

Salman Rushdie's Use of Magic Realism in Haroun and the Sea of Stories

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Abstract – Though, many studies have laid emphasis on Salman Rushdie's usage of magic realism in his novels that are highly acclaimed, the way in his children's fiction it has been employed has not been studied yet. Attempts have been made in this paper to fill in this gap by implementing theoretical framework of Anne Hegerfeldt's (2005) on magic realism onto its reading of Sea of Stories (1990) and Salman Rushdie's Haroun. On five features or techniques this framework relies specifically: a realist mode of writing to describe fantastic characters and events, literal manifestations of figurative expressions, subverted and historical and scientific discourses, a supernatural reality and finally a marginalized focaliser. It has also been suggested in this paper that magic realism was employed by Rushdie to undermine the historical and scientific discourses also realist narrative mode to present an alternate view of the world that positions narrative – knowledge, gained from stories which have magical events and characters, as a source of knowledge which is legitimate with regard to the world.

Keywords – Salman Rushdie, Magic Realism, Narrative Knowledge, Children's Fiction.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Even today one of the most understudied fields of research of children's literature is – Magic Realist children's fiction. One probable reason can be that on the child reader these magic realist stories have undesirable effect. The Uses of Enchantment (1976), In his seminal work, psychoanalytic framework was applied by Bruno Bettelheim onto his fairytales reading which, he argued, provided the child reader with ways of dealing with emotions that are acceptable and harmless like jealousy and anger. When the child reader looks for similarities between the difficulties faced by the fantastical characters of his reading and problems he is facing in real life this happens. He argued, though in fact the fairytales are established in fantasy realm allows the child reader to curb his emotions and feelings and onto the fictional characters of the tales project them. Till the time the child reader becomes adult and becomes mature enough emotionally and physically to deal with his emotions and real life problems this continues to happen. Bettelheim continued that unfortunately stories that have fantastical creatures and improbable events in a setting that is realistic, such as those with features that are magic realistic, makes the child reader confused when he tries to distinguish between reality and fantasy. The child reader feels isolated thus from his parents he spiritually withdraws as with all his might tries to reconcile in between the two distinguished realms. As written by [1]

Such stories, that fall in accordance to inner reality of the child's, though faithful might go to external reality, the gap between the inner and outer experience of the child is widened. Since the child starts to believe that they live in another spiritual world, he becomes separated from his parents, no matter how closely they may live according to the real space, they seem like emotionally living in different continents (temporarily). It creates a gap between the two generations for both the parent and child it is painful.

Thus Bettelheim here has clearly mentioned that when the child reader becomes confused between his internal imagination and external reality problems occur. Even Margaret Higonnet also concluded that on the child reader these magical events and characters of the narrative context, in a realist setting that occur or exist may affect as in he may experience stimulus a sense of threat or violence as per [15]. Therefore, the postulations that magic realist literature has detrimental effects on the child reader stated by both child psychologist Bettelheim and Higonnet should be remembered. Nina Mikkelsen, literacy educationist according to her, literacy level in children increases when any text drawn from the reading is beneficial to the readers – [18]. Thus, thus we can conclude from the present studies that the effects of magic realist texts are largely inconclusive and regarding this issue more needs to be discovered and researched by

literacy educators particularly. To assume that the psychology of the child reader should resemble with that of the protagonist or child character of the magic realist literature he reads is wrong.[14]Acknowledged that "it is obvious that the perspective of the child as used in the fiction is likely to be a construction and with psychological reality should not be confused[14]. [7]also mentioned that "that regarding the culture of childhood we still know very little, what the world of children, values, constructions – which determine their experience with literature and also how it helps shaping it as per[7]. It has been made clear by their studies, the affect that the magic realist children's fiction has on the child reader has is difficult to estimate. By identifying or focusing on the characteristics of magic realism this method can be used to study this type of literature. While [13]; [19]; [24] in their study discussed connection of magic realism with fiction of children, as per my knowledge, there is very limited or rigorous number of studies on analyzing in fiction the elements of magic realism that are for child readers. [20] and [21] from these stood out for their analysis of elements of magic realism in fiction of children. Only Rudee (2006) explored the theoretical aspects of this kind of narration style directly. Whereas, the title of Guldager's (2012) paper seems to lay emphasis on magic – realism in two children stories of Rushdie, he directly did not address it, instead focused on hybridity concept. This paper pursues to contribute to this feature of magic realism understudied as emphasized just to address these limitations. These have been highlighted in Hegerfeldt's Lies that Tell the Truth: Magic Realism as seen through Contemporary Fiction from Britain, 2005 onto Haroun's reading and Salman Rushdie's The Sea of Stories (1990).

To identify the elements of magic realism in children novels by Rushdie; Hegerfeldt's framework was applied principally to bring about the fact that no such theoretical framework is known, before or during Hegerfeldt's seminal work publication, to provide a critically rigorous definition for magic realism this was never attempted. As it is difficult to define the term "magic realism" and has led to misunderstandings and wrong implementation which is understandable. Lies that Tell the Truth (2005) in this pioneering book by Hegerfeldt, the problems associated with magic realism have been addressed. This has so far has provided the most precise and inclusive elements in writing of magic realism that beyond the boundaries take the stories of commonplace fantasy fiction by describing, its characteristics under very precise terms. As per my knowledge, on this assumption that whether in fiction of children magic realism defers markedly from those in adult fiction there is very little support. Thus, it can be said that the line that defines magic realism in fiction for children from that is found in adult fiction primarily deals is almost non existing with summoning a view of the reality alternatively which challenges the one that is conventional.

II. SALMAN RUSHDIE AND MAGIC REALISM

As most of his novels are characterized as (magic realist), for critics his creative writings provide ample ground to analyze the various problems that are associated with magic realism.[4] claimed that the best-known magic realist writer in the English language is Rushdie, is portrayed in his highly-acclaimed novels one of them is *Midnight's Children*, 1981. Rushdie has written two books for children namely *Luka and the Fire of Life* (2010) and *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* other than his adult fiction books. Even Rushdie's narrative style of magic realism is carried out with an alternate view of reality by many.[9] stated that more than this, it is a way of telling truth as in a magic realist world some parts should he debates, that with the real world has a meaningful connection. So far, studies on Rushdie's usage of magic realism have covered his adult fiction; his children fiction has been largely ignored. [10]Article would be an exception to this though the different aspects of magic realism he has not specifically addressed. One of this reason is maybe Rushdie's own initial assertion that his readers of magic realism are allowed to experience an all different perception of reality and if it is desirable or not as mentioned within the literature available on mental growth of children. Therefore, it is useful to quote the way Rushdie himself expresses support for this at this point.

Opposition of imagination to reality this idea, is also the opposition of art to politics is important, as it tells us that we are not helpless; that to dream there is need of power. As [22] stated that the only weapon with which reality can be smashed is unreality.

It is a very controversial stand that is pretty obvious taken in association with literature for the children since this genre's nature has been always(didactic), subjective to parental regulations and the will to control children's way of behaving and thinking. Parental control has been defied by Magic realism as children's mind is full of imagination.

Haroun Khalifa is the protagonist in the story; Haroun and the Sea of Stories the city in which he lives is afflicted by so much sadness that its name has been forgotten by its own inhabitants. In a country name Alifbay it is located. Rashid Khalifa is his father's name who is a storyteller, notably - among his admirers known as "the Ocean of Notions" and among his enemies as "the Shah of Blah". Every time he narrates stories, that to the world brings magic and not only children and adults but also animals equally enjoy his narrations. When Soraya, Haroun's mother, ran away with their neighbor Mr. Sen Gupta, a man who lacks the aptitude to imagine and he criticizes Rashid constantly conflict in the story began. Haroun was so frustrated that he blamed his father being the reason behind his mother's lack of affection towards

her family and unintentionally ended up asking a question that robbed the latter temporarily from his ability to narrate stories: "What is the point of telling such stories that are not even true? To the city of Gup, Haroun travelled which is geographically located on second moon of earth, Kahani, he went to Walrus and requested him to bring back his father's ability to narrate stories. Haroun just had a simple request but it ended up as a rescue mission to protect the- Ocean of the Streams of Story, from where stories of his father originate, and thus he decides to prevent Khatam-Shud from poisoning the Sea of Stories with the help of his magical friends.

III. HAROUN AND THE SEA OF STORIES AND THE RUSHDIE AFFAIR

As a whole, this novel is fit for children as it contains a very simple story. Still when read with read carefully it can be said to be eluding the political associations behind the publication of - The Satanic Verses, 1988. Haroun and the Sea of Stories have also tried to capture metaphorically, "the sweep and chaos of contemporary reality, it resembles to dream or nightmare "like Rushdie's other magic realist novels by [16]. The author's personal plight is in context to the nightmare he has stated when well-known Iranian leader, Ayatollah Khomeini (1900–1989) sentenced him to death, as a consequence of publication of - The Satanic Verses and therefore nearly for a decade he was forced to isolate himself. Without taking into context the publication of Rushdie Affair which was earlier known as Haroun and the Sea of Stories, Rushdie's novel cannot be understood and he himself refrains from associating the latter. [8], pointed out that his novels do contain allusions to- "the fight in between the imagination, the forces of freedom and those of obscurantism" by [8]. Thus, Rushdie's Haroun and the Sea of Stories can be read to address this issue, and as an alternative approach magic realism can be used to defend stories and also narration of stories as the freedom of speech.

IV. REALIST NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

Though at the beginning of the story, "once in the country of Alifbay, was a sad city, in other terms. The saddest city, on the narration seems like imposing a fairy tale-like structure, all the magic realist features are present In Haroun and the Sea of Stories listed by Hegerfeldt. In the novel the first magic realist feature found is the appropriation of a list narrative technique particularly, to describe magical characters a nonchalant narrative tone and also fantastic events. As magic realism is a mode of writing that has magic realist narrative style which can also be set in a realistic setting or world, thus this technique results in undermining realism. Yet, in the context of magic realism, conventional norms and values are disregarded In favor of those that are fantastic. Hence, an alternative point of view about

reality is advocated by Magic realism that is held different from that by the dominant – center.[25] supported this, they claimed that texts of magic realism are drawn upon cultural systems these are so real as literary realism presents and quite often these-"over empiricism; privilege mystery, tradition over innovation, empathy over technology. "

The most apparent aspect of magic realism in Haroun and the Sea of Stories is the appropriation of a realistic setting. Manipulating the reader's sense of familiarity to places in the real world is the aim of this technique. Thus this, as per Bortolussi, 2003, permits the readers to differentiate between magic realist texts from that of either science fiction or fantasy fiction as the last two genres settings are distinctly fantastical. In Haroun and the Sea of Stories There are two dominant settings that can be acknowledged. Planet earth is where the first setting has been set , which contains all other places, the country Alifbay, the Town of G and the Valley of K which in between the Mountain of M is nestled where a beautiful lake called Dull exists these are all imaginary. Outside planet earth the second setting takes place, on second moon of earth, Kahani, which is made up of a vast-Ocean of the Streams of Story, City of Gup, Twilight Strips where Gup City from the Chup City stands and finally Chup City are separated by the wall by Chattergy. In the novel, as indicated by the descriptions of these places, the extra textual real world has been represented in the first setting, whereas the magical place located outside planet earth is the second one.

Other than these references from real places and aspects of life, Alifbay is also attached to the real world through childhood memory of Rushdie. In Haroun and the Sea of Stories, Rushdie has re-created India of his childhood, as claimed by Suchismita Sen (1995). In his portrays of the typical Indian middle class family, their lifestyle and the Indian English spoken in Bombay during the 1950s and the 1960s, has been described In his novels as per Sen, 1995. In one of the passage, Khalifa's house has been described as; "a small concrete house that has pink walls, windows of the color lime-green, balconies painted blue with railings that are squiggly. As per Sen, 1995 with a typical resemble this resembles which is less than fashionable Indian middle class family, an excellent familiar scene was recaptured when a heated argument scene on the bus took place that was carrying Haroun and Rashid to the Valley of K with that of crowded city bus in a bygone India. As read by readers in one passage, "My hold all," yelled a mud-woman. "Crazy buffalo! Looney tune! Desist from your speeding, or my possessions will be thrown to Kingdom Come!"

V. MARGINALISED FOCALISER

Marginalized focaliser is the second magic realist technique In Haroun and the Sea of Stories. A

focaliser is a narrative structure, in which the narrator is the omniscient third person who in the story narrates the hidden motives and innermost thoughts of the characters. In this story, the third person narrator who is omnipresent, a point of view is expressed by Gup pees that is different from one that is held by center. If as an analogy we take Rushdie's resistance in the novel against the restrictions imposed on creative – imagination and freedom of speech by an Iranian leader, it can be deduced that in real life, Ayatollah Khomeini is, the dominant – center that are supposed to be resisted by those are at the margins. As, Rushdie was still under the threat of the death fatwa sentenced on him by Iranian leader at the time of book publication. Thus it can be said that that Rushdie utilized magic realism in response to the center in Haroun and the Sea of Stories to defend and justify the importance of stories and freedom of speech. As per Zamora and Faris (1995), this has been made possible as a diverse interaction space is provided by a magic realist text.

In Haroun and the Sea of Stories Diverse interactions that took place in the novel was already known by the omniscient focalisers. Jonathan Culler, 1997 argued that in a novel focalization allows presenting the world from the omniscient point of view as information about all the events about to happen in the story and also the thoughts and actions of the characters' is known by the focaliser beforehand he is privileged to do so. Though In the text, marginalized perspective has been recognized, the center's perception still remained active. The antagonist of the story, Khattam-Shudre presented the latter part in the novel, who as per many critics to odor Ayatollah Khomeini -Baena 2001; Biscaia 2005; Kullmann 1996; Coppola 1991; Teverson 2001.

VI. SUBVERTED SCIENTIFIC DISCOURSE

As in Haroun and the Sea of Stories the magic realist text, non-literary discourses, specifically those on natural science, in order to emphasize the importance of narrative knowledge are subverted as a valid-mode to understand reality. The purpose is to demon strait that a comprehensive explanation of the world cannot be provided by science alone. During the age of the Enlightenment (1650–1800) that is In the middle of the seventeenth century and at the beginning of the Early Modern period, 1450–1750, in the domain of science, technology, economy, philosophy and politics, western thought and culture had undergone rapid development. Enlightenment displaced the feudal system that was characterized by the medieval worldview with its own ideals specifically those concerned with the limit less potential of human – reason and perception of sense as the primary faculty for attaining knowledge. As a consequence, Sir Francis Bacon, 1561-1626 pioneered scientific revolution, for acquiring knowledge modern science became the primary method. For providing knowledge about the world,

they considered natural science as the dominant authority the narrative knowledge derived from myth, tradition, superstition and legends was rejected by Enlightenment thinkers as according to them, these cannot be proven to be valid scientifically. As per [25], 1995 yet in many societies, reliance sustained on such a discourse can be traced to beliefs that are common and that in a community are collectively shared.

To challenge the ability of scientific discourse to provide its readers to understand the world in a comprehensive way, even the characters of Haroun and the Sea of Stories adhered to the principles of science and but resorted to -“mock-scientific-discourse” to elucidate their scientific-achievements. For instance, in this novel the marginalized focaliser, the Gup pees who practiced science they in order to protect their stories used unscientific methodologies. Readers have been told that all the stories of Ocean of the Streams of Story are held in the form of liquid and that these can be mixed and transformed to make their own new version. So, it can be said that Ocean of the Streams of Story symbolically represent a pool of collective narrative knowledge that comprises of all sort of stories, such as of legends, fairy and myth that are quite often debarred from our understanding of reality. This symbolism became more obvious when the existence of the ocean was kept hidden from being revealed by the usage of advanced technology and forms-of-belief that refer the level of myth with that of the existence of ocean. Remarkably, the book with the title Ocean of the Streams of Story also has collection of stories by (Somadeva C. 1070), who a Kashmiri Brahman was a scholar of Sanskrit also in the court of King Ananta of Kashmir he was the court poet and his profession was to preserve much of ancient folklore of India in the form of series-of-tales.

VII. SUPERNATURAL REALITY

In Haroun and the Sea of Stories supernatural reality has been viewed as insufficient to explain technology, science and reality they are made to appear either supernatural or are super naturalized just to make them fantastic or remarkable. At the same time, the narrative also posed ethical-questions that concerned their usage and misuse. In this novel, other than Gup pees who had learnt to use technology to construct P2C2E, Khattam-Shud also possessed an advanced technology that as “Far Too Complicated to explain” was described by Iff. He, still used his knowledge about science and technology to how to put an end to these stories instead of guarding them. Khattam-Shud, just like any other scientist experimented and discovered a methodology to - “synthesise” poisons that could have been used to abolish each and every stream of stories in the Ocean. The dark laboratory which was on the dark ship, using a machinery that is “Far Too Complicated to Explain”, also known as “The Poison Blenders”, Khattam-Shud mixed some “anti-story”

poisons. In fact, in the bud, in order to nip his problem, Khattam-Shud assembled the most efficient and the largest Plug just to block the ocean's wellspring, which is the stories source, to pour out new stories in the ocean. From this it can be inferred that Bacon's famous dictum "Knowledge is Power" was taken by Khattam-Shud literally as he misused science and technology in order to cause devastation and thus by doing so, he drew attention towards the ethical issues concerned about their limitations and misusage.

VIII. LITERALISATION

In Haroun and the Sea of Stories literal manifestations of figurative expressions or liberalisation is the last magic realist feature that can be identified. In this novel, primarily it appeared in the form of formidable –question, "What is the use of stories that are not even true? A question that was posed by Haroun to his father after his mother, Soraya, left the family. After this to Rashid extraordinary thing happened: "the Fabled Shah of Blah, the legendary Ocean of Notions -Rashid Khalifa stood up in front of a huge audience, as soon as he opened his mouth to tell stories he ran out of them". Like a course, this question worked that condemned Rashid's mind into thinking that he is not worthy and took away his ability to narrate stories. The rest part of the story was set to motion as Haroun blamed himself for the misfortune of his father and his will to visit Kahani just to restore subscription of his father's Streams of Story. By changing the question into a reason for misfortune, emphasis was given to words by magic realism that has almost same impact as actions.

IX. CONCLUSION

All the five prototypical magic realist features displayed in Lies that Tell the Truth, Haroun and the Sea of Stories by Rushdie were out lined by Hegerfeldt. These led to creation of a magical world that can be the real world by its appropriation of a mode of writing that is realistic to portray events and characters that are magical. A privileged mode of presenting reality in the fiction is realism is undermined from the time the narrative showed that it can be used for describing magical characters and events. Also, just to represent an alternative-perspective that from the margin has been derived, in the novel marginalized focalizes has been used. Whereas from myths, legends and oral traditions narrative knowledge has been derived as an important source of knowledge in the novel it is considered. Science also has been made to appear-supernatural. To conclude, the novel has also employed liberalisation as a figure of speech. As a whole we can say that in the novel Haroun and the Sea of Stories is a magic realist fiction in which many of the features brings the readers to sense and imagine magic in real.

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