SALMAN RUSHDIE’S WORKS ARE A CARNIVAL OF SORTS

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ABSTRACT
This article aims at briefly analyzing Carnivalization in Salman Rushdie’s works. Carnivalization is a trend setter of the present day generation because none of us want to be bound by the set norms. We want to set free, away from all the bondage of the world. Rushdie being a post-colonial writer sees this reality and has tried to input it in his writings, not only to make it impressive but also to be a part of reader’s life, who gets involved in the chinies boxes of Rushdie’s stories. The term means a celebration of life in all forms. It was a term coined by Bakhtin (1895-1975) who introduced it to the literary world through his book ‘Rabelais and his World’. Rushdie who seems to have stepped into Bakhtin’s shoes presents not only this but many of his techniques of novelization in a most wonderful manner and all his novels are full of carnivalization. He writes fearlessly. His novels are open and language used is blunt but yet the bitterness of the truth is conveyed in a decent manner. ‘Post’ to him does not mean ‘after’ but it rather means an acceptance of the change. All this makes him a dare-devil, post-modern, post-colonial and of course Bakhtian to the core. He feels that to be modern, one has to be post-modern first, that who revisits his story to see it in a new light. He uses heteroglosia, multiple voices, and polyphony in his dialogic to project his viewpoint. Practically all his works fit well in the Bakhtian contention and also suit best to the term carnival.

Keywords: Bakhtian; Carnivalization; Menippean

INTRODUCTION
What is a ‘Carnival’?
A carnival sets the pace for escape velocity where one flies like a jet into the sphere of freedom, an escape from the bondage of actualities to the open sky of dreams and fantasy. It is an escape from the limitations of society, where the old binary has no meaning, and the only prevailing desire is for change. It is a shift from the hierarchy to the open-free space. A carnival is a celebration of life. It is a dream coming true or weaving a new dream. It is mingling of the opposites and subverting the traditional heir archery.

Bengal follows a tradition of doing the unusual during the Durga pooja. The sculptures of the Goddesses are prepared from the soil that is collected from the houses of the prostitutes- those ladies of all the people who are considered a bad element of the society. It is a different concept all together. It is moving away from the normal. A totally astray action that involves utmost dedication to prepare the sculptures and the joy that it gives to the people who make them and to those who worship them as well as is unlimited and beyond explanations.

Carnivalization is there, ever since the world came into existence and history has a number of examples to prove it. Take the underlying truth of The Mahabharat and The Ramayana. The desire to be supreme and the best, sets ground for this theme and then even the brothers/mothers can stoop down to any level to fulfill their sadistic pleasures.
Rushdie does not want to follow a set rule just to impress the people, he’d rather be different and make his own rules ‘so the darkness shall be the light, and stillness the dancing’ as opines Eliot (internet).

The Oxford dictionary of Literary Terms (3 ed) defines carnivalization as the liberating and subversive influence of popular humour on the literary tradition, according to the theory propounded by the Russian writer M. Bakhtin. In his works Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics (1929) and Rabelais and his World (1965), Bakhtin argued that the overturning of hierarchies in popular carnival—its mingling of the sacred with the profane, the sublime with the ridiculous—lies behind the most ‘open’ (diagnostic or polyphonic) literary genres, notably Menippean satire and the novel, especially since the Renaissance. Carnivalized literary forms allow alternative voices to dethrone the authority of official culture: Rabelais, for example, subverts the asceticism of the medieval Church by giving free rein to the bodily profanity of folk festivities.19

In Tudor Dynasty the ‘most nearly satanic tragedy that can be found’ is Doctor Faustus. A story of a certain doctor named Faustus, meaning ‘auspicious’ becomes an avid follower of the black magic and his temptations go unabated as he desires the famous ‘Hellenic Beauty Helen’ for his company which was unusual, for Helen had long been dead.

‘Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss……’, this is carnivalesque.

The Shakespearian plays are also a true example of love and hatred, revenge and conspiracy, fantasy and dreams- totally carnivalesque in nature.

Today in the USA, carnival is primarily associated with Mardi Gras, a time of revelry that immediately precedes the Christian celebration of Lent; during the modern Mardi Gras (Chinese Film), ordinary life and its rules and regulations are temporarily suspended and reversed, such that the riot of Carnival is juxtaposed with the control of the Lenten season, although Bakhtin argues in Rabelais and His World that we should not compare modern Mardi Gras with his Medieval Carnival. He argues that the latter is a powerful creative event, whereas the former is only a spectacle. Bakhtin goes on to suggest that the separation of participants and spectators was detrimental to the potency of Carnival.

In his Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics (1929) and Rabelais and His World (1965), Bakhtin likens the carnivalesque in literature to the type of activity that often takes place in the carnivals of popular culture. In the carnival, as we have seen, social hierarchies of everyday life—their solemnities and pieties and etiquettes, as well as all ready-made truths—are profaned and overturned by normally suppressed voices and energies. Thus, fools become wise, kings become beggars: opposites are mingled (fact and fantasy, heaven and hell). It is not to be construed that the liberation from all authority and sacred symbols is an ideology to be believed and held as a creed. Carnival extracts all individuals from non- carnival life, non- carnival states, because there are no hierarchical positions during carnival there cannot be ideologies for the mind of individuals to manifest.10

Bakhtin, Rushdie and the carnival, Carnivalesque is a term used in the English translations of works written by the Russian critic Mikhail M. Bakhtin, which refers to a literary mode that subverts and liberates the assumptions of the dominant style or atmosphere through humor and chaos.

Bakhtin’s philosophy is extremely rich and helps to understand the society in a simple manner through his literature. He is popular in both the fields,

1- How people acquire language and
2- How to influence people through dialogic.

He talks of multiple voices and authorial consciousness, historical beginning of novelization, rearticulation of language, moves from closed areas to open ones. Bakhtin believes in decentralization. He feels that language unites. He talks of recognizing other voices and social profiles. He uses metaphors. Also believes in symphony of voices to produce orchestration .He feels between the word and the environment there is elasticity. Such are the points he has tried to highlight. He is more for
Rushdie has picked up almost all his traits but at the same time he has blended them with his ideas of extreme openness and ugliness that prevails in the society. Both believe that the past is a reflection of the future and so cannot be forgotten. They believe in magical realism, fantasy, dreams and modernism. They feel that language should be the reflection of the era. They create interest in shape, pattern and design. The word plays a significant role in what has to be written or said because words are the expression of the feelings and if not expressed properly they can do more harm than help. It refers to the development of dialogism in which the metaphor of carnival is applied to the structure of the narratives that invert conventional relationships and celebrate a grotesque canon of the body. Bakhtin puts forward the theory that the element of carnival in literature is subversive; it disrupts authority and introduces freedom of thought and action. Jerome Braun (2013): ‘There are also references of carnivalization to show alienation from a sociological and psychoanalytic perspective, revisiting classic treatments of the topic and exploring its relevance to understanding post-modern consumer society. It examines the escapist potentials for good and for ill in modern society - those fostered by commercial interests, and those maintained by individuals and groups as their form of resisting alienation’. 

For Bakhtin, carnivalization has a long and rich historical foundation in the genre of the ancient Menippean satire. In Menippean satire, the three planes of Heaven (Olympus), the Underworld, and Earth are all treated to the logic and activity of Carnival. For example, in the underworld earthly inequalities are dissolved; emperors lose their crowns and meet on equal terms with beggars. This intentional ambiguity allows for the seeds of the “polyphonic” novel, in which narratologic and character voices are set free to speak subversively or shockingly, but without the writer of the text stepping between character and reader. Carnivalesque is also a prevailing theme in Angela Carter’s last novel Wise Children (1991) and Charles Dickens’ Great Expectations (1861). The Shakespearian plays have a great connect to the theme of carnival.

Classic Movies like Aranyer Din Ratri (Days and Nights in the Forest) (1970) and Apu-Trilogy (1955) directed by Satyajit Ray have well to do carnivalesque employed in them.

It is believed that theater and the films are a secret subconscious that influences the minds of the common man in a great manner. Including African American, East Indian, and Filipina theaters and movies have much to say and express in terms of carnivalesque ideas and the Indian cinemas graphically depict this theme which is implanted in the consciousness of cinema. Now that Rushdie is a man born out of an Indian Bollywood city, could not escape from its influence as a result most of his novels like, MC, The Satanic Verses, The Ground Beneath her Feet etc. reflect the prominence of movie style in the approach of his characters.

Works of Rushdie and the carnival. Rushdie has a diehard carnival attitude towards life. Being a contemporary writer, he highlights this aspect because he sees it as reality. So his novels are a realistic approach to life, events, places and people. He made his writing debut from ‘Grimus’ (1975), and there is no looking back for him thereafter. It is a ramshackle surreal saga based on a 12th-century Sufi poem and, copiously encrusted with mythic and literary allusion, a science fiction and fantasy novel too, where the ‘flapping eagle’ wonders for 777years, 77 months and 7 days, searching for his sister and exploring identities before falling into the Mediterranean Sea. The very opening of the novel is a controversy to nature where the life span of the flapping eagle defies the laws of the very existence of man. An inability to ‘fit in’ with a mortal world leads Flapping Eagle to attempt suicide, thus, Flapping Eagle’s conformity is hidden under a surface of non-conformity. The beautiful blending of the opposites.

Women are empowered souls of Rushdie’s characterization, and not to miss, the most significant people to bring about change in most of his work. The female characters contribute a big deal to the theme of carnival. The Shakil sisters in Shame (1983), who not only pretend to give birth to Omar but
later instill in Omar not to feel shame, as a result he becomes a sexist and is beheaded by his wife, shameful acts from beginning to end but most prevalent trait with the present day young generation.

Amina eloping with her lover, Brass Monkey burning shoes, Padma seducing Saleem knowing well enough that he is impotent are other examples of carnival from Midnight’s Children (1981).

The Ground Beneath Her Feet (1999) is a carnival of music, of pop, of stage, of popularity and fame. The Times Book Description: "A carnival of words...a triumphant hymn to the transforming power of love.”

The carnival of places is reflected truly in East West (1995) and The Jaguar Smile- a Nicaraguan journey (1987). MC, The Satanic Verses (1988) and Shame also celebrate this through the description of Kashmir, Pakistan and Mecca. Rushdie has made use of ‘Roman conceit’ as a metaphor throughout the novel Fury as he describes New York City as the epicenter. Bombay is talked off in almost all his novels.

Time and place have not been so intensely and accurately captured in any other novel than Fury (2001). Fury opens on a New York living at breakneck speed in an age of unprecedented decadence. Malik Solanka, historian of ideas and doll maker extraordinaire, steps out of his life one day, abandons his family without a word of explanation, and flees to New York. There is a fury within him, and he fears that he has become dangerous to those he loves. The book, Moor’s Last Sigh draws on a variety of real historical figures and events, including the surrender of Granada by Boabdil, the demolition of the Babri Masjid, the 1993 Bombay bombings, the gangster and terrorist Dawood Ibrahim, as well as modern Indian political organizations like Bal Thackeray and the Shiv Sena .It to be noted that none of the above said events are without carnivalesque theme. These all include a sort of revolt and anti-binary activities like the JalianwalaBagh incident, Amritsar Riots in MC or Rijksmuseum Amsterdam in Fury-all describe not only the place with accuracy but also the event that adds life to his writings.

Surely there is a carnivalesque element of feelings and emotions. Prof. Solanka is a Cambridge-educated millionaire from Bombay, who is looking for an escape from himself. ‘There was a satisfying anonymity in the crowds’ or ‘ the optimistic love philosophy of his youth having given him up, he(professor Solanka) no longer knew how to reconcile himself to the increasingly phoney……’(Fury:pp7),seems indeed able to ‘revel in the carnival of Rushdie’s prose. The Satanic Verses is a wonderfully erudite study of the evil and good entwined within the hearts of women and men, an epic journey of tears and laughter, served up by a writer at the height of his powers - beautiful mingling of extreme human emotions. The novel MLS is full of ideas of carnival of temper, madness, prophecy, allusions and several other such related emotions

Cricket, the modern carnival, finds place in The Ground beneath Her Feet also. Cricket and colonialism cannot be separated. Englishmen have left behind two of their legacies, besides many other things, in all their colonies--English and Cricket. Darius the cricket lover goes to play cricket in a pentangular tournament.

Yet another kind of carnival that can be prominently seen in the Works of Rushdie is that of myth. The boy, OrmusCama, in The Ground Beneath Her Feet, is a mythological hybrid fusing the Greek musician Orpheus with the Hindu god of love, Kama (who is rescued from the underworld by his wife, Rati, goddess of music). In MC, some of the names like Padma (the lotus goddess) and Shiva(the destroyer) are taken from Hindu mythology. TSV talks of Muslim Religion in a new light.

Dreams are not for the bedtime alone, they are there in the works of Rushdie as well. The Satanic Verses consists of a frame narrative, using elements of magical realism, interlaced with a series of subplots that are narrated as dream visions.  The Sunderbans in MC speaks volumes of dreams and fantasy.

Rushdie is a master writer who plays gracefully with his words and punctuations because he feels that words express feelings. In East, West, the comma in the title itself plays a significant role and at other
places he just misses the punctuation to make his writing impressive. He shows indifference to grammatical rules in MC to create topsy-turvy speech patterns such as ‘green and black the window’s hair, clutching hands and children mmmff and little balls and one –by-one- torn-in -half, and little balls go flying green and black her hand is green and nails are black as black’(MC.pp:422).

The strong use of word and the idea of decolonization in TSV was what that had put him in trouble resulting in the fatwa that was issued against him. The multiple voices, each individual and synchronizing with the other shows the role of dialogic and its influence on society.

He does not miss the political satire and use of humour because it adds essence to life and gives a realistic picture of the prevailing society.

Not to miss that Salman Rushdie talks high of the Nation and is deeply connected to the roots (India) which he proudly describes in all his works. He stays connected to the past and so weaves it with personal. He uses memory as a tool to reflect back and very smartly shifts back to the present. All this he does to bring ‘Carnival to Life’ in his novels, to project reality and to show how the post-modernist feels about life. Bakhtin goes on to note that a ‘vague memory of past carnival liberties and carnival truth still slumbers in the modern form of abuse’ (Rabelais: 28). In times to come carnivalesque theme will emerge as a giant and super-sized ideology that all writers would like to follow. Menippean satire and the Bakhtinian carnival have attracted the attention of scholars of Rushdie’s works, and the research scholar shall treat them where they are most relevantly important for her work. -- In the section about ‘The Carnival’. And the saga goes on….

OBJECTIVES
1. To enhance one’s corpus of knowledge
2. To enrich educational philosophy
3. To show relation to various fields of education
4. To harmonize of different methods

RESEARCH QUESTION
1. The article aims at giving a brief idea of the scholar’s work.
2. Has carnivalization changed down the ages?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
Each one of Rushdie’s books has been variously reviewed and Salman Rushdie’s novels have been graciously interpreted by the critics.

Carlos Fuentes (1989): has talked about the use of language used by the author.

“Rushdie’s work perfectly fits the Bakhtinian contention that over in an age of competitive languages. The novel is the privileged arena where languages in conflict can meet…. Establishing a dialogic encounter, a meeting with the other”.

Tiwari.V.K. (2001): has brought about in his research the use of language that makes Rushdie’s works open ended and the shift from past to present.

“The unrepeatability of an utterance, that is parole and repeatability of langue are clearly distinguished by Bakhtin. The shift is historic as he moves from the closed to the open area wherein dialogism becomes the central factor”.

Shashi Tharoor (1988): opines that Rushdie describes India in a way no one ever has done before Bakhtin. M.M (1984): focuses upon the newness that needs to be brought in novelization and that Rushdie uses it readily.
‘The position from which a story is told, a portrayal built or information provided must be oriented in a new way to this new world’.


‘If a “Globalizing spread of Imperialism”, in the words of Meenakshi Mukherjee, was most significant event during the late nineteenth century, the end of twentieth century may well be seen as an era of another “Globalizing Spread”- this time of postcolonial theory’. Homi Bhabha suggested that it was a set of diverse.

Tanu (2014): suggests that Rushdie’s use of language is helpful in creating carnival environment. If ... As one of Rushdie's earlier works, he experiments a lot with words and language.

**METHODOLOGY**

1. The research problem will be identified to understand the unusual phenomena of Bakhtin’s carnivalization, polyphony, dialogic etc.
2. The problem will be grasped and defined within operational limits by using the previous research, primary and secondary sources and internet.
3. The hypotheses will be formulated and generalized.

**FINDINGS/RESULTS**

1. Rushdie is a fan follower of M.Bakhtin and uses his techniques most effectively in all his works.
2. That Rushdie is a post-colonial and post-modern writer who uses multiple voices, fantasy, myth, dreams, hetrogloisa, satire etc. his views.

**CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is clearly seen from the above article that though carnival is not a new theme but Rushdie uses it to highlight reality, remaining within the literary limits of decency. He has perceived it with a new light and all his works are full of this theme to the core. He fits well into the Bakhtian contention and has tried to use practically all his techniques of good novelization. It is also recommended that scholars should study Rusdhie in order to have a broad and open spectrum of literary techniques.

**FUTURE STUDY**

There is much scope of future research related to this topic as Rushdie is not only a contemporary writer but also controversial in many ways, even though he projects reality and involves the reader to such an extent that the reader is bound to feel to be as one of the characters, thus an affinity of the historical and the personal is created. His works serve a dual purpose of simultaneous criticism and praise and also to tell to the world the way people use the language and react to situations.

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