Samrat Upadhyay into the category of other emerging Nepalese writers who have started

writing in English. When a considerable number of Nepalese writers began to write in English language, the Nepalese voices reached the western world. Kumar Karna makes the further illustration as follows:

In order to show Nepaleseness in English literature in Nepal, most Nepalese authors like Samrat Upadhyay have exploited the process of transfer to show Nepalese socio-cultural elements. Transfer here refers to both transfer of language and that of cultural and social elements. Whereas in some cases, the texts show linguistic transfer, in other cases, cultural and social elements have been transported to convey Nepaleseness. (53)

Sajan Kumar Karna tries to evaluate Samrat Upadhyay's contribution in the light of the other leading Nepalese writers who write about Nepalese subjects in English language. Karna has not mentioned whether the language of such representation is politically correct or not. If the language of representation is not taken into consideration, it can surely be said that Nepalese writers who write in English have made worked hard to take Nepalese voices to the western metropolitan world.

Upadhyay is a gifted writer, but his gifts are on richer display in his earlier work, including *Arresting God in Kathmandu*, an excellent volume of stories from 2001. *Buddha's Orphans* is an overproduced mixture of images, ideas and fragments. It never coheres in theme or form. Nathaniel Handal is judgmental of the Samrat's literary skill and tact. Handal expresses the following opinion :

This novel has a promising start --- and a terrific first sentence: Raja's mother had abandoned him on the parade ground of Tundikhel on a misty morning before the Kathmandu had awakened, then drowned herself in Rani Pokhari, half a kilometer north. In, *Buddha's Orphans*,

writer Samrat Upadhyay takes up Nepalese history since 1962, with all its tradition and intrigue. (13)

The mood of Kathmandu is one of chaos and nostalgia. Handal says, Upadhyay presents the Nepalese history since 1962 with the features and events of Nepalese society. Handal sees the influence of unknown grace in Raja being rescued and raised for a time by a poor woman, and then adopted by another, who is middle-class but mentally ill. Raja meets Nilu, the daughter of an alcoholic widow --- and years later, after their lives have changed, the two reunite and marry. Author has added several things in the novel. The realistic elements are almost overshadowed by the frequent authorial detail and interruption.

Martin Albert, in his work *Silence of Samrat in Buddha's Orphans*, views the novel from the angle of the gradual disintegration of proudness and power of the privileged. Nilu's elopement with Raja marks the disintegration of the privileged class. Nilu's family is too weak to take any action to check the impulsive decision taken by the Nilu. He reflects the following views as to this aspect of the novel:

Nilu also takes charge of her destiny at an early age, dropping out of her privileged convent school and running off to find Raja (that "low-class boy," her mother sniffs). Later, while Raja lolls in bed, Nilu goes to work. When their marriage falters, she toys with a younger man.

Years later, when her adult daughter disappears, Nilu takes to the streets to hunt her down. Meanwhile, Nepal shudders as caste lines and gender roles break down and protesters jam the streets. (19)

According to Martin, Upadhyay seems to be hurrying through a checklist of major events: the Maoist rebels, with their old, clunky rifles, make a brief short appearance, as does the crown prince who gunned down his entire family, creating a constitutional

crisis. Upadhyay is most clever in close-up, as when Nilu consults a lama with a sideline in real estate, or tries ganja and notes great joy how the air is lighter and syrupy at the same time.

Although all these critics and reviewers examined the novel from different perspectives and arrived at various findings, none of them investigated the presence of author's orientalist bias in the representation of Nepalese culture, history, socio-cultural life of Nepalese and their beliefs. The researcher claims the lingering orientalist attitude of the author in his dealing with the Nepalese issues and events is fresh and original. That is why the researcher reflects upon the issue of author's orientalist and derogatory attitude towards the Nepalese culture and social beliefs as well as convention. The issue raised by the researcher differs sharply from the old-fashioned ideas and findings of these critics.

The sole purpose of the researcher is to expose how the author happens to reflect his orientalist biases while representing Nepalese society, its people, political crisis of the country and struggle of Nepalese society towards freedom and progress. The deep-rooted caste contamination, gender inequality, Nepalese people in poverty and helpless condition, expression of lust and greed, lazy bureaucracy and corrupt administration are all depicted as though these are the inseparable part and feature of Nepal. It is obviously clear that Nepal and Nepalese people are more attached to spiritualism and superstition. They are not interested to the pragmatic line of thinking. He describes as though Nepalese are impulsive, irresponsible, and drowned fully to the ocean of corruption. Crime and corruption filled country is what Nepal really. Specially female characters in this text are portrayed with much biasness in author's mind. They are represented as sorry looking lecherous creature only.

This thesis will have three chapters. The first chapter contains issue, elaboration of hypothesis, brief introduction of author and his stylistic trait, views of different critics and the point of departure. The second chapter deals with the thorough analysis of the text. The analysis is conducted from the viewpoint of orientalism and other relevant theory of representation. The last chapter includes the conclusive findings of the research.

II. Orientalist Representation in Samrat Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans*

The novel *Buddha's Orphans* represents Nepalese society and culture in a biased way. Kathmandu valley is portrayed as the exotic city that is torn between the temptation of modernity and the burden of tradition. Upadhyay depicts Nepalese families as if they are loose and fragile. No coherent normative forces bind Nepalese society. The family of Ganga Da is on the verge of disintegration. His wife, Jamuna is insane and schizophrenic. Her fit of schizophrenia tortures Ganga Da severely. Kaki's son kicks her from his house. Even the educated ladies like, Nilu and Prateema profess belief in superstitious practice. Muwa is a drunkard and gambler women who enjoys living together with half a age younger boy being irresponsible toward her daughter Nilu.

In this novel, Upadhyay depicts the story of an illicit mother. A mother who happens to be a mother without any sense of being able to give birth to her baby and then nurture and take care of her baby. An unknown mother gives birth to a baby. Perhaps due to the fear of being shamed and embarrassed, she dies getting drowned in Rani Pokhari. Rani Pokhari is the famous pond located at the heart of Kathmandu. This pond has religious and historical significance. But the author does not care for its historical and spiritual significance. He simply plays with its importance hilariously. He is not aware of its importance. He upholds condescending attitude to it. That is why he portrays this pond as a site in which an illicit woman, who gives birth to a baby, dies by getting drowned in it. To show an illicit woman die by drowning on it is to contaminate and poison this pond. Such representation reflects author's metropolitan biases and orientalist prejudices. The following lines cited from the novel illustrate and expose how condescending is author's attitude towards Nepalese sites of religious and historical importance:

For the rest of the morning, she and Bokey Ba roamed the area in search of someone who would claim the baby. Kaki walked in the front, clutching the baby to her chest, already protective. She puckered her lips in kisses at him whenever he cried. They circled Rani Pokhari, where the mother's body now rested at the bottom of the pond, which was the size of a football field, with a white temple dedicated to Lord Shiva in the middle. Kaki remembered vaguely that it was built by a Malla king to console his wife after the death of their son- thus the name, the queen's Pond. (5)

The above citation shows that the author is aware of who makes the pond and why the pond is made. He is conscious of pond's historical significance. Historically speaking, this pond offers consolation and solace to those who are broken hearted. But in this novel, this pond has become the place in which suicide takes place. Upadhyay furthermore says that one of the SLC students had committed suicide due to his poor performance in exam. Nowadays suicide rate is on increase. This pond offers opportunities to those who happen to commit suicide. The author intends to say that nowadays historically important places have lost gradually grace, charm and importance. Clearly, condescending orientalist attitude of author is manifested in this novel.

To probe how Upadhyay's metropolitan bias and prejudice is implicated in the novel, the researcher makes use of the ideas from *Orientalism* by Edward Said. Said puts an end to the difference between east and west, as orientalists put in discourse of orientalism. He says that with the start of European colonization the Europeans came in contact with the lesser developed countries of the east. They found their civilization and culture very exotic, and established the science of orientalism. Orientalism is the

study of the orientals or the people from these *exotic* civilization. Edward Said argues that the Europeans divided the world into two parts; the east and the west or the occident and the orient or the civilized and the uncivilized. This was totally an artificial boundary. And it was laid on the basis of the concept of them and us or theirs and ours. Said's ideas, which constitute the theoretical framework, are presented below:

The Europeans used orientalism to define themselves. Some particular attributes were associated with the orientals, and whatever the orientals weren't the occidentals were. The Europeans defined themselves as the superior race compared to the orientals; and they justified their colonization by this concept. They said that it was their duty towards the world to civilize the uncivilized world. The main problem, however, arose when the Europeans started generalizing the attributes they associated with orientals, and started portraying these artificial characteristics associated with orientals in their western world through their scientific reports, literary work, and other media sources. (87)

The trend to divide geography, culture and civilization takes root in the discourses of orientalism. The Europeans see their advantage in drawing boundary between the culture of the west and the culture of the east. By doing so, they intend to make their culture acceptable and universal. On the strength of the universality of their culture, the westerner intends to take economic and political benefit. As claimed by Said, orientalism generates those truths regarding to the cultures and history of orientals. Those truths are political truths. The truths and knowledge that arise from the discourse of orientalism are politically charged. They are unable to give exact reality

regarding how the oriental culture really is. The truths that are commonly found in the discourses of orientalism favour the colonial interest.

With this sort of theoretical insight of Edward Said, the researcher goes on to enumerate biases of the author from the text. The novelist Upadhyay portrays the mother-son relationship in an exotic manner. A mother who lives on her earning made by selling corn on pavement has to meet an unexpected response from her son and daughter-in-law. The question of money comes in mother-son relationship. Mother is embittered by the pestering and nagging daughter-in-law. The traditional stereotype that there is constant quarrel and misunderstanding between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is perfectly reflected in this novel. Kaki is one day kicked by her son. She has nowhere to go. Kicked by her son and daughter-in-law, she is forced to pass night on road. Finally, she is compelled to work as a servant in a rich man's house. The noisome vulgarity, querulous family and constant acrimony among family members are some of the unavoidable features of Nepalese family. To Upadhyay, Nepalese families are exotic. Any kind of bad event can happen sporadically. The following lines reflect this attitude of the novelist:

One morning, Kaki's son kicked her out of the house, accusing her of stealing money from under his mattress, which she had to pay for the goat. The rest of the day Kaki roamed the city with her belongings. Too weak to gather the bedding in her arms, she had left it in the courtyard where her son had thrown it, so all she had now was a box filled with jewelry and trinkets, a black and white photo of her young son taken by the street photographer of Baghbazaar, and a bag crammed with two petticoats, three blouses, and an extra dhoti. (10)

Instead of being caring and loving to his mother, son behaves aggressively. In Nepalese society, sons and daughters care their mothers and fathers as though they are no less than gods. The belief that caring and loving one's parents in old age is more valuable than paying a pilgrimage to the holy places. But this view is presented in a derogatory way. Of course conflict can occur between parents and offspring. But offspring hardly goes to the extent of kicking parents. Upadhyay's treatment of underlying socio-cultural values is unacceptable.

Some additional ideas of Said become pertinent here. Said argues that Europeans defined themselves while defining oriental people and oriental culture. The definition of oriental culture and people helps the European people to project their self and identity. Orientalists use a stock of stereotypical remarks to depict the oriental culture and oriental civilization:

The most important use of orientalism to the Europeans was that they defined themselves by defining the orientals. For example, qualities such as lazy, irrational, uncivilized, crudeness were related to the orientals, and automatically the Europeans became active, rational, civilized, sophisticated. Thus, in order to achieve this goal, it was very necessary for the orientalist to generalize the culture of the orientals. Another feature of orientalism was that the culture of the orientals was explained to the European audience by linking them to the western culture, for example, Islam was made into *Mohammadism* because Mohammad was the founder of this religion and since religion of Christ was called Christianity; thus Islam should be called *Mohammadism*. (Said 143)

Sweeping generalizations regarding oriental culture take place in discourse of orientalism. The generalized remarks contain plenty of orientalist stereotypes. These stereotypes are suggestive of how well-organized and systematic is the politics behind the productions of orientalist texts. Certain political motive really exists at the back of the textual production. The entire process of producing orientalist discourse is supported by colonial greed, the vision of colonialism and ultimately the idea of conquest. By representing others' culture as alien and enfeebled, it would be easier to conquer it. The idea of conquest is inherent in the representations of oriental culture.

In the novel, there are plenty of evidences which exemplify that representation of beliefs and customs of people is full of prejudices. Ganga Da is a government employee. He works in planning commission. He is a corrupt bureaucrat. Worst than this he is a faithful follower of monarchy. He has constructed a house by using money he embezzled from government fund. Although he is prosperous in terms of material prosperity, he is inwardly miserable. His wife is a schizophrenic crackpot. Her sporadic reaction puts Ganga Da in distress. His schizophrenic wife reacts in an unexpected way. She has become a great nuisance to him. Worst of all, she is a 'sterile' woman. Ganga Da is carrying a burden of his wife's schizophrenia and sterility. Upadhyay mentions some Nepalese families. All these families are facing different problems. In some houses daughters elope, in other houses son brings an untouchable girl to his house and the like. Upadhyay hardly deals with specialty of Nepalese family sensitively. To him, Nepalese families are as fragile as western families. That is why Nepalese families appear to be fragile or breakable. The following lines suggest how schizophrenically reactive Ganga Da's wife, Jamuna is:

Jamuna returned, carrying a bottle and a wad of cotton. She knelt before Raja, who, to Kaki's surprise, did not shrink from her. Jamuna

dabbed a piece of cotton with iodine, and applied it to his face. You are a brave boy, son. Jamuna said. A bahadur. She took Raja to the bed and made him sit next to her. You two go out and talk about the wages and other things. He will stay with me. Go! No, no I want to talk in this room. Kaki said, but Ganga Da signaled to her that it was okay.

Reluctantly, she left Raja with the woman and went out. (28)

Ganga Da's wife Jamuna is insane. She is temperamentally schizophrenic. She reacts unpredictably. Updhyay does not mention why she is insane. When she sees a child, Raja, her maternal instinct wells up. Is her insane reactions caused by sterility or is it caused by indifference of her husband? Upadhyay does not bother to ponder upon this issue. He is simply interested in casting orientalist shadow in the image of Jamuna. To the author, Jamuna is a mysterious woman who is not easily understandable. Her image fits into the image of a woman who is hysterically affected by the drudgeries of domestic life.

With the help of Stuart Hall's idea of representation, the further analytical task will be conducted. Hall is a noted theorist of representation. He is of the view that representation does not successfully convey truth. One who represents has one intention while encoding message in the textual representation. But the viewers or readers approach it from another angle. The one who wants to decode the message has different objective. That is why the problem can occur. The following lines give Hall's view regarding the theory of representation:

A message must be perceived as meaningful discourse and be meaningfully de-coded. There are four codes of the communication. The first way of encoding is the dominant code. This is the code the encoder expects the decoder to recognize and decode. The second way

of encoding is the professional code. It serves to reproduce the dominant definitions precisely by bracketing the hegemonic quality, and operating with professional coding. The third way of encoding is the negotiated code. It acknowledges the legitimacy of the hegemonic definitions to make the grand significations. The fourth way of encoding is the oppositional code also known the globally contrary code. (37)

Hall elaborates how message is encoded and then how the perceiver happens to seek different message other than the message he intends to achieve. The different objectives in the minds of encoder and decoder create problems. The problems exist that at the level of textual production and interpretation. Hall challenged all four components of the mass communications model. He argues that meaning is not simply fixed or determined by the sender. The message is never transparent. The audience is not a passive recipient of meaning.

Hall's idea regarding the creation of meaning is applicable in Upadhyay's text. Upadhyay also creates meaning about Nepalese culture and society in a biased way. In this novel, Upadhyay portrays Kathmandu valley as crime prone city. It is subject to unrest, instability, and metropolitan dread. People are rebelling against monarchy. But some other people are worshipping king as the incarnation of god Bishnu. In the same city, youths with progressive and democratic consciousness are asking reform and multiparty democracy. But in the same city, some vigilantes of king are crying that they need their king-god. The city of Kathmandu is torn between ideological superstition and political modernism. The following lines show this aspect:

Het! The official, a short, plump man with a protruding belly clad in the official daura suruwal, and wearing dark glasses like King M.

always did, had scolded Raja. 'You think this button is something cheap? To be worn by every vagrant on the street? See here?' The official pointed his pudgy fingers at the king's profile. This is our king, understand? They say he is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu himself. You cannot touch our king with your filthy hands. (32)

Demand for democracy is afoot. The strong superstitious base of society hinders political quest. The collective strivings of people for democracy and political reform are pushed to the corner. Instead of defending for public outcry for democracy, Upadhyay throws light on the dim prospect of democracy. It appears that Nepalese society, as depicted by Upadhyay in this novel, is incapable of undergoing progressive reform and socio-cultural transformation optimistically.

Upadhyay also makes parody of the importance of holy rivers Ganga and Jamuna. Once when Ganga Da plans to marry, someone brings marriage proposal of Jamuna. Jamuna is a girl from rich and cultured family. Ganga Da is also a respectable employee of planning commission. The Brahmin thinks that Jamuna and Ganga are the names of two holy rivers. Similarly the names of marriage candidates are Ganga and Jamuna. The union between these two marriage candidates would be good as the confluence between Ganga and Jamuna rivers. But the confluence of Ganga and Jamuna, that means their marriage, turn out to be source of misery, burden and great nuisance. In this way, Upadhyay portrays the underlying spiritual norms as they are no less than a bag of superstitious belief. The following lines are illustrative of this point:

At the time of his marriage, he had just started his job at the planning commission, where he was now a second-class officer. In the years since his father's death, his mother, clad in the white dhoti of the

widow, had turned to scriptures and prabachans. The proposal for Jamuna had come through a distant relative who had known Jamuna's family for years. Both Ganga's and Jamuna's names refer to two of the holiest rivers of India, the man had said with a smile, whose confluence is a sacred spot, thus this marriage dictated by the heavens.

(38)

It is believed that the marriage between Ganga Da and Jamuna is dictated by heaven. But the reality is drastically different. Such a heavenly dictated marriage turns out to be the source of constant quarrel, burden and restlessness. From his heavenly dictated marriage, Ganga Da gets a schizophrenic wife. Throughout his life, Ganga Da does not get peace and happiness. His whole life is ruined by constant pestering and reactions of his wife. In this way Upadhyay ridicules the hollowness of spiritual faith. In Nepalese society most of the heavenly dictated marriage breaks, shattering illusions of devotees and believers.

Michel Foucault argue that the new notion of truth is formed out of discursive practice. He categorically rejects the effects of ideology in the productions of knowledge. Discursive framework is largely responsible for the origin of a new mode in which discourse about culture and history circulates. The production of discourse about culture and history is affected by power groups. At the same time, the circulating truths and knowledge generate a sort of power. The process is mutual and interactive. The following lines exemplify the point:

With the emergence of post-structuralism, a shift from ideology to discourse in social theory took an upper hand. Let us begin with the two main tendencies in post-structuralism: textuality and discursivity. Textuality refers to a movement within literary, cultural theory and in

philosophy emphasizing the revaluation and revalorization of text as text. Textual researches focus on language as a producer of meaning rather than a pale reflection of some prior reality. Discursivity on the other hand, has an area of research much broader than textual analyses.

(70)

Foucault's discourse describes how traditions, norms, rules, texts, symbols, words and expressions are created by power. These contents demonstrate hierarchical power relations. Discursivity unlike textuality, not only deals with the text but also with the context. Discursive research focus on the question of how rather than why. They do not look for causal explanations. Foucault analyzes different institutions and other discursive unities to detect power relations. According to Foucault, statements and truth-claim spread and take the form of hegemony. With the hegemony, truth-claim gradually transform into the regime of truth.

This view of Foucault is linked with Upadhyay's method of representation. Upadhyay's mode of representation of Nepalese people and their culture in this novel is not free from the politics of power. Orientalist biasness is embedded in his representation. In this novel, Ganga Da's mother is overtly spiritual. She does not live with her son and daughter-in-law. She lives under Swami Nityananda's tutelage. Ganga Da's mother has renounced this material world. She is overtly religious. She takes pride in her commitment to the act of renunciation. She assumes that she will never get peace and happiness so long as clings to this material world. She comes in a hustle and bustle to her son's house. She pressurizes her son to take all of her properties along with the properties of his dead father. Her spiritual pursuit shows she is spiritual. In this novel, Upadhays represents Nepal as though it is exactly what the orientalist tend to say about people of orient. In the western orientalist discourses,

people dwelling in the east are spiritual. They are also heedless of the temptation of materialistic world. The same orientalist stereotypes are used by Upadhyay while portraying Nepalese people. The following lines suggest this fact:

Ganga Da's mother visited, unannounced. She told him that she had come to Kathmandu to transfer all their property to his name- the house and the close to one lakh rupees Ganga Da's father had left for her-as she now wanted to renounce all earthly matters and devote herself to God under Wwami Nityananda's tutelage. But her first question to Ganga Da and Jamuna was why they had not yet given her a grandchild. The next day Jamuna entered the living room carrying something cradled in her arms. (40)

Upadhyay is a diasporic author who dwells in America. He occupies the metropolitan stand as an author. He views oriental culture and his native custom from the western perspective. His style of representing the Nepalese society fits into the expectation of western audience. To become popular among western readers and scholars, he represents Nepal and Nepalese culture in biased way. In the unconscious mind of author, the orientalist biases are embedded. The only one idea comes to the mind of author- this idea is that Nepalese people are spiritual and unnecessarily transcendental. To represent Nepalese people as spiritual beings under the influence of transcendental fantasy is to commit a bias. Upadhyay is not above this prejudice.

Female characters in *Buddha's Orphans* are almost all tainted with foibles and deviations. Ganga Da's wife is schizophrenic. His mother is overtly spiritual. Kaki is helpless in the hand of her own son. There is another lady whose name is Muwa. Muwa is a 'widow' who lost her husband when she was in the prime of her youth. She has one daughter whose name is Nilu. By the time Nilu is four, Muwa's

husband dies in car accident. Since then Muwa has been living with her daughter. Muwa is prosperous. Though her husband died and she is living a miserable life of a widow, she is rich in terms of material prosperity. At the heart of Kathmandu, she has a large house. But Muwa is not living a normal and ethically sound life. She has fallen into alcoholism and drug addiction. When her only one daughter elopes with Raja, Muwa becomes broken hearted. Muwa has not only fallen into the habit of alcoholism and drug addiction but also to moral debauchery. She is enjoying living together with Sumit. The important thing is that living together or cohabitation is not practiced in Nepalese society. But Upadhyay shows Nepalese women cohabitating with their respective male partner. Either Nepalese women are harmfully spiritual or embarrassingly lecherous. The following lines reflect this point:

Muwa's husband had died in a car accident several years before when her daughter Nilu was four, Ramkrishan told her. He was the owner of one of the city's first travel agencies, housed in an office with large glass windows in Basantpur. He also owned pieces of land and shares in jute and sugarcane factories throughout the country. That unfortunate morning he had parked his car in front of his travel agency and was locking the door when an out-of-control lorry slammed into and crushed his head to pulp. Muwa's mouth smelled of alcohol when she came near. She was never free from the shocks unleashed by disastrous death of her husband. (51)

Muwa's problem and prejudice are not handled by the author in a justifiable way. The author looks at the condition of his characters from fixed and biased perspective of orientalism. Instead of dwelling on problem of Nepalese women realistically, he views those problems by putting on the lens of orientalism. The exact reality

regarding Nepalese women, socio-cultural life of Nepalese people and other underlying ethos are distorted. It is dreadful to expect ground reality regarding Nepalese society from Upadhyay. The existing norms and values are shattered into pieces. The progressive change and emerging spirit of modernity are cast aside by author in this novel.

James Markshields is the ardent follower of Michel Foucault. He comments upon Foucault's attempt to trace the nearness between the thematic of repression and the microphysics of power. The way power operates in a subtle and silent way is called by Foucault as the microphysics of power. Any cynical notion of power hardly fits into the framework of power. Foucault projects the disembodied and diffused notion of power. Foucault's analysis of power in the first volume of *The Order of Things* is admired by James Markshields with a detached critical awareness.

Markshields makes the following remarks about Foucault's treatment of power:

First and most generally, power is not simply punitive—it does not just deny, silence, restrain. Power can also be, in fact need also be productive; a purely cynical form of power, says Foucault, would never last. Although we have come to accept confession as a liberating revolt against the silence of the Great Repression, confession is itself a form of the subtle workings of power, one that in fact promotes discussion and analysis of sexuality. (1)

Markshields is a noted critic of Michel Foucault. He explains Foucauldian notion of power. According to Markshields, power is not only repressive but productive also. It not only silences the forbidden voices but also explores outlets whereby repressed urges come out. Cynical notion of power hardly survives forever. Foucault views

power as relation of forces. It shapes the constructive process of generating truth-claim.

This idea of Markshield is relevant in the analysis of the way Nepalese culture and Nepal is represented in the novel by Upadhyay. Kathmandu appears as exotic and inscrutable city in the narration of Upadhyay. While describing Kathmandu city and taste of people who live in it, Upadhyay makes use of the language of orientalism. The exotic images commonly found in discourse of orientalism are used by Upadhyay. The following lines, which capture the exotic taste of Nepalese people, illustrate politically charged view of author:

Kaki and Ramkrishan talked as they washed the dishes, cut and sliced vegetables, swept the floor, tasted the food with their ladles, plant flowers and vegetables in the garden. Raja wandered around house, and every now and then Kaki called him to make sure he was not bothering Muwa, who while not drinking, napped in her room on the second floor, or her curtains drawn in the middle of the afternoon, a bedside lamp on, read Indian magazines detailing illicit romances, and murders and decapitation. (52)

The irrational habit of Nepalese people is described in the above-cited excerpt. Most of Nepalese people are seen eating with ladles. Their custom of eating is totally irrational. It is not hygienic to eat by everyone with the same device with which people use to cook. Upadhyay views that outwardly Nepalese people seem to have interest in gardening and planting flowers in garden. It appears they have idea of cleanliness. But the reality is drastically different. They read magazines which contain articles about murder, decapitation and illicit romance. This taste shows how violent

their taste is. The outward gentility is threatened by the inner violence which is reflected in their taste in decapitation, murder and illicit romance.

In the fictitious world of narration, Upadhyay presents Nepalese people who believe more in witch doctors than medical doctors. Ganga Da does not take his sick wife to psychiatrist. He does not take her to hospital. He takes her to miracle healer. Like Ganga Da and his wife, several sick women and men rather go to witch doctors. The following lines prove this point:

Although he did not take her to Ranchi, Ganga Da tried other treatments. He took her to people known for their miracle curers: a healer at the base of the Swayambhunath hill; the college girl in Thamel who became possessed by a powerful Newar goddess at the chant of a few mantras; Patan's Ama, who was reputed to heal patients declared untreatable by the doctors in the nearby Shanta Bhawan. But Jamuna's condition, instead of getting better, got worse. Towards the end of their second year of marriage, it became further exacerbated after she failed to get pregnant. (40)

Due to her inability to get pregnant, Jamuna is losing her normal psychological condition. The patriarchal society dictates every married woman to be pregnant after marriage. In case she remains stable, she is likely to get cursed and disgraced. The sterile woman is mocked and then left in pain. The pressure put by patriarchy to Jamuna puts her on the verge of insanity and bout of schizophrenia. The strong desire to be mother is deprived. As a result, she turns into the patient of schizophrenia. But Ganga Da does not take her to hospital. Instead of taking Jamuna to hospital, he takes her to witch doctor. Such representation of Nepalese people in this text is biased orientalist representation by Upadhyay. Because, nowadays there is enough

development in health and medical sectors of Nepalese society than before. And Nepalese people have also become much aware than before regarding superstitions practice. But Upadhyay present this fact in biased way.

Nepalese society hardly witnesses lesbian practice. Although there might be some lesbians in Nepalese society also, the lesbian relation is not as openly manifested as the author believes. The author exhibits the lesbian attraction between Nilu and Sister Agnes. Nilu is not aware of the growing lesbian interest of Sister Agnes. When Sister Agnes expresses her lesbian interest in Nilu, then Nilu begins to quit Sister Agnes. In the beginning there is a good friendship between them. But Nilu is not aware of Agnes' lesbian interest. That is why she is surprised by Agnes' growing interest in her. Such an open exhibition of the case of lesbian relations between girls reveals that Upadhyay thinks that Nepalese society is sunk into perverted sexuality and other deviant cases of sexuality. The following lines show this point:

Sister Agnes placed her right hand on Nilu's thigh, which was exposed as her tunic had slid up while sitting. Go on, Sister Agnes said, and yawned. Nilu squirmed and shifted, so Sister Agnes' hand would slip away, but it remained on her thigh. Rumi ... Well He suggests that physical desire can be channeled for union with God. There was no mistake now: Sister Agnes' fingers had travelled further up Nilu's thigh, closer toward her crotch, and with a jerk Nilu bolted out of the bed and stood. Her breath had become stuck in her throat, and when the words came out, they tumbled out rapidly, I have to go. (85)

Lesbian relationship is as rampant as the author simply assumes. Nepalese society is not as sexually corrupted as he believes. But Upadhyay views sexual experience of

Nepalese people from western angle. That is why he is tempted to impose sexual perversions and deviant sexual longing. The blatant expression of lesbian interest between Nilu and Sister Agnes produce bad effects in the established codes prevailing in Nepalese society.

To examine Upadhyay's representation of Nepalese culture, the researcher deals with Foucault's view on representation. According to Foucault, any mode of representation is not totally free from the formative influence of power and the dominant cultural codes of society. According to Foucault, the idea of taking out pure truth from a discourse is sure to fail. The following lines give a glimpse of Foucault's stand on the absolute representative power of representation:

Foucault maintains that the great turn in modern philosophy occurs when, with Kant, it becomes possible to raise the question of whether ideas do in fact represent their objects and, if so, how they do so. In other words, ideas are no longer taken as the unproblematic vehicles of knowledge; it is now possible to think that knowledge might be something other than representation. This did not mean that representation had nothing at all to do with knowledge. Perhaps some knowledge still essentially involved ideas' representing objects. But, Foucault insists, the thought that was only now possible was that representation itself could have an origin in something else. (171)

As claimed by Foucault, every mode of representation is problematical. But this problematical nature of representation is actually the true characteristic of representation. Judged from the classical point of view, the postmodern narration or representation is problematical. But viewed from the workable perspective, it is the exact characteristic of representation. This thought, according to Foucault, led to some

important and distinctively modern possibilities. Not, however, produced by the mind as a natural or historical reality, but as belonging to a special realm of knowledge.

Foucault's idea regarding the representation of meaning is applicable in Upadhyay's text. The historical reality that is represented in the novel, is politically charged. We find false representation of Nepal and Nepalese people in this text. The efforts of Nepalese people to improve their tastes are sidelined as vulgar and debased. Over the last few decades before the restoration of democracy, many youths of Kathmandu cultivated the taste for videos and movies. Most of the youths liked pornographic movies. On the streets of Thamel several music videos and pornographic C D shops were established. The tastes of youths take new direction. It shows a kind of change in society. Other admirable things have also appeared in Kathmandu valley. But Upadhyay depicts the shifting taste of Nepalese youths as vulgar and debased. Nepalese youths are portrayed as aimless guys who roam casting glance on shops of pornographic CD and horror movie. The following lines shows this sort of bias on the part of author:

Over the past year, every year alley in inner Kathmandu seemed to boast a video parlor, where bootlegged, grainy copies of Hindi and English-language movies, some pornographic, were shown for a fee. Nilu and Raja had been to a couple of these video parlor, where old men with dentures sat shoulder to shoulder with young, boisterous boys, and young brides with gold jewelry sparkling and tinkling on their wrists jostled for space with grandmothers suffering from arthritis.

(147)

In this novel, Thamel area of Kathmandu valley is portrayed as the underworld of vulgarity and degradation. It is the destination of those who are temperamental and

impulsive. They turn to Thamel to expose their debased passions. In their attempt to fulfill their vulgar and debased passions, they are totally neglectful of their duties and responsibility. They represent a group or a class that is on the path of deviation. This place is not the underworld of moral debauchery. It is the favorite destination of tourists both domestic and foreign. But the author has depicted this place as the center of evil. Thamel also acquires the characteristics of an oriental land that is portrayed in several discourses of orientalism. Orientalistic bias of the author is manifested in the representation of crowded area, Thamel, of Kathmandu valley.

Most areas of Kathmandu are represented as land inhabited by freaks and fakirs. The socially alienated youths loiter irrationally and insanely on the streets of Kathmandu. Kathmandu seems to be alien land of freak and fakir. Buses and vans that drive on the road are not in systematic order. There is no systematic rule and regulation while managing things. The following lines justify the point:

In Freak Street, dreadlocked hippies with long beards and baggy corduroys hung about, looking stoned and happy. A heavy smell of ganja and has permeated the air. A multi-colored van sat outside a shop, and a girl in a long, flowing frock, a cigarette in her hand, was arguing with a Nepali shopkeeper, probably unhappy over a business deal. From the second floor of a house, the steady, rhythmic beat of reggae, lending the argument below an almost sensual tone are fine and charming. Nearby, a black man in a crew cut chatted with a saffron-robed sadhu, explaining to him that he was an American marine. The sadhu, fingering his dirty beard, was nodding. (149)

The impact of hippsterism and other radical movements is described by the novelist in this novel. As the way orientalist say, Upadhyay presents Kathmandu valley as the

dwelling place of fakirs, freaks and saintly motorcyclists. Kathmandu is not the place where rational and pragmatic people live. To Upadhyay, it is just the shelter of those who have one screw loose. His biasness is clearly projected in this sort of representation. Most probably, there are orientalist biases embedded in his mind.

As per the objection to the distorted representation of Nepalese culture in *Buddha's Orphan*, the researcher cites ideas of Hall. Hall points out some of the important clues as to how representation of culture takes place in a discourse and how the process of interpreting culture turns out to be problematical. Hall works out some sorts of plan to narrow down the gap between culture as such and the textually represented culture. Hall's ideas are reflected below:

As people who belong to same culture must share a broadly similar conceptual map, so they must also share the same way of interpreting the signs of a language. In order to interpret them, we must have access to the two systems of representation: to a conceptual map which correlates the sheep in the field with the concept of a sheep: and a language system which is visual language, bear some resemblance to the real thing or looks like it in some way. The relationship in the system of representation between sign, the concept and the object to which they might be used to refer is entirely arbitrary. (72)

As claimed by Stuart Hall, the meaning is constructed by the system of representation. It is constructed and fixed by the code, which sets up the correlation between our conceptual system and our language system. One way of thinking about culture is in terms of these shared conceptual maps, shared language systems and the codes which govern the relationships of translation between them. Not because such knowledge is imprinted in their genes, but because they learn its conventions and so gradually

become culture persons. They unconsciously internalize the codes which allow them to express certain concepts and ideas through their systems of representation. But of our social, cultural and linguistic conventions, then meaning can never be finally fixed.

Upadhyay has represented Nepal and Nepalese society in this novel keeping orientalist biasness in his mind. Representation of Nepalese culture and lifestyle is totally distorted by him. So, it is obviously clear that Upadhyay has not understood the codes of others' culture as described by Hall. In this novel, entire Kathmandu valley is represented as a place in which many unprecedented anarchic things take place. Kathmandu is anarchic and amorphous. At any time government properties can be destroyed. Institutions and buildings of public importance are burned on the spur of moment. The following descriptive part portrays Kathmandu valley as a volatile and unpredictable place:

Soon after Nilu and Raja sat for their SLC exams, the city exploded.

Some students were hauled around the city in pushcarts, a garland of shoes around their necks, their faces blackened. The Royal Nepal Airlines office in New Road, right across the street from the parade ground where the Rana autocrats had gathered their soldiers for pompous and useless ceremonies a century ago, became a focal point of the public discontent. Cars were torched, and further up the road the buildings of the government newspapers were set on fire. (150)

Disgruntled students set fire on cars and other public properties. It appears that they have no control over their impulse and anger. Unaware of the consequence of their aggressive actions, the disgruntled groups set fire and create agitation and public protest. The government administration is too weak to impose harsh and punitive

measures to control such kinds of aggressive activities. In the backward and least developed country like Nepal, government is not able to impose strong rules and disciplines.

The formation of textual representation of oriental culture is largely responsible for highlighting how power dynamics works. In the Foucauldian tradition, Said suggests to look at Orientalism as a discourse:

Without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enonnously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage-and even produce-the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. (3)

According to said, only by examining orientalism as a discourse one can understand orientatlism as systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage and produce the orient, politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period. Orientalism is not simply a collection of misrepresentations about the Orient in Europe. It created body of theory and practice. Orientalism in the European culture became an instrument for maintaining content.

According to Foucauldian tradition, Said suggests to look at Orientalism as a discourse. Similarly, Upadhyay has also produced this text as a discourse of Orientalism being influenced by Western culture and power. The images of exoticism, which Said detects in *Orientalism*, occur in Upadhyay's novel as well. In this novel, the relationship between Raja and Nilu indicates many things. There is huge gap between them. Raja is an orphan boy who grows in a rich man's house due to Ganga Da's help. Nilu is born and brought up in rich family. Regardless of Raja's

anonymous background, she does come close to him. Their nearness and intimacy sparks sexual interest. They involve in passionate sexual activities which expose their impulsive and impetuous habits. The following lines show their maddening sexual spree and impulsive exchange of passionate gestures:

Before now, they had petted each other in alley, he had sucked her breasts in his house in Lainchour, and she had given him a hand job. But they had not gone beyond these. One time, in Lainchour; with Ganga Da and Jamuna Mummy away to Manakamana, they had come very close: Raja's pants were down to his knees and she had taken off her t-shirt and her panties but just as he readies himself to enter her, she moved away from him and said, Raja, no, let's wait. He hadn't argued with her, just held her tight. (158)

In this novel, even the attraction and love between young boys and girls are portrayed as loveless bare attraction based on sexual attraction only. The mutual exchange of affection and care is represented as just the sexual attraction between young girls and boys. It appears that affection, sentiment and care are no longer important to human relationship. The existing evidences from the text suggest that Nepalese people are devoid of affection. They just show their vulgar sexual hunger. The sole aim is to enjoy the instant gratification of vulgar sexual pleasure. But the reality is fundamentally different from what Upadhyay says about it.

In this novel, Upadhyay does not portray Buddhist monasticism as the holy shrine, rather it is represented as a place in which sexually repressive monks live. Swayambhunath is the famous Buddhist shrine. Upadhyay reproduces Swayambhunath as the residence where Buddhist monks take voyeuristic delight by looking at the girls who come on a date with their boyfriends. The monastery and its

surroundings are represented with derogatory view of author toward Nepalese religion and spirituality. It is desecrated and profaned by the irresponsible remarks of the writer. The following lines show how Upadhyay desecrates and profanes holy shrines like Swayambhunath:

Sometimes in their walks they ventured as far as Swayambhunath temple to the west, climbed the hundreds of steps that would leave them breathless. From the top, surrounded by monkeys, they would watch the city. Buddhist boy-monks in saffron robes would stand a few feet away, their arms crossed at their chests, gazing longingly at Nilu. These young monks, mindful of their doctrines on the impermanence of desires, only watched, but the bands of young men in the street corners teased, heckled, and badgered. (173)

This extract illustrates how the novelist has spoiled the spiritual significance of holy shrine, Swayambhunath. Of course, youths visit Swayambhunath temple for relaxation. But Upadhyay says that monks who live there are voyeuristic. They take voyeuristic delight by looking at the private parts of girls who come on date with their boyfriends. To represent holy place as the corrupted site of dating and voyeurism is to belittle and weaken spiritual importance of holy shrines. On the one hand, he depicts entire Nepalese people as absurdly religious. On the other, he desecrates temples like Swayambhunath.

The biased view of the author is reflected in this novel *Buddha's Orphans*. His representation represents none of the concrete and pure reality. Upadhyay's metropolitan stand is reflected in this novel. His attitude toward Nepalese and their culture is unacceptable.

III. Politics of Representation in Upadhyay's *Buddha's Orphans*

The central argument of this research is that Upadhyay's treatment of Nepalese culture and religion is problematic. Nepalese culture and the Nepalese people's religious faith are falsely portrayed in *Buddha's Orphans*. There are several evidences in the texts which clarify author's orientalist biases. He portrays Nepalese people as impulsive and exotic. The unusual elements and temperament exist highly in their behaviours and activities. Kaki is one of the character of this novel and Upadhyay portrays her highly temperamental and impulsive. Out of her maternal affection she does wrong judgement by nurturing an orphan infant, because she is too poor to nurture him. Similarly, Bokey Ba commits the same mistake. He puts the unknown and unidentified baby on Kaki's lap and abandons. Ganga Da is too irrational to marry a woman who is schizophrenic. His simple belief in arrange marriage brings him to the path of tragic life. Throughout his life he has to live with a mad woman disregarding the happiness of conjugal life.

The novelist seems orientalist in this text, because he is criticizing and making parody of the oriental people and culture by using different characters in the novel. In this novel, Upadhyay projects his oriental biasness toward Nepal and Nepalese culture being orient himself. Though on the surface level of the novel he presents political upheaval of Nepal from 1960's to the present situation along with the story of young lovers, but in deeper level, we find his orientalist attitude. He depicts Nepali people as stoic, visionless, poor, superstitious, overtly religious, insane, impulsive and uneducated which is opposite to occident. If we analyze and interpret this novel superficially, we cannot call him Orientalist but when we have thorough reading of this novel wearing the spectacle of Orientalism, then we obviously find this novel as a

piece of Orientalist representation. Through various issues, characters' portrayal, their behaviour and setting, we can find his hidden Orientalist notion.

Characters like Kaki and Bokey Ba are represented as very poor Nepalese in the condition of homelessness. Bokey Ba dies due to the shiever cold, lack of shelter, care and medicine. Kaki also makes her livelihood by selling corn in Ratna Park, who is abandoned by her own son and daughter-in-law and she is left homeless. One morning, Kaki's son kicks her out of the house. His harsh treatment is unexpected. He complains her of stealing money from his mattress. The rest of the day Kaki roams the city with her belongings. She is in too weak condition to carry her belongings and she roams in search of shelter.

There are sufficient evidences in this novel, which illustrate that representation of beliefs and customs of Nepalese people is full of prejudices. Ganga Da is a government employee. He works in planning commission but he is a corrupt bureaucrat and faithful follower of monarchy. He has constructed a house by using money which he misused from government fund. Although he is prosperous and rich, he is not happy but is in really pathetic condition. His wife is schizophrenic. Her activities and reaction puts Ganga Da in distress. His mad wife reacts in an unexpected way. She has become burden to him. She is a sterile woman. Ganga Da is carrying a burden of his wife's schizophrenia and sterility. In this novel, Upadhyay portrays some Nepalese families stereotypically in the way the orientalist scholars represent and dominate the orient in their work. All the families he portrays in this novel face problems regarding social norms and values. In some family, daughters elope, in some mother is drunkard and irresponsible toward own children, in some son kicks his old mother, in some, women are mad and burden to her own family, in some, girl dies of illegal relationship in young age. So, Upadhyay hardly deals with

the speciality of Nepalese family positively and sensitively. To him, Nepalese families are weak and fragile. Such biased representation of Nepalese society by author is unacceptable.

The setting of this novel is depicted as exotic, shapeless and crime prone like what Orientalist says about the major cities of the orient. Upadhyay depicts Kathmandu valley as crime prone city. To him, this city has the feature of unrest, instability and full of metropolitan trick. Ganga Da is also a resident of the same city and he is so cunning and fraud that he snatches other peoples' children and makes his own by making duplicate document of birth certificate. He snatches Raja away from Kaki, who has nurtured Raja when he was infant. He bribes the staff of Patan Hospital to make forge birth certificate of Raja to cure his schizophrenic wife. So, in this city, this sort of people are dwelling who can cheat and trick other people very easily. People are fighting against monarchy. There are always strike and normal life is always disturbed, poor people's lively wood is very badly disturbed. Due to strike in Kathmandu valley Nilu's Maitreya dies untimely because of lack of treatment on time. In the same city, youths with progressive and democratic consciousness are demanding reform and multiparty democracy. But in the same city, some blind followers of king are crying that they need their king - god because they worship king as the incarnation of Lord Bishnu. Upadhyay portrays the city of Kathmandu torn between ideological superstition and political modernism.

Orientalistic biases are embedded in the representation of female characters in this novel. Upadhyay has portrayed female characters keeping orientalist biases in his mind. Female characters are represented as the blind believers of superstition and fake cultural practice. Kaki is helpless character in her own house, Ganga Da's wife, Jamuna is schizophrenic. Ganga Da's mother is too much spiritual and leaves all the

material things and leads the life of Saint. And most of the female characters are represented as lecherous creatures only. To exemplify this, we can take the name of Muwa. She is a 'widow' who lost her husband in an accident in her youthful age. She is very prosperous in terms of material possession, she is living with her daughter Nilu and starts having relationship with a boy Sumit who is half a age younger than her. She is enjoying living together with Sumit, she is drunkard and gambler at the same time. The important thing is that living together is not practiced in Nepalese society. But Upadhyay shows Nepalese women living together with their respective male partner. Nilu also elopes with Raja without the consent of family. And her daughter Ranjana also returns from America with a child of Habsi on her womb. Not only this, Mohini, who is Raja's dead mother has such story. She bears child before her marriage which is against Nepalese social norms and values and she is compelled to commit suicide in Ranipokhari. Such representation of female character by Upadhyay clarifies that either Nepalese women are harmfully spiritual or embarrassingly lecherous.

In Nepalese society, we can hardly find open lesbian practice. Although there might be some lesbians in Nepalese society. But the author exhibits the lesbian attraction between sister Agnes and Nilu in the text. Upadhyay wants to show that lesbian practice is rampant in Nepalese society. This is condescending attitude of author toward Nepal and Nepalese people. And another important thing is that he has depicted Buddhist monasticism with orientalist attitude and full of orientalist prejudice. He has portrayed Buddhist monastery Swayambhunath as love making place of young lovers. Not only this, he has blamed the young monks for their voyeuristic gaze upon Nilu and young lovers who visit Swayambhunath. This is very

wrong notion and biased attitude of author. This is derogatory view of Upadhyay toward Nepalese culture, society and religion.

Samrat Upadhyay's present location is USA. And he has written this novel from Metropolitan soil. So, to meet the longings of western audience and scholars and to be readable and to maintain his central position in western Metropolitan world, he represents Nepalese people with biased Orientalistic attitude in this novel. Not only this, he also wants to gain economic benefit from the western world by representing Nepalese people in such biased way. So, there is politics of representation in this work of Upadhyay. All these evidences clarify that the author shows his orientalist attitude while portraying Nepalese society and culture. So, such biased representation of Nepal and Nepalese people in this novel makes him stand as orientalist writer.

Works Cited

- Albert, Martin. *Reflection on Metropolitan Bias*. London: Harper Collins, 2011.
- Dixit, Kanak. *Unheard Voice*. Kathmandu: Nepalaya, 2012.
- Dyer, Wayne. *Diasporic Pathos*. New York: Norton, 2010.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things*. London: Harper Collins, 1997.
- . *The Theory of Power*. London: Macmillan, 1998.
- Hall, Stuart. *Theory of Representation*. London: Macmillan, 1998.
- . *Codes and Communication*. London: Macmillan, 2001.
- Handal, Nathaniel. *Immigrants' Voice and Silence*. New York: Canon Gate, 2010.
- Karna, Sajan Kumar. *Trends in South Asian Literature*. New Delhi: Rupa Publication, 2010.
- Markfield, James. *Critique of Foucault's Discursivity*. London: Macmillan, 2004.
- Mishan, Ligaya. *Diasporic Voice in Alien Land*. New Delhi: Pilgrim Publication, 2011.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. New York: Penguin, 1998.
- . *Culture and Imperialism*. New York: Penguin, 2002.
- . *Reflection on Exile*. New York: Penguin, 2004.
- Thapa, Rabi. *Nepalese Literature: A Critical Reflection*. New Delhi: Diamond Publication, 2011.
- Upadhyay, Samrat. *Buddha's Orphans*. New Delhi: Rupa Publication, 2010.