

A Study on Historical Fictional Novel "The Enchantress on Florence" By Salman Rushdie

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ABSTRACT

Salman Rushdie, a British-Indian novelist and essayist, who combines magical and realistic details in his fiction and non-fiction, can be compared with English authors like E. L. Doctorow, Angela Carter, Peter Carey or Emma Tennant. His prose synthesizes imagery, ideas, and patterns of sound and sense. His literary works prove the versatility of his literary talent and his universal interest in probing the possibilities for a mutual understanding of cultures as different as those in the East and in the West. "The Enchantress of Florence" is Rushdie's tenth novel published in 2008. The story of the novel is set against the background of Europe and the Orientals in the 16th century. The novel seems to be historically accurate but conceived fictionally. It is rich in presenting minute details of the respective era, which is stylistically opulent. The novel concentrates upon the history of Mughal Era and Renaissance age; relationship between East and West; fantasy and fables; cross cultural storytelling and journeying etc., the novel primarily concentrates on the mutual suspicion and mistrust between East (India's Mughal Empire) and West (Renaissance Florence), Ottoman Empires, the earlier Mongols etc. Through the novel of Salman Rushdie's The Enchantress of Florence (2008), the paper therefore frames mythology, magic, imagination as well as reality. It tells of a visit from Italy by a mysterious man, Mogor, to the imperial palace of Akbar, called Fatehpur Sikri. In so

many other languages, the trickster-traveler is versatile and seemingly abandoned. The study even reflects on how Rushdie achieves by incorporating the history of the East as well as of the West in recreating a Modern Era. Through putting out an analysis by reader-centric and text-centric strategies, the imagination, romantic as well as creative notions, the narrative strategy, the magic as well as practical elements and linguistic carnival in the book can be adequately examined. Rushdie's hybrid identity as an Indian, now migrated to Britain, very well suits the technique of magic realism in order to raise voice for those who are marginalized because of their language, religion, caste and nationality.

Keywords: Enchantress, Florence, Fatehpur Sikri, Renaissance, Mughal dynasty.

INTRODUCTION

Rushdie's Mystical Book is "The Enchantress of Florence". He also said that in order to write a literary masterpiece, it took years upon years of studying Indian historical as well as mythological texts. This is just like a study paper in which every expression, phrase, section, characters as well as description is precisely designed. Enchantress, the strongest term, is extracted through American Comic Books published by D.C. Including comics and D.C. entertainments which are organized by Warner Brothers. And later it became a symbol of the Holly Wood Film Industry. Florence, the second word, is derived from the Italian region of Florence. The city is renowned for its culture, trade, as well as the arts. It is considered the Literary Renaissance Area. Florence is a great place where, attributed to its amazing sights, millions of tourists visit the place annually. These 2 charming words were chosen by Rushdie to transcribe a literary work. Enchantress of Florence is a present by Rushdie for his son, who is far from his son. A reader must keep some essential elements in consideration before beginning to

read this book. The book, centered on Indian mythology, spiritualists, esthetics, and superstition, is illustrated. [1]

The novel concentrates upon the history of Mughal Era and Renaissance age; relationship between East and West; fantasy and fables; cross cultural storytelling and journeying etc. The novel seeks sanctuary in the mirror of history- in this case; a mirror veiled in gauzy multiculturalism platitudes. Rushdie, like Garcia Marquez, intertwines actual historical characters and events within a story full of history, fantasy and fables. Rushdie's tales are filled with various genres like history, myths, fantasy, fables, religion, and so on. Justin Newman indicates that, "despite its preening, *The Enchantress of Florence* proves an essential book; in its strongest moments, *The Enchantress of Florence* repudiates linear, Eurocentric histories of the Renaissance and conjures in their stead place in a synchronous world of the parallel realities". As a master of magical realism, Rushdie has cleverly crafted real historical events into fiction so that the readers could perceive his work totally an authentic document. Some authors deftly incorporates that "Rushdie in *The Enchantress of Florence* makes a peripheral account of the historical details of the age of Renaissance and also of the age of the Mughals. He distinguishes himself from the regular historical novelists like Scott as he asserts almost categorically that dogmatic religion as a force in the world is often divisive, a source of conflict, a barrier to progress, and socially oppressive. It appears he is interested in *geschichtlich* (what applies to the present) than in *historisch* (what we know about the past), based primarily upon documents". [2]

In asserting the rights of magic, Rushdie also tests the power of the imagination to affect reality by compressing the already known heterogeneous facts and fictions in the frame story model. As discussed, this is his highest theme, and his persistent obsession in the novel. Imagination has the power to affect reality at personal, social, political levels. Rushdie has proved this in his writings.

He portrays a wonderful life in "The Enchantress of Florence" and seems to go outside and experience it. The novel "The Enchantress of Florence" represents a special type of comparative culture and social experience, depicting sites and periods so far away from them in history, but they are made, humanly, in the novel, which looks so identical. Rushdie himself seems to say that with all historical (colonial), social, religious etc. problems it is still worth to write a story to invite the reader into something transcending these, not by making them forget, but to put them into a place on which light falls from astonishing angles.[3]

HISTORICISM ELEMENT IN THE ENCHANTRESS OF FLORENCE

"The Enchantress of Florence" is a Magical Novel of Salman Rushdie. Before starting this novel, a booklover should keep some important elements in his mind. It is the Novel narrated centered on Indian History, Spiritualists, Aesthetics, as well as Mysticism. The Novel starts with a Traveler who desires to adore the attractiveness of Fatehpur Sikri located at Agra District in Uttar Pradesh State of India. The City was identified and developed by the king "Akbar the Great". He was the third powerful king of Mughal Dynasty. His father was Humayun and his Grand Father was Babur who founded the Mughal Dynasty in India. Akbar was an artist so he showed much interest in Art and Culture. He developed Fatehpur Sikri, as Literary and Artistic Hub of Central India. Akbar took initiative and established a vast Library with bulks of Literature written in various languages like Persian, Latin, Greek, Arabic, Sanskrit and Hindi. He appointed Linguistic, Literary Scholars as well as Calligraphers to translate The Ancient Classical Books in to Arabic and Indian Languages. [4]

The tale seems to be about the history of two eastern and western cities. To link the 2 significant historical figures, Akbar the Great and his contemporary Machiavelli of the 16th century,

Rushdie utilizes his Magic Realism feature. The portrayal of Akbar is highlighted here by Rushdie for his excellent contribution to literature and philosophy. And from the other hand consider Machiavelli, an influential Italian politician, historian as well as skilled artist whose contribution to Western civilization and also significantly influenced the rest of the nations. He served as a representative in the Florentine region of Italy for many years. Rushdie mixed factual historical events with fictional characters in his novel. It is exceedingly difficult to comprehend Rushdie's novels if we understand the profound origins of historical as well as mythological characters and plotlines. [5]

It's the 11th novel by Rushdie, combined with mythology & magical realism. It took several years for Rushdie to put out the Historical Master piece. It's a novel of history and current events. In *Imaginary Characters*, he portrayed the story with strong situations. Rushdie has a specific style of storytelling; through his positions, he rarely talks about the actual theme. He rarely cares about the theme of the book. His individuals, for their own reasons, act and speak. So rather than looking for the rational implications of the problems, readers of Rushdie's novels read and appreciate the beauty of fiction. He is an author who, writes for self-satisfaction. His Characters and themes jump one character to another, one theme to another. Simply witnesses his imaginary roles with Historical and real life situations.

This is a Novel, blend with reality with fantasy. Rushdie visited Fatehpur Sikri, which had a hidden treasure of Art and Literature. At the climax of the book, not just for booklovers as well as for the outer world, Rushdie includes bibliography of 8 pages. From his own perspective, Akbar's city Fatehpur Sikri contrasted the city of Florence.[6]

Fatehpur Sikri and Florence

Salman Rushdie has conferred a fascinating description of Fatehpur Sikri, which was built during the second half of the 16th century by Emperor Akbar. For around 10 years, the headquarters of the Mughal Empire has been Fatehpur Sikri (the city of victory). Everything in a standardized architectural design, the series of monuments as well as temples comprises one of the main attractions in India, the Jama Masjid. According to Sastri and Srinivashachari, “Akbar revered Muslim saints. He met Shaikh Salim at Sikri, a village near Agra. In accordance with Salim’s assurance, Akbar’s eldest son was born in 1560 and was named Salim after the saint. Next year his second son Murad was born. As a mark of gratitude to Shaikh Salim Akbar built a splendid city at Sikri and named it Fatehpur Sikri”.[7]

Renaissance in Florence as well as Fatehpur Sikri of Agra is brought back to life. Florence pales are compared with Mughal Court of Akbar’s region Fatehpur Sikri. Furthermore similar blended polarity in Akbar is seen among the culture of East and West in Florence as well as in Fatehpur Sikri. Akbar noticed similar polarity as he usually listen the tales. For exhilarating exchanges of perspective, an opportunity is created by two different cultures i.e. Florence and Fatehpur Sikri. And these two cultures became dream for one another.

From the novel of Rushdie, it is observed that this book provides the historical data of political scenario of Florence as well as Mughal era. Salman Rushdie is clearly skilled at portraying completely fictional history as well as tends to also be a part of the ancient chronicle of The Enchantress of Florence. Past, too, has never been absolutely accurate. The writer weaves a script that brings the historic as well as fictional story of Fatehpur Sikri as well as Renaissance Florence alive, mixing history, imagination, fairytales, memory, culture, culture and other

cultural factors and the mixture of history, fantasy as well as fables. In the form of historical fiction, Rushdie introduces history with new fantasies, viewpoints, colors and patterns. [8]

The Scared function of Literature

However, few technical problems are adapted in this interpretation. And perhaps the most significant would be the concept of a textual play loses its meaning if the focus of the antagonistic relationship was the main intent of the novel, since it makes absolutely no sense to make a unique environment from its own time, space, laws, enchanters, history, etc., if the world of illusion to reality is opposed by others. This will clearly render the play pointless. Secondly, despite the fact that the text would seem to violate the laws of geography as well as of history and cause the time of Akbar and Machiavelli's Florence to clash in one location, there is no specific reference to anything about the actual city of Florence.[9] In the world of imagination in which all opposites and limits are null and void, words are transformed, cities are explored via the eyes of a fictitious character, rulers can have contradictory identities, pirates might become messengers of queens, they can reach East and West of various historical periods and people experience the same hopes and ambitions. In his 2008 meeting with Charlie Rose, Rushdie even admitted that he intended to write a novel which might discuss the contradictions between two cultures, but finished up explaining their connections. In other words, there is really no distinction among history and fiction in the field of play. [10]

The novel has its own substance which incorporates both of them and even makes them merge. The distinction between principal and secondary, historical progress versus literature, and all the terms associated with them (imperfection, defeat, etc.) is no longer necessary. The author tries to return to a beginning of the history through the same intricate framework of play, wherein the

literature had the spiritual intention of putting people under the same spell of the narrator, so this situation is in my view, signified in the novel by the aspect of water that also escapes from the city once the enchanter as well as his dialect magic are vanished. Thus, the end of the novel also marks the exit from this sacred world of play, a return to the “prosy” everyday life. It is a novel which returns to its former complexity and represents a world in itself, one in which characters are not plain textual beings, but they attempt to reconnect their readers to a complex archetype to which everyone can relate.[11]

Language and historical background in his Novel

As a result of his controversial comment against Lord, Rushdie has been exiled from the East. The spiritual supremacists were unable to digest the problem, so he arrived in the West. He has already been writing in English countries for years Novels, Non-Fiction, fiction in English Language. His heart is in India and its subcontinent, even if he is in western nations.[12]

In Languages of India, including Hindi, Marathi and Kashmiri, Rushdie hardly publishes his novels. For his novels, he usually chose English since his goal was to introduce India's secret historical, political, economic, cultural and social problems to the outer world. Among several other Post-colonial authors, Rushdie is a distinct character. The interesting & enthusiastic novel starts with the concept of India as well as the rest of the free world in the 16th century. Rushdie is the great storyteller. The characters just drive everyone into an imagined world. For decades, he has given voice to the poor and marginalized minority groups. He takes out the realities of the Colonial India of Britain. In any region, such as the Hindus in Pakistan and the Muslim communities in India, minor communities often become victims. Many writers aimed at the historical perspective with imaginative ideas as their key resource for fictional novel writings,

and also Post Structural ideas. They are actually translating history into literature. Instead of providing dates and events of raw details of the past events, postmodern authors add human soul to the events through characters and powerful settings. [13]

CONCLUSION

Salman Rushdie's is greatly influenced through the path of Indian literature, and now he has achieved a very significant role in the field of linguistics with a perfectly esteemed place in the soul of the booklovers. In Rushdie's magic realism, myth helps to strengthen the functionality of the fiction; history justifies the claim of the text on actuality. It is observed that Rushdie's present novel provides historical information about Mughal era and Florentine politics. It is evident that Salman Rushdie is adept at the presentation of fictionalized history and *The Enchantress of Florence* seems to be a representative of medieval chronicle. History too, is never entirely factual. The author weaves a text that fuses history, fantasy, fables, memory, tradition, religion and other cultural influences and the conflation of history, fantasy and fables bring alive the historical and fictional story of Fatehpur Sikri and Renaissance Florence. Rushdie presents history with new imaginings, perspectives, patterns, and shades in the appearance of historical fiction. Thus, Rushdie attempts to build and express a complete picture of Indian post-colonialism as well as Indians as a single unified place and people by linking and mixing historical events, mythical stories as well as fictitious representations, the novel depicts the multitude and uniqueness of India, in an effort to overturn India's colonial picture.

In the novels of Rushdie, the national history, the society and post colonialism are deeply researched. Many approaches to the novels of Morrison and Rushdie consider the representation of history and politics as primary to their novels, and see the magical element as wholly

subordinate to this aspect. In fact, any attempt at reading a coherent political message into his novels must revise the suggestion that the magic is a force for reimagining national identity, for decolonization or for any kind of political subversion. *The Enchantress of Florence* represents a world where there are not one but multiple realities. In order to perceive these realities one must have a pluralistic worldview where magic and realism exist side by side.

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