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Magic Realism In Salman Rushdie's Midnights Children

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Abstract:

Salman Rushdie, he is one of the most significant writers of Indian Diaspora Literature. He has given noteworthy contribution in Diaspora literature. He has thrown the light upon the problems of his motherland which he faced in his life. He encounters with the problems through his extremely creative writing style. He is a master to present "magic realism". This paper will explore the depth about magic realism in Salman Rushdie's magnum opus "Midnights Children" published in 1981.Salaman Rushdie's all work is unique but Midnights Children is really remarkable, Rushdie has presented pre-independent and post independent era and shows the problems of that era. The creativity of the novel won "Booker Prize" in 1983.

Key Words: Magic-Realism, Indian Nation, Post Colonialism, Narrative Techniques.

Introduction

Salman Rushdie he is a writer of "Diaspora Indian English Literature", generally he writes about migrated people and their plights. He presents their struggle for existence and their adjustment with alien culture. Rushdie himself a migrated person therefore he is very much familiar with the problems which faces by a migrated man. "Midnights Children "it is an autobiography like V.S. Naipaul's "A House for Mr. Biswas" published in 1961. V.S Naipaul he is a contemporary writer of Salman Rushdie like Rushdie he is a writer of 'Diaspora literature' and very much familiar with the struggle of migrated people. Like Rushdie, Naipaul also a migrated man from his motherland therefore In "A House for Mr. Biswas" Naipaul presented his own childhood struggle as well his father's life through the character of Mr. Biswas, as the same manner in Midnights Children Rushdie presented his own childhood simultaneously presented a picture of pre-independent and post-independent

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scenario. Rushdie presented the problems of his motherland because he himself faced it. Rushdie had to leave his motherland when he was a schoolboy.

Ahmad Salman Rushdie born in Muslim family on 19 June, 1947.Rushdie was sent to England at the age of fourteen for schooling. Rushdie's family joined with emigrating Muslims, responding to the increasing conflicts between Pakistan and India, by moving to Karachi, Pakistan. These political and religious conflicts extremely affected the life of Salman Rushdie. Rushdie presented all effects of departed India in his famous novel "Midnights Children". Midnights Children are series of events and actions of post and pre independence era. Rushdie has tried to explore all these things in his first novel named "Grimus" published in 1975 but unfortunately this novel rejected by critics and readers too, but "Midnights Children" got all success, and sat new dimensions in literary world.

Magic realism and Midnights Children

Magic realism it is coined term which discovered in 1925 by Franz Roh, who is a German art critic. He has given new direction in European painting, a return to Realism after Expression abstract style. In literary world this term came in the 1950 and the 1960s when various Latin America writers used it. Magic realism it is a narrative style to presents supernatural events into realistic narrative without questioning the improbability of the events. Salman Rushdie he has expertise to present blending of events with magic realism.

Rushdie's second novel "Midnights Children" (1981) is considered as broad canvas events. Rushdie uses magic realism as a narrative technique. This is a panoramic novel which consists 70 years of modern Indian history and events of that time. To express these series of events Rushdie has used the narrative style of magical realism in which myth and fantasy are blended with real life. According to Oxford dictionaries "magic realism" is a literary or artistic genre in which realistic narrative and naturalistic technique are combined with surreal elements of dream or fantasy". Merriam –Webster Online Dictionary define magic realism as "a literary genre or style associated especially with Latin America that incorporates fantastic or mythical elements into otherwise realistic fiction- called also magical realism"(magic realism).Magic realism is a technique of narration, that is make difference between reality and fantasy. It is a general view that magic realism often uses for rural areas "but some politically motivational writers like Salman Rushdie have their magical realistic novels in big cities which are under political and social tension" (Bowers, 2004, p.32).

Midnight's Children is a vicious cycle of episodes, it presents era of pre and post-independence of India and shows the picture of India and Pakistan's partition which took place at midnight on 15 August 1947.Main body of Midnights Children occurs after independence. Saleem Sinai who is the protagonist and narrator of Midnight's Children,

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novel starts with the description that he was born at midnight on 15 August 1947, at the exact time of India's independence from British Raj. Salem thinks from starting of the novel that his birth ties with country's fate not only his birth even all those children's birth tie with country's fate who born at the same night. Salem discovers that all midnight's children are gifted with special powers and to make contact with them Saleem uses telepathy. Rushdie presented Salem as a self-conscious narrator, his existence actually the history of independence. Salem he is a rebellious, aggressive, grave and shallow.

"Midnight's Children" is a full of mysterious and the world of magic. To present the magic realism through characters the mixture of fantasy and real world's events are very much required and Salman Rushdie has a magic mastery to blending with these two. In Midnights Children from the very first passage Rushdie has proven his mastery through the first generation character named Aadam Aziz (grandfather of Saleem Sinai). After coming India in one spring of 1915, Aadam hitsthe ground while praying and three drop of blood fall from his nose and turn into rubies; his tears become solid like diamonds. In a magical realist text, readers find the conflict between the world of fantasy and reality, as well as readers see that realistic world does work for fantasy world and fantasy world does work for realistic world, every world makes a fictional world for other.

The next character Tai also presents his appearance with magic realism. Tai's claim to being of great antiquity. He feels himself so old that he had watched the "mountains being born" and "seen emperors die" (Rushdie, 2006, p.13); he also says that he "saw that Isa, that Christ, when he came to Kashmir" (p.13). Why longevity of Tai shows in the novel, because Tai's character presents old and pre- colonial India. In Midnight Children from starting till the end of the novel Rushdie presented blending of real world incident and the events of mysterious world. Therefore Rushdie is bound to present Saleem with superhuman perception. Saleem he is a single witness of 12 various lives and their superpowers. Salem who is the medium to connected to history by different modes of phrases. The fiction along with the narrative of the Midnight's Children is the story of three close groups of families, living in Srinagar then in Agra, and in Bombay, before the final migration to Karachi. Salem the narrator told the story to Padma (orally wife of Saleem and a powerful midnight child) by sitting in a pickle factory at night, Salem is the owner of supernatural powers with the help of this he easily reads people's mind. He says:

"And there are many stories to tell, too many, such an excess of intertwined lives, events, miracles, places, rumors, so dense a commingling of the improbable and the mundane. I have been a swallower of lives; and to know me just the one of me, you 'll have to swallow the lot as well."(Midnight's Children pg.120).

Saleem uses magical realism, with its blending of mythology, realism, fantastic elements and facts of history to tell the story to Padma. Saleem Sinai recollects his events of past through

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his telepathy, Salem proclaims as the set of its "handcuffed" to history78. Rushdie's 'chutnifiction'of the Indian language and history with proper sense of humor and created metaphors of nationhood, all things successfully justified with his narrative technique that is magic realism. Through the characters of Midnights Children, Rushdie beautifully blended events of post and pre-independent colonized Indian people and country as well.

Conclusion

Magic realism uses traditional storytelling as an important and useful tool in expressing opinions or transferring knowledge via literature. Magic realism as a postcolonial device in Salman Rushdie's Midnights Children, provides us with perfectly illustrative examples of how magic realism can work historical postmodernism.

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