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REVIEW ARTICLE

“MAGIC REALISM IN MIDNIGHT CHILDREN”

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“Magic Realism in Midnight Children”

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Magic realism or magical realism is an aesthetic style or genre of fiction in which magical elements blend with the real world. *Midnight's child* deals with life, exuberance and fantasy. 'Salman- Rushdie' is a narrative conjuror of genuine skill. As per various critics, *Midnight's children* is said to be picaresque novel, "a Bildungsroman in the negative sense", "a very modernistic mixture of naturalistic background and surrealist foreground", and eminently political novel between myth, irony, magic and the flair of an oriental fairy tale. The ingredients of the European novel can be traced in the novel such as realism, psychology interwoven into the pattern of magical genre. Magical realism can be seen as a device biding Indian culture of the past to the contemporary multicultural interface. Rushdie's principal use of magical realism in the text involves the telepathic abilities of Saleem and other thousand and one children born at the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947, abilities that enable them to communicate with each other and in Saleem's case to read the mind of those around him.

Rushdie regarded *Grimus* as an attempt at amalgamating both the eastern and western influences on his writing: wanted to find a way of taking themes out of oriental thought and expressing them in the western world. *Midnight's children* illustrate a link between Rushdie's style of communication in the text and the formal oral narrative that he seeks to reproduce. Those same forms also provide Saleem's Sinai with a way of organizing his own complex autobiography. He is literally 'hand cuffed to history', the circumstances of his own birth making him analogous to the newly emergent, independent nation of India. His narrative is there for simultaneously the story of his own life and a mirror of the life of India itself. Saleem makes a distinction between two modes of connection that join himself to the nation, the 'literal' and the 'metaphorical', a distinction obviously related to that between realism and magic. The connection that Saleem calls 'metaphorical' which involves repetition across different skills is based on a narrative from sheered self and nation.

Tai, the boat man is also a story teller, spinner of yarns and inhibitor of fantasies who mirrors in his own technique the formal construction of Saleem's narrative and the novel as a whole with his magical talk.

"Tai is getting nearer. He, who revealed the power of the nose, and he who is bringing my grandfather the message which will catapult him into his future, is stroking his shikara through the early morning lake..."

Most post-colonial novelist have exposed the magic realism promotes national identity because it represents the experimental reality of the past and present, whereas also expressing craving that exceeds the fluctuation of events. Realism can make nation appear shockingly similar, while the unrealistic aspect of magic realism can make them unique by expressing desire in original way. Rushdie in '*Midnight's children*' uses magical realism in a broad form. Rushdie's mingling of the fantastic and usual seems typically Indian as the characters involved in contemporary political and social disorders also possess the power of mythic heroes. The first sentence in the novel illustrates his technique: Saleem, the first person narrator says, **"I was born in the city of Bombay... once upon a time" (midnight children, 1981, p9)** the statement echoes the social realism of the nineteenth century Bildungsroman and secondly English method of fairy tales.

Magic realism is a way of showing 'reality' more truly with the aid of the various magic of metaphors **"Amina is a drift in a sea that consists of 'waves of excitement' and 'hollow of fear'" (midnight's children's 1981, 112p)**

In *Midnight's children*, therefore metaphor generally involves the attribution of physical attributes to abstract our inner entities. We can note two things about the imagery invoked by Saleem's metaphor. First, that is banal sometime to the point of cliché **'wave of excitement', 'the hand of fate' (midnight children's, 144p)** and second, that the realms from which metaphors are drawn coterminous with the

world perceived. The radios, cinema screen, fogs, moths and fingers that Saleem deploys in metaphor all belong in this world filled as it is actual radio, cinemas and pointing fingers. When Saleem draws attention to his use of metaphor, **"suppose yourself in a large cinema" (164), "I become a sort of radio" (164), or I seem to be stuck with this radio metaphor(221).** The images invoked are likely to be technological.

Saleem claims to detect other people emotions with his senses, especially by smell. His powerful nose can pick up **"the heady but quick- fading perfume of new love, and also the deeper, longer last pungency of hate"** (midnight's children's ,148p)

Saleem smells on Padma's breath **"the dream of an alternative (but impossible) future ... the bitter – sweet fragrance of hope for marriage (midnight's children ,372p)** he can even return to a past before he was born and discern **" the acrid stench of his (Aadam Aziz 's) mother's embarrassment . (Midnights children, 20p)** Saleem say his magical connection to the Nation is "metaphorical," he is not commenting on its reality – for, as we have seen in the novel it is as real as the connection he calls "literal" – but referring to the structure of the relation. He is forever relating two sets of events that occur at same time , political history and private family history , by drawing a parallel between them **" one last fact the death of my grandfather , prime minster Jawaharlal Nehru fell ill and never recovered his health"** (midnight's children's p 64)

Midnight's children is different from earlier fiction in the sense that unities of time place and characters are unstable , the narrative changes between first person and the third person , natural becomes unnatural or supernatural . The novel is full of hidden clues and old utterance which always seems pointing towards some conclusion. This novel can be described in one way as a fantasy. Fantasy can be said as 'a kind of imaginative indulgence which disdains the lofty idealism" fantasy is close to Coleridge fancy which is concerned with illusion, hallucination and sensory experience rather than concepts, principles and ideals. the characters in the novel are constantly splitting into the doubles and multiples, for instance Saleem multiple mothers and fathers , his alter ego Shiva , Parvati-the -witch split and so more. The narrative frame work mid night children consist of an tale..... Comprising his life story...which Saleem Sania recounts orally to his wife Padma. This self-referential narrative (within a single paragraph Saleems refer himself in the first person 'And I wishing upon myself the curse of Nadir khan...." I tell u Saleem cried, its true" recalls indigenous Indian culture, particularly the similarly orally recounted Arabian nights. In the midnight's children the narrative comprises and compress Indian culture history " Once upon a time , Saleem muses, there were Radha and Krishna , Ram and Sita , and Laila and Manju; also(because we are not affected by west) Romeo and Juliet, and Spencer Tracy and Katherine Hepburn" in this sentence we can

clearly see that characters from Indian culture history are chronologically intertwined with characters from western culture , and the devices that they signify are Indian culture , religious and storytelling , western drama and cinema are presented in Rushdie's text with post-colonial Indian history to examine both the effects of these indigenous and non-indigenous cultures of the Indian mind and in the light of independence. Another aspect of Rushdie's technique is that he represents certain scenes in terms of a film. Such as **"Close –up of my grandfather's right hand: nails knuckle fingers all somehow bigger than you'd expect. Clumps of red hair on the outside edges. Thumb and forefinger pressed together, separated only by thickness of paper. In short: my grandfather was holding a pamphlet. It had been inserted into his hand as he entered the hotel foyer"** (midnight's children, 1981, 75p)

The art of memory is itself constructed around the object and arte facts which come to represent its fabric in the narrative. This is closely bound up with Rushdie's adoption of leitmotifs in the text- a non – rational network of connections which carries with it a cumulative rather than symbolic weight. The sliver spittoon is one of the chief of these , helping Saleem's sense of his personal history. Washing chest, globes and perforated sheets of Saleem's past, map out his memory of growing up alongside the new India. the letter from Nehru celebrating the illustrations moment of his birth and a photograph of himself a baby from the Times of India are preserver for posterity inside Saleem's old tin globe and buried in the garden of Buckingham villa before the family's final departure for Pakistan.

CONCLUSION: -

Through the above discussion we can say that Midnight's children fits into the mode of postmodern fantasy. It's a novel which is experiential, interrogative and subjective as well. The midnight children are a magic realistic device emphasis to the continued struggle to come in terms with identities and polarities of the post-colonial. There is a suggestion in the Midnight's children itself of Rushdie's awareness of this fact. Saleem's plea to the children of midnight is to establish an identity particular to themselves and their conditions which is not conceived in purely negative, reactive terms: an identity that falls between the underproductive dualism inherent in social divisions. However, the text is hybridized and must fall between the extremes of postmodern polarity on one hand and the desire to root narrative between national specifics on other .the individual voice is creeping progression of time and history nevertheless, the text conclusion is open ended. There may be no such thing as single national identity in the contemporary world, where media communication link cultures and countries, there is perhaps an interchange of culture, to various degrees between all countries. this delicate ambiguity is emphasized in the final sentence of the text, which link magic with realism, the individual with history,

individual and regional identity, self-assertion with the magnet of the universal ... **"It is privilege of midnights to be both masters and victims of their times, to forsake privacy and sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes, and unable to live or die in peace."**(Midnight's children, p 463)

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