

TRIBHUVAN UNIVERSITY

Double Bind of History and Fiction in Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown*

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By

Rohit Kumar Lamsal

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

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– Rohit Kumar Lamsal

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Tribhuvan University
Central Department of English
University Campus, Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Rohit Kumar Lamsal has completed his thesis entitled **Double Bind of History and Fiction in Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown*** under my supervision. He carried out his research from August 2008 A.D. to June 2009 A.D. I hereby recommend his thesis be submitted for viva voce.

Badri Prasad Acharya

Supervisor

Date:

Tribhuvan University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled **Double Bind of History and Friction in Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown***, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Rohit Kumar Lamsal, has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

Members of Research Committee:

Internal Examiner

External Examiner

Head

Central Department of English
Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur

Date:

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Abstract

The present researcher attempts to show that Salman Rushdie rewrites Kashmiri history from the marginalized people's perspective since he thinks that the officially-approved monolithic history cannot present the embedded socio-political, religio-cultural ambience of the contemporary society. Rather, he thinks that this officially recorded history assiduously supports the elite people, who are in power and their culture to maintain their 'status quo' by creating certain discourse. Thus, the present researcher, in this dissertation, attempts to expose the socio-historical context and fictional elements that are going simultaneously and concomitantly to exhume the marginalized and underprivileged unsung histories like that of Shalimar and Kashmira. To reinforce the cultural and religious amity by creating humanity, fraternity, brotherhood among the people from different cultures, religions, and nationalities, Rushdie by deploying allegorical mode of writing, myth, circular plot and so on valorizes the sentiments of those underprivileged people whose voice cannot be heard in the official or mainstream history.

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I. A General Introduction to Rushdie as a Novelist

The present researcher attempts to expose the historical happenings of post-partition India and especially the repercussions of war upon the common people by analyzing Rushdie's fiction *Shalimar the Clown*. In this novel, Rushdie, by showing his dissatisfaction with the officially recorded history, presents counterhistory in the form of fiction which is more trustworthy because it encompasses the voices of the marginalized and suppressed people who are neglected in the process of recording the history in the written form. In course of dealing with historical events in the form of fiction, Rushdie accelerates the fiction by taking the historical figures and events along with the completely fictional characters and events concomitantly to portray more credible history of underprivileged people and to raise their voices against domination indirectly in spite of his belief that the officially recorded history is merely the history of the elites and is written on behalf of their interest and benefit to maintain their status-quo.

Salman Rushdie, as a novelist, is without doubt one of the most acclaimed novelists in modern India. He mostly deals with the domestic issues like cultural and partition violence, instability and economic boom of the contemporary society. Moreover, he even domesticates the far-fetched stories orally derived from the forefathers. Being a Muslim by birth, he obviously shows his interest in that religion but vehemently negates the negative aspects of the same religion at the same time. So, one can find the religious riots among Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities if s/he observes his texts. Likewise, in most of his fictions' South Asian setting like India and Pakistan also has significant trace to play the game of Ace for the colonial countries having the colonizing errand which keeps on their vigilance to fulfill their innermost

desire of being superpower. Therefore, it is not surprising to look his works through the politico-cultural spectacles. Nevertheless, the economic boom of contemporary society in the so-called 'oriental third world' can be viewed with some repercussions upon the people dwelling in this world through his works. In addition to this, the issues of war, violence, destruction, gruesome killings, murder, rape, and even the issues of harmony among the people of different cultures, religions, regions have also remarkable roles in his writings.

The texts of Salman Rushdie such as *Midnight's Children*, *The Satanic Verses*, and *The Moor's Last Sigh* raise the questions of hybridity and cultural representation through characters who cross or blur cultural boundaries. The non-linear narrative style of Rushdie's work derives from the oral story-telling tradition of India, yet these very same techniques are parts of Rushdie's challenge to the certainties of facts and historical narrative. That is, they are histories, not a history, which are written or told by specific people from particular perspective. Such a challenge has often been taken as a mark of postmodernism in Linda Hutcheon's opinion who hails Rushdie's postmodern parody. On the other hand, Berman claims Rushdie for modernism and in particular the style for "visions of truth and freedom that all modern men and women can embrace [. . .] an inner dynamism and a principle of hope" (qtd. In Barker). It would seem that in exploring the boundaries of cultures, their mixing and meeting, Rushdie is at one and the same time traditional, modern and postmodern.

In *Midnight's Children*, for which Rushdie got the Booker Prize, Saleem Sinai, the deformed protagonist-narrator of the novel born on midnight of Indo-Pakistan partition in 1947, is supposed to be a witness to almost all the major events that took place in India after partition. Even though he is a middle class Muslim, he does not hesitate to mock at whatever is outdated, narrow and constricting in his

nation and religion, thereby depicting the bitter reality of the Indian sub-continent nations, after the partition. Thus, Rushdie, in this novel, attacks on the hypocrisies and other radical thoughts of religion and also ridicules to the chaos and intrigues of politics through the depiction of the deformed narrator-hero, Sinai- a strong hater of fanaticism and pseudo-nationalism. Reviewing the technique of art of suspense in Rushdie's fiction, Nancy E. Batty writes: "*Midnight's Children* synthesizes political allegory and the non-fiction novel, trying national events and domestic life into a larger whole of suspense" (18). This also accentuates Rushdie's allegorical style of writing. Similarly, by taking it as one of the milestones in depicting the postcolonial India Leela Gandhi opines: "A brilliant and endearing novel, that vividly depicts the people, landscape and culture, thereby presenting the mentality of the people and leaders after the separation in Indian sub-continent" (65). From the views of these critics, it is obvious that Rushdie writes being within the cultural, political and religious periphery in allegorical and retrospective styles signifying historical events in fictional ways.

Likewise, Rushdie's another highly controversial novel *The Satanic Verses* got restricted in many Muslim dominated countries at first and later it was banned in other countries also. The Muslim countries which had been angered by the publication of this novel in 1988 in UK, took it as a tribulation for Muslims who spurned it as an assault upon them, and accused Rushdie of blasphemy and fundamentalist- insulting their sacred religion. The government of Iran, especially the spiritual and political leader Ayatollah Khomeini issued a 'fatwa' that shocked the world. However, many people in western nations viewed Iran's action as an assault on freedom of expression. The title of the book refers to an old legend retold by Rushdie that probably outraged the Muslims the most. According to the legend, some of Koran's original verses were

supposed to be originated with Satan, later deleted by Muhammad to show his supremacy over Satan. By rewriting this legend, Rushdie offended Muslims by associating the holy Koran with the work of Satan. For this, Muslims felt that they had been betrayed by one of their own- turning his back on his roots to embrace Western culture. Therefore, this novel is taken as the symbol of the hostility of the West against the Islamic world. Even after all his stern positions to defend it as the work of fiction and that the part of the book that offended Muslims consisted of one character's deranged dreams, Rushdie apologizes for this, however, 'fatwa' is not taken back till now.

Being tired with the accusation of blasphemy and fundamentalism for being against Islam and Muslim, Rushdie sympathizes upon the Muslim community in his recent fiction *Shalimar the Clown* (2005). However, he does not fall behind to blame the negative aspects of Muslim religion that are culpable for the same community. So, this fiction, in the same way, is not the exception for the insertion of the issues found in his other texts. Therefore, it also depicts more than a half-century long Indo-Pak conflict in Kashmir making the novel an engaging reading of the plight of the present day world in its personal, political and cultural dimensions. *Shalimar the Clown* presents the picture of a turbulent world rife with fundamentalist attitudes and terrorist activities born thereof raising the issues like communal violence, religious conflicts, influx of terrorism, political hegemony and even the cultural riots based upon the Kashmiri history at the period after the partition of India and Pakistan. Moreover, it also raises the issues of the marginalized and indigenous people like Shalimar Noman, Boonyi Kaul, Kashmira/India etc. who are compelled to kill their desires to feel their existence in the society as usual through the medium of allegory.

It is known that whatever the motive the author has, allegorical mode of writing is the matter of author's choice. It is the marginalized mode of writing with the subversive potentialities, which assist the marginalized and indigenous people to raise their voices against domination indirectly because allegory is constantly attracted to the fragmentary, imperfect and incompleteness; therefore it is a progressive mode of writing as Stephen Greenblatt points out:

Allegorical interpretation is permissible if it is a self-conscious and provisional process, with no inherent claim to truth: "allegories are no sense of the Scripture, but free things besides the Scripture, and all together in the liberty of the spirit." By themselves, "allegories prove nothing" and can make no more claim upon our faith than any fiction: "if I could not prove with an open text that which the allegory doth express, then were the allegory a thing to be jested at, and of no greater value than a tale of *'Robin Hood.'*" (101)

That can be noticed when Shalimar Noman, a tight rope walker for the village performing troupe knives Max (imilian) Ophuls, the former American ambassador to India and now the head of the US antiterrorist department, as an objection to the Western hegemony and as against the familial unity allegorically.

Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown* has been analyzed from various perspectives such as postcolonial perspective, feminist, Marxist and so on. It is strikingly amazing to note that the novel *Shalimar the Clown* has received scores of overwhelming criticisms and responses since its publication in 2005. Some of the mention-worthy analyses like politico-cultural, religious, postcolonial, global and even feminist perspectives have reserved the analytical ground. In course of analyzing this novel from various perspectives, Brad Hooper views it from politico-cultural perspective:

What contemporary novelist knows more than Rushdie about the political-religious tension besetting the globe since the middle of the twentieth century and, especially, now such tensions not only affect personal lives but also, in many instances, create the lives many people lead? The historically shaped lives of Maximilian Ophuls, born into a wealthy Jewish family in Strasbourg, France, and later a resistant hero and vastly popular diplomat, and Shalimar the Clown, who grew up in the devastatingly beautiful (but Hindu Muslim disputed) Kashmir region of India, intersect, and why one is compelled to take the other's life seems to be the perfect material for Rushdie's cosmopolitan, sociopolitical consciousness. (1713)

Hooper, thus, points out the skill of Rushdie for presenting political, cultural and religious harmony prevalent in the global world that shape the individual life like that of Ophuls, Shalimar, Boonyi, Kashmira and so on.

William T. Vollmann, on the other hand, peeps through the vantage point of religio-cultural perspective when he says:

The focus this novel is extremism. It tells the tale of two Kashmiri villages whose inhabitants gradually get caught up in communal violence [. . .]. Their passion becomes a marriage solemnized by both Hindu and Muslim rites, but as conflict heats up, Boonyi seduces the American ambassador. The resulting transformation of Shalimar into a terrorist is easily the most impressive achievement of the book [. . .]. When he is describing Kashmir's good old days of communal tolerance, he too frequently takes refuge in slapstick [. . .]. *Shalimar the Clown* is a powerful parable about the willing and unwilling

suspension of multiculturalism. And for those readers who even in this post-September-eleventh continue to cling to American narcissism.

(12)

Vollmann's vision to read it as a communal violence between Hindu and Muslim religion ultimately leads the destructive nature of communal tolerance in near future. He even analyses Rushdie's female characters as less important than the male ones, and also reminds the readers the most recent terrorist activity of September eleventh who are still clinging to the self-imposed superiority of America.

Likewise, Mukul Kesavan analyses the novel from postcolonial perspective by adducing the context of the violence in which Shalimar happens to be engaged after the colonial imperialism. For this Kesavan writes:

Rushdie does not justify Shalimar's violence but he supplies its context. *Shalimar the Clown* begins after India's partition and ends in the 90s; this is not the contemporary present of al-Qaeda and suicide bombers. In fact, Shalimar disapproves of suicidal Jihadist. He does not kill innocent civilians. His definition of a blood feud allows him to count his daughter as an enemy. (50)

To elaborate this opinion further, Rushdie himself makes the parallel study of the incident of September 11, 2001, which is merely a representative incident to exhume the marginalized histories of the suppressed people. Rushdie recounts the event of September 11 to supply the context as he writes, "After the bombing of World Trade Center in New York [. . .] eight years later this would be remembered as the first bombing [. . .] he sat across a table from his lower in a stinking meeting room and expressed his fears for his safety" (613). Like some of the post 9/11 events, Shalimar delves deep into the roots of terrorism and explores the turmoil generated by different

faiths and cultures attempting to co-exist. Despite Rushdie's denial to the suicidal Jihadist proves his disinterestedness to the innocent killings.

Moreover, in viewing it from different perspectives, Alan Cheuse takes *Shalimar the Clown* as heading towards the path of globalization when he remarks:

From village politics to regional, national politics to world politics, the novel's lens widens even as it sharpens the focus on the major characters and on many minor figures; village louts, Indian generals, American presidents, and Pakistani dictators populate this satirical fictional opera with the deep heart. Sometimes the language can get a little too essayistic, but at its best *Shalimar the Clown* deftly mixes dark comedy with high politics, sex and war and terror, romance and mythology. (1)

In this way, Cheuse provides the cause of global terrorism through an individual terror like that of sex, romance and so on.

Besides these criticisms and analyses based on the novel, Francis King deals with the skill Rushdie has been possessed with:

Rushdie is at his best when he tells Max's story. An Ashkenazi Jew, born in Strasbourg, he became an admired academic before gaining even greater distinction as a Second World War Resistance hero and then immigrating to the states. With tremendous skill Rushdie brings out his ruthlessness, the power of his intellect, and his sexual glamour even into old age. Each page that follows his fortunes is masterly in its concision and insight. (1)

Here, King's point of view to observe the technique of Rushdie's writing in this fiction is context-oriented.

Shalimar, the clown, who used to entertain people is destined to the assassination of Opuls not at all on political or religious grounds but totally on a very passionately personal and emotional reason as Nell Freudenberger states: “Rushdie intertwines personal with political corruption; as the valley slides into bitter conflict, Boonyi and Shalimar’s love affair devolves into a revenge drama of international proportions” (1). Furthermore, the murder takes place by the reluctant seductive activity of Ophuls rather than the willful murderous instinct of the clown. It signifies Rushdie’s far-reaching political suggestion in allegorical level in course of defining the seemingly personal tragedy of love, betrayal and revenge. The desire of the West, and of America particularly, to play with destiny and sentiment of the eastern people is responsible in many instances in bringing about the conflicts between the West and the non-West.

Despite all the claims different critics have analyzed *Shalimar the Clown* about the text as political novel, postcolonial novel, the novel based on communal-religious violence, it will be ethically more effective interesting for the present researcher to analyze the novel from the new historicist perspective because the new historicist reading helps to rummage the marginalized histories along with social, political, cultural and even economic aspects of the contemporary society thoroughly. So, the present researcher, by taking this fact into consideration, moves ahead to carry out the research from the new historicist approach to ransack the suppressed histories of Kashmir especially after the partition of India and Pakistan. The present novel *Shalimar the Clown* deals with the contemporary histories of Kashmir by drawing the officially recorded history and the fictional history simultaneously to depict the more credible history of the marginalized people particularly after the partition of India and Pakistan.

The need for a new way of analyzing the text '*Shalimar the Clown*' from new historicist perspective is realized to pinpoint the officially recorded historical facts in its textual forms, and to separate other aspects of fictional elements intertwined within the same recorded history. So, it is apparent that fiction is interfused within the history to expose the subdued history of the laymen and other marginalized groups. This clarifies that the history is not only the matter of power-holders for their interest. Thus the concept of 'historicity of text' and the 'textuality of history' is used in the new historicist perspective. New historicism, as a tool, examines the historical facts on the one hand and the fictional fusion on the other. Moreover, the historicization of fiction and the fictionalization of history keep forth the ground reality based on the contemporary cultural, political, social and economic ambience. In *Shalimar the Clown*, Rushdie believes that the proclamation of the universal truth in history can no longer sustain. He vehemently challenges and questions the traditional ideas of seeing history as coherent, objective, and continuous unity. Therefore he takes different versions of histories like that of the higher bureaucratic officials Max Ophuls, and the laymen like that of Shalimar and Boonyi simultaneously. For history has no longer a set of fixed objective facts; it has no limited boundaries. The facts no longer exist unless they are interpreted. By the use of the imaginative power, traditional historians who are deeply embedded within the network of power, representation via discourse and knowledge, interpret the events of history and present them coherently to make the history intelligible to us. In this way, historians play a vital role to record the history barely for the benefit of the handful of people who are in power. Henceforth, history happens to become subjective. On the other hand, fiction tries to reach near to the history because it deals with story of those people who are neglected and suppressed by those power holders in their own version of history. Consequently,

there can be many versions of history since it is subjective, whereas fiction proves its contiguity with the truth since it tries to be objective. It is thereby obvious that history is no longer homogenous and final version rather it is heterogeneous and multiple based on the interpretations and perceptions.

By history, it is generally understood the officially approved version by the authority that is recognized and accepted throughout the nation and even outside the nation. Besides this, the nationally and internationally recognized history is applied in the academic institutions like schools and universities as a representation to create absolute truth. For M. H. Abrams:

[h]istory is not a homogenous and stable pattern of facts and events which can be used as the 'background' to explain the literature of an era or which literature can be said simply to reflect, or which can be adverted to as the "material" conditions that, in a simple and unilateral way, determine the peculiarities of a literary text. In contrast to such views, a literary text is said by new historicists to be 'embedded' in its contexts, as a cultural power-relations, practices and products that, in their ensemble, constitute that we call history. (250)

Fiction, on the other hand, in a broader sense, is understood as the literature as a whole. So, it includes both facts and fictions simultaneously without being prejudiced for fiction is not the unreal product of human imagination. In course of defining fiction, David Daiches writes in *Critical Approaches to Literature*, "it is any kind of composition in prose or verse which has for its purpose not the communication of fact but the telling of a story- either wholly invented or given new life through invention or the giving of pleasure through some use of the inventive imagination in the employment of words" (4-5).

Rushdie, by creating the dominated history of Shalimar and Boonyi, wants to dissolve the prevailing culture of presenting the dominant history, which is officially recorded. The history like that of Max Ophuls has been revisited with the history of Shalimar and Boonyi concomitantly to present the more credible history of Kashmir after the war-torn period, i.e. postcolonial period. The neglected history like that of Shalimar gives birth to more Bin Ladens who will take violent steps to make their voices heard in the present global world. Thus, Rushdie tries to blur the demarcation between history and fiction as well as the hierarchy of giving priority to the former over the latter.

The present research contains the general introduction about the concepts and objectives of the writer Salman Rushdie on the basis of the texts he has produced in the contemporary issues in the first chapter. The second chapter develops new historicism as a theoretical tool basically to analyze his text *Shalimar the Clown*. The textual analysis of the very text from the perspective of the afore-stated theory occupies its place in chapter three. Besides, chapter four wraps up the research along with conclusion.

II. New Historicism

New historicism as a term refers to the parallel reading of the literary and non-literary texts usually of the same historical period by giving equal weight on the basis of the special and temporal background. Moreover, new historicism blurs the hierarchy that privileges either the literary text over the non-literary text as in New Criticism or the nonliterary text like history over literary text as in Old Historicism or biographical-historical criticism. Likewise, it also accentuates the cultural, political, social and economic ambience of the historical period embedded within the text at the time of its production. New historicism even exhumes and questions the singular reality, objective truth, and other established facts. For this, the role of the new historicists is to “go-between at once within the field and external to it” (Veese 21). Thus, a new historicist analyses any text whether it is literary or non-literary, being within the historical period when the text is produced. Nevertheless, he also encompasses all the external circumstances that help to produce the texts indirectly. Therefore, the text is the outcome of the socio-economic and politico-cultural atmosphere, which is deeply embedded in the text that becomes the instrument to analyze the text for the new historicists. So, new historicists view that history should be constantly revisited, rewritten and reread along with the demand of time.

New historicism, as a critical approach to literature, undoubtedly rejects both the autonomy of the individual genius of the author and the autonomy of the texts. Instead, it views the literary texts as only foregrounded form of socio-economic, politico-cultural milieu. So, it is obviously inseparable from the historical ground; and the author is also in the grip of the historical circumstances of the period of the texts’ production as Frye said that a “history is a verbal model of a set of events external to the mind of the historian” (400). But “it is wrong to think of a history as model similar

to a scale model of an airplane or ship, a map or a photograph” (White 400). In other words, it is one discourse among many cultural discourses.

Thus, history is an embedded element to literature and vice-versa since literature is not simply an outcome of history rather it actively makes use of history through its participation in discursive practices. In this regard, the prominent new historicist Louis (Adrian) Montrose states:

The new(er) historical criticism could claim to be new in refusing unexamined distinctions between “literature” and “history”, between “text” and “context”, in resisting a tendency to posit and privilege an autonomous individual- whether an author or a work- to be set against a social or literary background. (398)

To accentuate this view of Montrose, M. A. R. Habib says, “The new historicism argued that analysis of literary text could not be restricted to texts themselves or to their author’s psychology and background; rather the larger contexts and cultural conventions in which texts were produced needed to be considered” (766).

By coining the terms ‘historicity of texts’ and ‘textuality of histories’

Montrose further views:

By the history of texts, I mean to suggest the historical specificity, the social and material embedding, of all modes of writing- including not only the texts that critics study but also the texts in which we study them; thus I also mean to suggest the historical, social and material embedding of all modes of reading. By the textuality of histories, I mean to suggest, in the first place, that we can have no access to a full and authentic past [. . .]. In the second place, those victorious traces of material and ideological struggles are themselves subject to subsequent

mediations when they are construed as the “documents on which those profess the humanities ground their own deceptive and interpretive texts”. (410)

That is to say ‘textuality of histories’ means that no one has complete and authentic histories in textual forms because s/he is not completely familiar and his/her contiguity to reach up to it unwillingly happens to be fictional. It is thereby one has to pile up some reminiscences through the use of his/her creative imagination. Likewise, ‘historicity of texts’ signifies the actual historical issues mentioned in the texts to notice similar relevant activities in which socio-cultural, political, economic and even material surroundings embedded of that historical period help one to locate the texts on the basis of its production. In this sense, we give emphasis to the backgrounded history of the text rather than the foregrounded materials which avoid so many voices of underprivileged people. It is an attempt to rewrite history in order to champion the marginal, the outcast, the long suppressed figures. In this way, it can be stated that the historical context in which a literary work appears is not a factual, independent series of events which exist apart from the reader.

Although the term new historicism had been baptized decades before, it got its recent meaning in early 1980s through the work of the prominent new historicist Stephen Greenblatt, who first of all took it to analyze particularly the works of Renaissance period. Later in a broader sense, it occupied a place as a critical approach to see literary and non-literary works equally being based on their historical context. Thus, it blurs the hierarchy, prejudices and biases of the literary and non-literary texts particularly to give privilege to the former over the latter. Moreover, new historicism even changes its jaundiced eye to view history as objective, monolithic, linear, causal, static, homogenous and authentic by implanting another eye that sees everything

equally according to socio-economic, political and cultural aspects. Thus, new historicists take history as the matter of interpretation, perception, and it is subjective. So, new historicism dismantles all these traditionally established facts and proceeds by taking history as heterogeneous, unstable, progressive, processual and preamble. By taking this fact into consideration, H(arold) Aram Veenser writes:

Louis Montrose thought new historicism equally unprogrammatic, saying new historicists are “actually quite heterogeneous in their critical practices”, and Catherine Gallagher added that the “phenomenon” was one of “indeterminacy”. As for the most recognizable new historicism, Stephen Greenblatt declared that new historicism was “no doctrine at all” and made other disavowals that provoked one reviewer to say, “the general himself is [. . .] swearing that he is no theoretician, that his invention of the term new historicism was virtually accidental. (1)

From this excerpt, it is said that history is the representation in the form of narratives or stories. So, it is the matter of perception. History is always the part and partial because the histories are the products of the same historical society. So, there is no adequate totalizing explanation of history. But, in contrast to this, history is dynamic, unstable interplay among discourses through which historians can analyze it; however, the analysis will always be incomplete because there is no definite, authentic and universal history.

New historicism is a practice rather than a doctrine. History veers according to the interest of the power holders. To elaborate this opinion upon history, a renowned critic Hans Robert Jauss, in his “Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory”, clarifies the absence of objective truth within history in this way:

For the positivistic view of history as the ‘objective’ description of a series of events in an isolated past neglects the artistic quality as well as the specific historical relevance of literature. A literary work is not an object which stands by itself and which offers the same face to each reader in each period. It is not a monument which reveals its timeless essence in a monologue. It is much more like an orchestration which strikes ever new chords among its reader and which frees the text from the substance of the words and makes it meaningful for the time. (75)

Likewise, for Jerome McGann, poems are ‘time and place-specific’, hence historical analysis is a ‘necessary and essential function of any advanced practical criticism’ (432).

Another critic Laurence Lerner puts his view in his “History and Fiction”:

[. . .], and it has become a common-place to argue that history cannot give us direct access to objective facts, since the ideology and the verbal strategies of the historian will determine what he chooses to notice and how he describes it, to say nothing of the connections between events that he then establishes [. . .] for history is simply the result of writing and (even more) the ideology of the historian. This would mean that the past is unknowable. (437)

For this, one can say that the definition and interpretation of history is based on ideology and interest of historian, and other socio-political, cultural, economic and even material embeddedness can be viewed on the basis of his/her location despite all the historical circumstances. Thus, it is hard to grasp the past authentic history completely in a direct and objective way since it is largely based on the ideology of the historian.

From all these aforementioned extracts of different theorists and critics, it is crystal clear that any historical text does not have objective truth. Rather it is the product of socio-economic, politico- cultural circumstances of contemporary historical period. So, the text cannot remain untouched by the historical context and it is equally ineluctable from the clutch of time and place-specific milieu. If any text claims to be 'objective', it will accidentally lose its artistic or aesthetic aura. Any text cannot remain as a monument to display its same face to the different viewers of different period. Instead, it is a podium from where the conductor announces the changes of scenes and actors on the basis of time and place.

Dealing with history as the 'objective truth', the so-called recorded facts accidentally happen to be mixed with fictional account in its textual form. The tendency of new historicism to view its history as literature and literature as history is thus confined within the boundary of the 'textualization of histories' and 'historicization of texts' by blurring the age-old demarcation between history and fiction, which ultimately become inescapable into each- other. Now, the literature and history, therefore, have neither their 'beginning' nor 'ending' because they emerge as the negotiable product in the society. New historicism even blurs the hierarchy between literary and non-literary texts and the tendency to see the former in the light of the latter.

Nevertheless, it challenges the canonicity of texts and writers. It subverts the hierarchy of high and low, good and bad, elite and popular culture. New historicists, therefore, observe both the history and fiction with the same eye and with equal importance. To paint the golden color in this opinion, Laurence Lerner further opines:

Fiction differs from history in not making a claim to truth [. . .]. The consequences flow from the fact that history tries to be true. First the

historian's picture 'must be localized in space and time' [...]. The world of fiction is not purely imaginary, but overlap is especially large, and welcomed [...] all history must be consistent with itself [...] there is only one historical world. (439-40)

From these sentences, one can claim that the written or recorded history is merely the representation of those who are in power. These power holders twist history according to their interest by any hook and crook. Thus, the recorded history tends to fiction/imagination. Similarly, fiction or the oral history, by encompassing the pain and suffering of the suppressed and marginalized people tends to move towards truth/history. Therefore, fiction tends to move towards history because it has more contiguity with truth of the underprivileged people whereas history tends towards fiction or imagination because it is twisted according to the interest of the elite people. So, it can be said that fiction tends towards 'objectivity' and history towards 'subjectivity'. Since fiction is directed towards present and future, it seems more factual and moves towards fact/history, whereas facts tend towards past as if in retrospection that happens to become the perspective of elites and power holders to maintain their status-quo by hiding the reality of the past. Thus, as a repercussion of power politics, the persons who are in power [mis]interpret it or hide the facts according to their interest. This mire of power politics of elites reluctantly twists the historical facts towards the imaginative fiction as the pot-boiler.

In this sense, the new historicists remind us that it is treacherous to reconstruct the past as it really was- rather than as we have been conditioned by our own time and place to believe that it was. In other words, as far as the historical narrative includes complex set of symbols consisting of sign, symbol, icons, allegory- shared also by the

fictional documents, therefore it can never claim the ‘objective truth’. In this regard, Hyden White mentions:

For the historian’s aim is to familiarize us with the unfamiliar, he must use figurative rather than technical language [...]. All historical narratives presuppose figurative characterization of the events they purport to represent and explain. And this meant that historical narrative, considered purely as verbal artifacts, can be characterized by the mode of figurative discourse in which they are cast [. . .] language itself provided in the fore principal modes of figurative representation: metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony. (404)

Likewise, White also puts the distinction between history and fiction as he describes the construction of historical narratives as the process through which fact becomes fiction:

The older distinction between fiction and history, in which fiction is conceived as the representation of the imaginable and history as the representation of the actual, must give place to the recognition that we can only know the actual by contrasting it with or likening it to the imaginable [. . .] one of which is encoded as “real”, the other of which is “revealed” to have been illusionary in the course of the narrative. (406)

In the same context, he further says in his “Introduction to Metahistory”:

It is sometimes said that the aim of the historian is to explain the past by ‘finding’, ‘identifying’, or ‘uncovering’ the ‘stories’ that lie buried in chronicles; and that the difference between ‘history’ and ‘fiction’ resides in the fact that the historian ‘finds’ his stories, whereas the

fiction writer 'invents' his. This conception of the historian's task, however, obscures the extent to which 'invention' also plays a part in the historian's operations. (445)

For him, as the historians apply the figurative or rhetorical language, there is no question of scientific or authentic record of facts. On the other hand as a literary figure like novelists invents history on the basis of certain material reality, literary text like fiction cannot be the mere fantasy.

To crack the nut from all these afore-mentioned excerpts, it can be stated that 'historical writing can never be scientific'. It always becomes entangled in tropes, figurative language. History can be set over against science by virtue of its will of conceptual rigor and failure to produce the kinds of universal laws that the sciences characteristically seek to produce. Similarly, history can be set over literature since its interest in the actual rather than the possible, which is supposedly the object of representation of literary works. Thus, the 'objective truth', 'singular reality' and 'unified universal truth' are questioned by new historicism under the influence of Foucault and White. The evaporation of the borderline between fact and fiction and between history and literature contributes for the development of new historicism.

There are some tenets of new historicism to portray its difference from other literary genres. It is the 'parallel study' or the 'equal weighting' of the literary and non-literary texts produced in the same historical era, is one of the first and foremost major tenets of new historicism. Likewise, blurring the age-old demarcation or hierarchy between literary and non-literary texts, fact and fiction, elite and popular culture, vertical and horizontal practice of reading, is another equally important feature. Moreover, to take history as the matter of perception and interpretation and its heterogeneous, unstable, flexible characteristics are other tenets that are in sharp

contrast to Derridian formalist and textualist Deconstruction and New Criticism which deal with texts as having the 'self-sufficient entity', and autonomous corpus having 'nothing outside the text'. Moreover, it is also different from Marxist and Structuralist way of viewing texts as ultimately related to the economic infrastructures, super structure and base structure, and as a set of Saussurean signs of 'signifier' and 'signified' governed by a single, complex system of relationship respectively. Since new historicism is based on the matter of perception and interpretation, there is no final, singular exact meaning of any text. In this sense, history can be taken as the permutation of past for it must be constantly rewritten and reviewed on the basis of historical background.

Subjectivity, as opposed to the 'objective truth,' can be taken as the penultimate tenet of new historicism because new historicism firmly denies the 'objective truth' as fact for history is invented or constructed by those elites who are in power. Last but not the least, the shift from the singular, objective monolithic 'history' to the multiple, subjective and heterogeneous 'histories', and the embedded socio-economic, politico-cultural circumstances are at the apogee among the tenets of new historicism.

Thus, new historicism, by embracing the possibilities of the subversion of the twisted history of the power holders in the form of officially recorded facts, possibilities of exhibiting the embedded cultures of contemporary period, and possibilities of dismantling of the hierarchies 'eschews totalities, teleologies, and grand narratives, turns to details, local knowledge and what Frank Lentricchia calls "the gritty, ground-level texture' of life" (Veese 4). H. Aram Veese explains the five fundamental assumptions of new historicism as:

That every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices; that every act of unmasking, critique, and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risk falling prey to the practice it expresses; that literary and non-literary “texts” circulate inseparably; that no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging truths or expresses unalterable human nature; and that a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism participate in the economy they describe. (2)

For Veenser, the new historicists’ assumptions of expressing, unmasking, critiquing and circulating the embedded religio-cultural, socio-political materials on to the common ground for the assess of all the people change the unchangeable, alter the unalterable, and separate the inseparable human truths.

In dealing with new historicism in reference to the Old Historicism or biographical historical criticism, it can be observed that Old Historicism as a continuum rather than complete separation in the sense that the Old Historicism paves the way for the development of new historicism. Old Historicism also observes the historical events as new historicism but being static and with the singular, monolithic, unified spectacles. So, it cannot step further according to the demand of time. In contrast to this stability of Old Historicism, new historicism emerges out to accelerate the history further challenging the elitist’s interest to maintain their status-quo. This helps to raise the voices of marginalized and suppressed people to be heard even by the elitists and the power holders. Therefore, new historicism instantly has become popular since its emergence in the 1980s. It, unlike being Old Historicism, raises the issues that have been so-far ignored, and even exhumes all the embedded elements that help to ransack the then contemporary historical, social, political and economic

issues. For this, new historicism is a process which spreads its tentacles to the heterogeneity, multiplicity, instability and indeterminacy. But, on the other hand, Old historicism is static, homogeneous, unified and authentic.

Traditional historical critics have taken social and intellectual historical context as 'background' information necessary to appreciate fully the separate world of art, on which a work of literature is used as independent or autonomous corpus. New historicists reject not only this distinction but also the separation of artistic works from their creators and audiences, on the other way, traditional historians, thinking history as monolithic, having single narrative plot with a series of events of linear, causal relationship, believe that the so-called single, unified, universal, authentic history can be obtained through objective analysis, which is impossible for the new historicists. Moreover, Old Historicists observe the events from the 'top,' whereas new historicists analyze the events from the 'bottom'. In other words, the Old Historicists view any event from the elitist perspective, whereas new historicists view it from marginalized's perspective. This is to say that new historicism embraces all the neglected and marginalized histories of the underprivileged people in the genre called fiction. Ross Murfin and Supriya M. Ray, by taking the historical development of new historicism, write:

The historical criticism being practiced in the 1980s, however, was not the same as the historical criticism of the 1930s 1940s [. ..]. New historicist critics assume the works of literature both influence and are influenced by historical reality, and they share a belief in referentiality, that is, a belief that literature both refers and is referred to by things outside itself. They are also less fact and event-oriented than historical critics used to be, perhaps because they have come to wonder whether

the truth about what really happened can ever be purely and objectively known. They are less likely to see history as a linear and progressive, as something developing toward the present, and they are also less likely to think of it in terms of specific eras, each with a definite, persistent, and consistent *Zeitgeist* (spirit of the times). Hence, they are unlikely to suggest that a literary text has a single or easily identifiable historical context. (239-40)

To put this opinion forward, one can notice that it is difficult to produce any reliable interpretations despite the Old historicists' attempt to contextualize and stick to the facts. The impossibility of objective analysis and its complexity further strengthens the difficulties to supply any factual data for the traditional historicists.

Old Historicism dominated literature departments in the late nineteenth and some early decades of the twentieth century and formalist approaches replaced it and became prominent during the 40s and 50s of twentieth century. New historicism revolves the conflicts between historicism and formalism or (and) textualism and gives equal weight to history and literature in general and fact and fiction in specific.

To turn the focus of light upon the cultural materialism that has much contiguity with new historicism, we proceed to discuss both of these critical trends in relation to each other. Though by appellation, cultural materialism is British phenomenon and it shares some of the inherent qualities of new historicism which is mainly the American phenomenon. However, both of these phenomena have some differences despite some of their peculiar proximities since new historicism is an early 1980s phenomenon tending mainly towards the poststructuralist orientation on discourse and power especially on the construction of identity and so on. So, it is largely based on Foucauldian notion on discourse and power. On the other hand,

cultural materialism developed as a historicist approach to literature by Alan Sinfield and Jonathan Dollimore in mid 80s oriented towards the focus on ideology, on the role of institution, and on the possibilities of subversion. Thus, cultural materialism broadly deals with Marxism but in particular with Marxism of Raymond Williams's concept of 'structures of feelings.' New historicism situates literary texts in the political situation of its own day while the cultural materialism locates it within that of ours. Besides this, cultural materialism reads even the most reactionary texts against the grain, offering readings of dissidence, subversion and transgressions, which are relevant in contemporary political struggles that allow us to reach up to the socially marginalized groups and expose the ideological machinery that is responsible for their suppression and exclusion. Moreover, in cultural materialism, any past event can be revisited, reconstructed, reappraised and reassigned all the times through diverse institutions in specific contexts. Likewise, it sees the historical materials within a political framework. So, it is viewed as 'a politicized form of historiography'.

Cultural materialism takes interest equally to the understanding of the past and current political scenario to read the historical texts, and overtly tries to effectuate political change in the present form- a broadly socialist and feminist point of view. However as New historicist approach is more neutral approach to literature than cultural materialism which can be politically biased, the present researcher prefers new historicist approach to cultural materialist approach.

Hegelian notion of "the Will to Live" is the bottom line of incipient for Nietzsche's "Will to Power", which ultimately leads to sow the seeds of new historicism. The Hegelian idea of "the Will to Live" and "the Spirit of the Age" is moving towards the perfection slowly and gradually, which is unattainable for Nietzsche. So, he brings the idea of "Will to Power" to counter Hegelian idea. For

Nietzsche everything is in the network of power that determines truth, and is relative and subjective. Thus, the truth is something like alchemist, which cannot be attained. Nietzsche thinks power as pervasive everywhere and the only important thing in the world. Everyone desires for it by all his means of hooks and crooks. In this matter, Nietzsche posits, “the only thing that all men want is power, and whatever is wanted is created by those who are in power. So, truth is also shaped by power. The hitherto accepted truth as the representation no longer exists in Nietzsche because he says that life can never be understood in terms of ultimate truth. Any form of writing, claims Nietzsche, cannot represent truth since writing is presented through “a mobile wanted for the sake of power. If something is wanted more than something else it must represent power” (qtd. In Adams 511). Likewise, he views about truth and history in different ways and says it is history what determines truth but history is also army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphism” (qtd. In Adams 636). He has the postmodernist aesthetic attitude towards the world that sees it as “text”, the denial of facts, the denial of essences, and the celebration of plurality of interpretation and of fragmented self. Nietzsche further says, “truths are illusions of which one has forgotten that they are illusions” (qtd. In Adams 636). Therefore, truth is the matter of perceptions and interpretations, and there is no ultimate truth. To elaborate this further Beerendra Pandey states citing Nietzsche in his *Intellectual History Reader*: “Truth is undoubtedly the sort of error that cannot be refuted because it was hardened into an unalterable form in the long baking process of history” (85).

Nietzsche’s central point is that an individual and culture that concentrate too much on history alone loses the ability to act since the action requires forgetting. According to him, when one completely indulges in the past, he/she loses the promise of future. Historical sense, for him, no longer preserves life but only mummifies it. He

even claims that super-saturation is one of the causes of modern decadence. By taking all these facts into consideration, Nietzsche proposes the concept of suprahistorical being or superman, who is able to create history to solve the problem of history.

Thus, Nietzsche questions the singular reality, essence, and the absolute truth when he announces “the death of the god”. Similarly, he celebrates the heterogeneity, multiplicity, fragmented self in the matter of meaning of any text.

In course of nurturing the seeds of new historicism derived from Nietzsche that ultimately got blossomed along with the theorists like Stephen Greenblatt, Louis Montrose, H. Aram Veenser, Kenneth R. Johnston etc., Foucault has significant contribution to drag new historicism up to its maturity. Foucault, as a genealogist thinker, refuses to see history as evolutionary process, a continuous development toward the ‘present’. Neither was history regarded as an abstraction, idea or ideal, or as something that began ‘in the beginning’ and would reach to ‘the end’ – a movement of definite closure. To understand Foucauldian idea of history, it is necessary to conceptualize the notions of power, discourse and knowledge/truth which influence the new historicists’ idea of ‘textualization of histories’ and ‘historicization of texts’. The text, for Foucault, is verbal formation in the form of ideological products or cultural construct of certain historical era. That’s why, it is not also outside the network of power, discourse and representation since these are social, cultural products and are taken for granted in certain historical context. Thus, historian cannot escape the “situatedness” of time, and the “embeddedness” of the social practices. In addition to this, text, for him, speaks the power structures, oppositions and hierarchies which are after all the products and propagators of power since the text never reflects or represents preexisting entities and orders of historical situation. It is thereby obvious that history is always written from the perspective of

historian, and the position, a historian occupies in society determines the history he writes.

With the immensely influential impetus and ideas inherited from Nietzsche to transcend Hegelian and Marxist philosophies, Foucault has been always interested in the mechanism of human thought and particularly the character of the subconscious underlying all human action, which is power. Foucault's interest in history is different from traditional notion of history. He has been fascinated by the fact that even ideas, concepts, experiences as well as problems all have histories. He has become aware of how his seemingly divergent interests intersected each-other at the issue of power, knowledge, the idea of truth and the pleasure within the self. These ideas on 'subject', 'knowledge', 'power' and 'truth' make him at least a political philosopher. Foucault's main interest lies not merely in power and its manifestation but also in techniques which produce truth so as to lead an individual to subjection. That is why, McHoul and Grace write:

For Foucault, resistance is more effective when it is directed at a 'technique' of power rather than 'power' in general. It is techniques which allow for the exercise of power and the production of knowledge; resistance consists of 'refusing' these techniques [...].

Foucault suggests that power is intelligible, and susceptible to analyze down to its smallest details, in terms of the historical strategies and sets of tactics designed to mobilize these techniques to political advantage. But importantly, oppressive forces of domination do not hold the monopoly in the capacity to invent tactics. (86)

His main project is not to devalue and discredit the truth or science in general but to question the historical conditions necessary for the emergence of such truths. For this

purpose, he demonstrates the historicity of different disciplines and the concepts of objects related to such disciplines along with power relations and their strategies.

However, power cannot function in the absence of knowledge/truth.

According to Foucault, power is not always repressive, and circulates in the same direction rather it also bears the qualities of productivity and creative potentials. So, it is not only the means for the ruthless domination of the weak by the stronger and subjection, subversion, but it functions in consent as that of Gramsci's 'hegemony'. Hence, power doesn't move in one direction instead it circulates in all directions, to and from all social levels at all times. And the vehicle through which power circulates never reaches its destination. Thereby, power is never ending process, and in the way of formation. In this regard, new historicist has a great affinity with Foucault as he states in the first volume of *The History of Sexuality*:

Power is everywhere: not because it embraces everything but because it comes from everywhere [. . .]. Power comes from below; that is there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between ruler and ruled at the root of power relations, and serving as a general matrix - no such duality extending from the top down [. . .]. There is no power that is exercised without a series of aims and objectives [. . .]. Where there is power, there is resistance, and yet, or rather consequently, this resistance is never in a position of exteriority in relation to power. Should it be said that one is always "inside" power, there is no "escaping" it, there is no absolute outside where it is concerned, [. . .]? Or that, history being the ruse of reason, power is the ruse of history, always emerging the winner? (93-95)

From this definition of power and its scope, it is obvious that power does not inmate thorough hierarchically. It subverts the traditional concept of taking power as only the tool for subjection and domination since it turns the negative conception of power upside down. This means to say that power is all pervasive, and deserves equal weight.

Therefore, no one can escape from the grip of power. This can be conspicuously observed through the following excerpt by McHoul and Grace:

The most significant feature of Foucault's thesis is his stress on the productive nature of power's modern exercise. His main aim was to turn a negative conception upside down and attribute the production of concepts, ideas and the structures of institutions to the circulation and exercise of power in its modern forms. He forcefully expresses this point in the following passage: we must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms it "excludes", it "represses", it "censors", it "abstracts", it "masks", it "conceals". In fact, it produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. (64)

This pastiche clearly states the view that power is not only the tool for subversion and subjection but also a tool to turn the negative conception upside down which assists to see the history from marginalized perspective as new historicists do. On the other hand, power excludes, represses, censors, and even conceals whatever becomes against the interest and benefit of the people who are in power. The power holders sacrifice everything for their benefit. So, power is everywhere to fulfill the interest of all who are in power which can be localized as Stephen Greenblatt opines: "Power at once localized in particular institutions – the court, the church, the colonial

administration, the patriarchal family- and diffused in ideological structures of meaning, characteristic modes of expression, recurrent narrative patterns” (6).

However, it is the new historicist perspective that turns the negative conception of power upside down.

‘Discourse’ is another Foucauldian concept which deserves the equal position to construct the ideas of power and knowledge. Discourse is one of the disciplines which departs along with the demise of Structuralism in the early sixties that was regarded the embryo of it. The formalist, structuralist and communicative approaches to the social disciplines and practices have lost its aura as only the store-house of language or social interaction however these approaches have established relatively well-bounded areas of social knowledge. Discourse creates power, which ultimately creates knowledge that is truth. So, there is the network of discourse, power and knowledge. But all of these components are subject to change because truth becomes a perpetual object of appropriation and domination. This implies that discourse is always in the process of formation, correlation and transformation which take place after a certain epoch. Discourse is produced within a real world of power struggle. It is used as a means of gaining and sometimes even subverting power. For Foucault, discourse is a central human activity. So, he is interested in the process how discursive practices change over time. It means that meaning of any discourse depends on those who are in authority. The discursive practices, however, have no universal validity but are historically dominant ways of controlling and preserving social relations of exploitation.

In another way, all discourses are the inventions of the power struggle and there are no absolutely ‘true’ discourses but it is only the matter of how much more or less powerful ones. Discourse is directed to obtain power. In other words, every

discourse is in the persuasion of power. Foucault opines that discourses are deeply rooted in social institutions, and that social and political power operates through discourse, which is the ordering force to govern every institution. Moreover, power cannot function in the absence of knowledge/truth. Hence, discourse creates such a space whereby the social, moral, religious and political disciplines always control human behaviors directly. Therefore it is a means of achieving power since discourse is indispensable from power. This becomes more obvious when Foucault says:

Indeed, it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined together [. . .]. To be precise, we must not imagine a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominant discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that can come into play in various strategies [. . .]. Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it, any more than silences are. (100-101)

In this sense, discourse is always on the way of persuasion of power whether it be of accepted or excluded, and of dominant or dominated. So, it is inextricable from power.

Another aspect Foucault discusses about in course of writing history is genealogy. By following the footsteps of Nietzsche, Foucault takes genealogy as a critical approach which analyses the incidents, and gives detail analyses of society in general. Genealogy as a philosophical critical approach undertakes to expose the inextricable connection between knowledge and power, and subsequently the connection between all claims to absolute truth and different forms of power as it is said that knowledge is power. Unlike the traditional one, genealogical history is the history of oppressed people, not about the rulers but about the ruled ones. It tries to

explore into race, body and desire. It also attacks the supposed coherence of subject. Moreover, Foucauldian genealogical concept opposes the notion of lofty origin in history. His is the genealogy, which apparently seems as the reinterpretation and re-evaluation of the historical events in the counter relation to power, is to reconstruct the history through the marginalized and oppressive perspective.

Foucault opines that every epoch of history is not connected with each-other rather it is a kind of fragmented series of events, a chain of unrelated events. Genealogists even consider the insignificant and minor events as significant because they do not believe in the point of perfection. They do not believe in the possibility of teleology and the concept of origin. History, for them, is not linear and cyclic. Critics see Foucauldian terms like archeology and genealogy as tools for studying the history. The function of genealogy is to expose the body totally imprinted by history and the process of truth. Foucault takes genealogy as a synchronic method to deal with history, whereas archeology as diachronic. Genealogy, for him, is a Nietzschean effort to undermine all absolute grounds, and to demonstrate the origins of things only in relation to and in context with other things.

Among the three-fold bundles of genealogical history, it is more interesting to pay the attention in its scope. Attacking the supposed coherence of a thinking 'subject' is the first area where genealogy dwells upon. Secondly, genealogy dissolves the fiction of singular human identity. The attack upon the notion of the origin/truth in historical investigations is the third one. In the same way, the idea of history as discontinuity is the penultimate one. At last but not the least, genealogy focuses not upon ideas or historical mentalities but upon the 'body' so as to show it totally imprinted by 'history'. Besides this, as a genealogical historian Foucault, departing from the traditional concept, reforms the role of a historian having three – fold tasks.

A historian, while confronting the 'one' reality, should be in favor of the use of history as a 'parody'. In this view, Linda Hutcheon is close to Foucault as Hutcheon as well takes history simply as a parody. The second task of a historian should be directed against a 'singular human identity'. And the final task is the investigation of a historian which should be directed against 'objective truth'.

Through the observations of all these aforementioned features, it can be stated that Foucault's genealogical concept is to reconstruct the history by subverting the linear history, by seeing into the histories of events. Genealogy reconstructs the history through the marginalized and dominated people's perspective that is the new historical perspective to take all the neglected bodies of the society altogether. This perspective comes in sharp contrast to the historical one and creates a new history which is not the final one but the emergence of a history which may have more histories within it and related to it. Thus, the embryo of new historicism has been planted through the emergence of Nietzschean and Foucauldian ideas of history which challenge the singular, homogenous, monolithic, universal, unified history to embrace the histories of heterogeneity, multiplicity, instability, progressive, processual and ever-changing in course of time and place.

New historicism, though a 1980s phenomenon, has equal significance in reading the literature of any period based on the framework of contemporary time and place along with the embedded social, political, cultural and even economic aspects. Thus, it also looks backwards in retrospection. For instance, Louis Montrose reads Elizabethan period, especially the Elizabethan pastoral poetry in relation to the context of poetry (89). He even takes Kenneth Burke's fine phrase "equipment for living" for the pastorals and other imaginative forms to fulfill the re-creative function of poetry. New historicism, however, was invented particularly to study the

Renaissance literature by the proponent of it Stephen Greenblatt in 80s. Regarding the prevalence of new historicism in all the spheres of society with embedded social, cultural elements of contemporary time and space, Greenblatt remarks:

[. . .]. For the early sixteenth century, art doesn't pretend to autonomy; the written word is self-consciously embedded in specific communities, life situations, structures of power. We do not have direct access to these figures or their shared culture, but the operative condition of all human understanding of the speech of our contemporaries as well as of the writings of the dead - is that we have indirect access or at least that we experience our constructions as the lived equivalent of such access. (7)

For him, the automatic insertion of time and space-specific elements in the contemporary texts compels one to go ahead concomitantly with the period of the texts' production.

Renaissance dismantles the ideas of omnipotent and omnipresent God. New historicists like Greenblatt, who apparently observes Renaissance period through the vantage point of new historicism by bringing the two opposite Renaissance figures: More and Tyndale in his *Renaissance Self-Fashioning : From More to Shakespeare* stood rebelliously as atheist. More, on the one hand, shows his great affinities with the ideas of omnipotent God whereas on the other hand, Tyndale remains indifferent to the God's existence. Tyndale, as a rebel against the Catholic Church like virtually all the early reformers, sees the churches profoundly disobedient and as absolute submission to the king/power. He thought More, a cruel and venal politician who had sold his services to the highest bidder, while More thought Tyndale an immoral madman (109). Furthermore, by citing Tyndale, Greenblatt states:

In Christ, there is neither father nor son, neither master nor servant, neither husband nor wife, neither king nor subject: but the father is the son's self, and the son father's own self; and the king is the subject's own self, and the subject is the king's own self; and so forth. I am thou thyself, thou are I myself, and can be no nearer of kin [. . .]. Tyndale of course, defied the existing church, reviled monasticism, and ridiculed Utopia, but he committed himself with passionate totalism to God's word as manifested in the Bible. (110-11)

This extract conspicuously exhibits the total collapse of identity, the total dismantle of hierarchical relationship, the identification of Church as man's own imagination idolatrously worshipped (112), and the exiting Church, for Tyndale, as a conspiracy of the rich against the poor, the educated against the ignorant, the priestly caste against the laymen (113). Despite their opposing view regarding the God and theology, More and Tyndale both suggest a radical and momentous social crisis: the disintegration of the stable world order, the desacramentalization of Church and state, the subversive perception of the role of the mind, and specifically the imagination in the creation of the oppressive institutions (113). By emphasizing the other aspects of new historicism like space and time bound economic and social structures, and the influences of other contemporary thoughts, Greenblatt claims in course of reading Marlow in this way:

“The family is at the center of most Elizabethan and Jacobean drama as it is the center of period's of economic and social structures; in Marlow, it is something to be neglected, despised or violated [. . .]. In neutrality of time and space that characterizes Marlow's world, this ‘constructive power’ must exist within the hero himself”. (213)

In Elizabethan and Jacobean age time and space constructed economic and social structures which put the family at the center but for Marlow the conducive ambience should be constructed by the hero himself to exist in that society.

Similarly, along with the publication of *The Romantic Ideology*, in 1983, the high era for new historicism, by Jerome McGann, Kenneth R. Johnston proceeds to read the Romantic literature through the new historical perspective just as Greenblatt does to Renaissance literature. Considering the Romantic literature, Johnston opines:

“McGann’s real target was less Romantic literature itself than the academic ideology of its present interpreters, which glossed over and explained away such extremes of evasion. He historicized the methods of Romantic criticism and scholarship as he found them, c. 1980, and he found them to be, in a word, thoroughly ‘Romanticized’”. (172)

It is thereby said that Romantic literature not only romanticized the historical issues but also generated the possibilities of historical readings on the basis of the spatial and temporal interpretations and perceptions.

In course of viewing literature produced in different eras, new historicism also strongly occupies its place to analyze the recent disciplines like postcolonialism. Besides the reading of Renaissance literature through the theological perspective, Greenblatt announces the post-colonial existence in the same era by making the post-colonial study of *The Tempest* by Shakespeare. Reading *The Tempest* through the new historical perspective, Greenblatt makes the conclusion that Prospero as a colonial agent forcefully snatches the land and all other belongings of Sycorax to captivate Caliban and Ariel, the indigenous inhabitants of the island. For this purpose, he even notices the colonial errand of Prospero for expanding the territory to show his superiority and writes, “*The Tempest* utterly rejects the uniformitarian view of human

race, the view that would later triumph in the Enlightenment and prevail in the West to this day. All men, the play seems to suggest, are not alike; strip away the adornment of culture and you will not reach a single human essence” (Lee A. Jacobus, 373). In this sense, Greenblatt depicts the new historical traces to adduce the separation of art’s autonomy, self-consciously embedded elements of socio-cultural circumstances, plurality, the denial of singular human identity and so on.

The present researcher is going to apply new historicism to Salman Rushdie’s *Shalimar the Clown*. Rushdie’s ignorance to state the authority and its binding to the fiction with the help of allusions makes Rushdie’s intertextuality ‘doubled’. This reluctant nature to portray the so-called authorized, authentic colonial history of the winner compels Rushdie to present the marginalized and suppressed histories through the use of fictional elements which become more real than the homogeneous, unified and official history of the authority. So, Rushdie gives importance to the multiple, colorful, heterogeneous histories in his novel *Shalimar the Clown* also. In this way, in course of presenting the postcolonial history through the marginalized and colonized people’s perspective to make the history more credible, Rushdie in this novel *Shalimar the Clown*, revisits the pre-and post-war Kashmir and rewrites the histories of the marginalized such as Shalimar and Boonyi from their own perspectives.

III. Double Bind of History and Fiction in Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown*

As an exceptional literary figure for criticizing as well as embracing some of the western cultural values in the non-western literary panorama, Salman Rushdie has produced many brilliant symphonies, and *Shalimar the Clown* is one of the latest among them. It is basically produced on the ground of bilateral dispute about Kashmir between India and Pakistan. This live dispute is still going on for decades developing cold relationship along with inhuman mayhems which can even be observed through the recent attack at Taj Hotel in Mumbai. Now, America, as the superpower of the world, is accusing Pakistan for that type of dire activity. Moreover, the investigation also proves the same. This also helps one to surmise America's role as a catalyst between these two countries, India and Pakistan. *Shalimar the Clown*, as the centre of attraction in the novel, deserves the role to fight against such kinds of dominations, while, on the other hand, Boonyi stands for credulous or gullible puppet to be buffeted as a pendulum between these countries which are on the race of being more powerful in the world. Likewise, the religious, socio-political and cultural harmony prevalent in the supposedly 'paradise' Kashmir, is easily demolished with the entrance of the American interloper Max Ophuls who allegorically represents America - the hegemonic neocolonial power. Moreover, the post-partition setting, i.e. after 1947 including 9/11, 2001 attack in the text makes the novel historical.

To historicize the fictional events in *Shalimar the Clown*, Rushdie gives voice to Shalimar, the Muslim protagonist who is marginalized and suppressed. Historical texts include the fictional elements along with the embedded socio-economic, politico-cultural aspects of the society as human fabrication to textualize history. Traditional notion of viewing official historical discourse as an absolutely authentic and objective source has been dismantled, and the assumptions such as neutrality of

language, the universal truth in history have been challenged. So, history is based on the perception and interpretation since, there is the chance of addition and omission according to the interest of the narrator or the author.

In this historical fiction, creation of fictional places like Shirmal and Pachigam makes the reader take it as a fiction but meanwhile the cultural and religious harmony between Hindu and Muslim communities found in Kashmir under the reign of Hindu *maharaja* even after the partition of India and Pakistan makes it historical. In this regard, Rushdie opines:

Today our Muslim village, in the service of Hindu *maharaja* will cook and act in a Mughal- that is to say Muslim-garden to celebrate the anniversary of the day on which Ram marched against Ravan to Sita. What is more, two plays are to be performed: our traditional Ram leela and also Budshah- the tale of Muslim Sultan. Who tonight are the Hindus? Who are Muslims? Here, in Kashmir, our stories sit happily side by side on the same double bill, we eat from the same dishes, we laugh at the same jokes [. . .] a Muslim actor playing the part of a Hindu god. (*Shalimar the Clown* 115)

Thus, the Muslim majority in Kashmir shows happy, tolerant and harmonious relationship among Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities even under the rule of Hindu *maharaja*. They are going to perform their cultural programme in the same opera. Muslim actor becomes ready to perform the role of Hindu god, Ram.

They even eat from the same dishes at the same time. It portrays the religious, cultural tolerance with typical ingenuous excess, Rushdie describes the 'earthly paradise' that Kashmir was before it became a 'war zone'. To make it more conspicuous one can ponder at Indian historian Somnath Dhar's following remark:

“Another landmark was the visit of Mahatma Gandhi to Kashmir in July 1947. By that the British had announced the transfer of power to Indians. Gandiji was impressed with the communal amity he found in Kashmir” (75). To mark this Rushdie further writes:

Abdullah then mentioned Kashmiriyat, Kashmiriness, the belief that at the heart of Kashmiri culture there was a common bond that transcended all other differences. Most bhand villages were Muslim but Pachigam was a mixture [. . .]. So, we have not Kashmiriness to protect but Pachigaminess as well. We are brothers and sisters here said Abdullah. “There is no Hindu and Muslim issue. Two Kashmiri two Pachigami- youngsters wish to marry, that’s all. A love match is acceptable to both families and so a marriage there will be both Hindu and Muslim customs will be observed.” Parelal added, when his turn came, “to defend their love is to what is finest in ourselves”. (180)

In such a way, the Hindu and Muslim communities in Kashmir gave priority to the communal amity that transcended over any other boundary. Here, in a village, a Muslim boy Shalimar falls in love with a Hindu girl Boonyi. They innocently make love and their families decide to exonerate rather than condemn them. They celebrate the marriage ceremony of two different religions in two different ways as religio-cultural harmony.

On the other hand, to analyze the historical facts from the writer’s perspective, Rushdie has presented various similar adduces in this fiction. For this, he takes the then Indian president Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, foreign minister Swaran Singh, and other national figures like Morarji Deshai, Indira Gandhi, Pakistani prime minister Zulfkar Alo Bhutto. The historical setting in

Kashmir, New Delhi and Los Angeles makes the novel lively. Meanwhile Rushdie creates fictional characters like Shalimar named after the famous beautiful holy garden Shalimar the Bagh, Max Ophuls name apparently after the late film director, Boonyi, and fictional setting like Shirmal and Pachigam simultaneously to stress the suppressed, marginalized overseen histories of the unsung heroes like Shalimar the Clown. To this effect, Rushdie tells the history:

In the aftermath of the Tashkent Peace Conference (TPC), between the two countries , during the period of partial political vacuum created by the fatal heart attack of the Indian prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri (LBS) on the day following the signature of the Tashkent Declaration (TD), Max Ophuls launched a major new American initiative. In this interregnum, a bitter stalemate between the potentates of the congress party ended when the kingmakers Kumaraswami Kamaraj (KK) and Morarji Desai (MD) elevated Indira Priyadarshini Gandhi (IPG) to the premiership in the mistaken belief that she would be their helpless puppet. During this period of savage intra-party warfare only president Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan rose above the political storm. (307)

These are some of the seeds that concomitantly spring out in course of nurturing the history and fiction simultaneously in the form of ‘historicizing the texts’ and ‘textualizing the histories’. Here, for example, the historical figures like Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, Morarji Deshai and so on, having the strong will power of leadership are intermingled with the solely fictional characters like Max Ophuls, an American ambassador to India, having the colonizing errand of being the superpower in the world. Even these fictional characters’ names are somehow connected with someone or something historical.

In the history book entitled *Modern South Asia*, historians Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal put forward the real cause for partition of India into Pakistan on the basis of their own interpretation and write:

The 1990's have witnessed the rise of Hindu majoritarian nationalism in India, the resurgence of Hindu-Muslim violence in the North and west of the country, the recurrence of center-region problems in nearly all of South Asia, the repression of popularly backed armed insurgency in Kashmir and the ravages of an array of violent social and political conflicts in Pakistan involving, in particular, Urdu-speaking migrants from India. (190)

The centre-seeking problem and the Hindu-Muslim violence in the north and west of India particularly, and South Asia generally, are the dominant causes for the conflicts in Kashmir.

After the partition, India is taken as the leading South Asian country and the USA tries to attenuate it by not providing the military assistance to Pakistan. In this context, Rushdie writes:

[. . .] India, the largest and potentially most powerful non-communist Asian nation, was the biggest prize in Asia, and that on account of the United States handing seven hundred million dollars in military aid to Pakistan, that prize was being danger in lost. The trial was wagging the dog. Rostow agreed. India is more important than Pakistan. And Bowles agreed that America's unwillingness to arm India had pushed the late Jawaharlal Nehru, and now Lal Bahadur Shastri, into the Russian's arms. (295)

In this way, the so-called superpower keeps its vigilantes upon the activities of India and Pakistan.

The American power holders like the national security advisors McGeorge Bundy, his eventual successor, Walt Whitman Rostow, and the man who would follow Max to New Delhi after the scandal, Chester Bowles, by thinking India as the most powerful country in South Asia, want to impose their coloniality. To prove this Sumit Ganguly's writing can be cited:

Internationally, the lukewarm U.S. support for Pakistan, evidenced by the dispatch of a U.S. Navy task force to the Indian nation, soured U.S. relation with both India and Pakistan- the Indian were dismayed by what they perceived as U.S. support for a brutal military regime, and the Pakistan felt that the United States had betrayed them by not doing more to prevent India from dismembering their country. (59-60)

The superpower of the world, America, tends more towards Pakistan to prevent India from ascending the ladder of superpower by handing economic and military assistance. But that became the repercussion of soured U.S. relation with both India and Pakistan. On the one hand, India became rude for the U.S. support of brutal military regime of Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan got irritated for what the U.S. could not do more to prevent India from dismembering their country.

Whatsoever the repercussion of partition between India and Pakistan, everyone takes the root-cause as an Indian historian Sumit Ganguly takes, basically to the communal violence that was prevalent there:

The roots of the problem in Kashmir can also be traced to the early years of Nehru's prime ministership. A princely state with a Hindu ruler and a Muslim-majority populace at the movement of the British

transfer of power in 1947, Kashmir has been the most divisive issue in the subcontinent. India and Pakistan have to war over it in 1948 and 1965 and Kashmir remains the main bone of contention between the two neighbours. The recurring denial of genuine democracy as well as substantive federal autonomy promised soon after independence contributed to acute Kashmiri disenchantment with their status in the Indian union. Threaten by a tribal incursion from Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, *Maharaja* Hari Singh had signed an instrument of accession to India in October 1947. (210)

Thus, when India was divided into Hindustan and Pakistan in 1947, the latter was further divided into Pakistan and Bangladesh in 1971, the dispute of Kashmir between India and Pakistan remained the same. Rushdie also points out the same cause for violence in this way:

Communal violence everywhere was an ultimate crime. When it burst out one was not murdered by strangers. It was your neighbours, the people with whom you had shared the high and low points of life, the people whose children your own children had been playing with just yesterday. These were the people in whom the fire of hatred would suddenly light up, who would hammer on your door in the middle of the night with burning torches in their hands. (390)

This is the lively picture of communal violence where the people with different beliefs, different cultures and different religions reside together. It will be the place where there will be no strangers from outside but the people within the same community may get involve in breaking out one other's houses in such communal

violence. They will be the nearest neighbours, friends and relatives in disguise in the middle of the night with torches in their hands.

Pakistan seems solely responsible for this type of dire activity when one observes Dhar's following statements:

Pakistan has used all sorts of tactics- incitement to communal disturbance in Kashmir and the rest of India, infiltration of armed personnel to Kashmir and even wars of 1965 and 1971 to undo the accession of Jammu and Kashmir state to the Indian Union. That Kashmiris, fired by the zeal of patriotism and secularism, presented a united front to the aggressor from across the border on each occasion, is well known. (78)

It means that Pakistan provides supports to such kinds of terror-spreading groups not only in Kashmir but also in the rest of India to take Jammu and Kashmir as its own appendage. However, one cannot blame Pakistan and defend India in such complicated issue. Rather both the countries are responsible for spreading communal violence and chaotic situation in Kashmir.

After 1971 attack India emerged as a dominant power on the subcontinent and it undermined Pakistan's claim on Kashmir, which seeks to unite the members of the same ethnic group across contested borders. This ethno-religious claim to Kashmir was dismantled after 1971's Civil War. After this, Pakistan lacked political and military strength in Kashmir. After 71's war between India and Pakistan but not over Kashmir but in response to increased demands for autonomy in East Pakistan now Bangladesh claimed the lives of several thousand East Pakistanies and made nearly ten million refugees. The influx of refugees into India placed an extra-ordinary burden in India and the Indian political leadership under the rulership of prime minister Indira

Gandhi, who decided that it was cheaper to go to war than to absorb the refugees into India's population.

East Pakistan organized and trained indigenous guerrilla groups to fight against Pakistan Army in the consent of Army and parliamentary forces especially with Border Security Force. India supports the guerrilla groups known as "Mukti Bahini" (literally "liberation force"). Pakistan launched Air attack on Dec. 3, 1971 in India regarding it as interference in its internal affairs. However, Indian Air Force retaliated the next day and maintained air superiority until the end of the war on Dec. 17, 1971. This can be analyzed through the following excerpt in this fiction:

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto had visited the terrorists in Lahore, described them as freedom fighters, and declared that their "heroic action" was a sign that no power on earth could stop the Kashmiri struggle. He further promised that his party would contact the Kashmiri National Liberation Front to offer its cooperation and assistance, which would also be given to the hijackers themselves. Thus, Pak regime's entanglement with terrorism was proved for all the world to see. (400)

This pastiche describes even the responsible persons' attachment with guerrilla groups that intensifies the pugnacious nature between these two countries.

Shalimar's involvement, with the murder in his mind, into the world of liberation front to the fund raising activities found that the poor were more generous than the rich it was proper to be more so to speak persuasive when dealing with the rich (413). That displays the economic ambience of the contemporary society. This liberation front had its attachment to other groups like Lashker-e-Pak, Afghan's freedom fighters known as Taliban and for the USA Muj, Saudi Arabian terrorists, and became trained to properly use long range missiles, automatic grenade launchers,

rocket pods with solar-powered timing devices, 60mm mortars. After the skills in ammunitions they gained, they started 'Jihad'. However, Shalimar had the skill on all kinds of weapon, he used the knife as his best weapon to murder Max Ophuls, the former American ambassador to India, who deflowered Boonyi, Shalimar's wife. In this context, Rushdie writes, "Our lives touch again, Shalimar said silently to the ambassador, may be the gun I'm holding was brought to this region by you. May be one day it will point at you and fire. But he knew he did not want to shoot the ambassador. His weapon of choice had always been the knife" (445-46).

This might be presented as the reason to remind the bombing in the World Trade Center in New York (613) by Osama Bin Laden, a member of al-Qaeda on 9/11, 2001. Laden had been formerly nurtured and sheltered by America, and who had fought for the interest of America and against Russia with the weapons that America had provided to him at first but later turned against America itself as it began to ignore and abhor him and his Islamist religious groups in the world.

As the superpower of the world, America spoke against Islam and took Laden as a worthless and useless terrorist. *Shalimar the Clown* reminds the same incident, when this neo-colonial American agent Max Ophuls behaves Shalimar, an innocent meek clown of an entertainment group, in the same way. As a result, the same misfortune Ophuls has to bear from Shalimar as America does from Laden. Laden had used the same weapon he had been given by America as Shalimar uses the knife that has been provided to him by Ophuls as retaliation. This also leaves some traces of the existence of eastern products which are useful for the eastern people to preserve their culture, unlike being the highly developed weapons in the Western culture. These different groups along with the involvement of Shalimar who wanted to take avenger

with Ophuls, headed forward preoccupied in their mind with ambush, kidnap, extortion, bombing, assassination and ransom killings to meet their errand (438).

Moreover, this fiction also displays the true picture of war-turned state and its repercussions upon the apolitical common people. It portrays the anxiety of war and inhuman, intolerable atrocity like that of Nazi's to the Jews in this way:

A system of billets was in operation. The brothers Noman were assigned a series of temporary lodgings with families who sometimes welcomed them, at other times had to be coerced into housing such potentially dangerous guests and treated them with the mixture of anger and fear, barely speaking to them except when absolutely necessary, locking up their marriageable daughters, and sending the younger children to live elsewhere until the peril had passed [. . .], a billet they abandoned after a single night because they both dreamed the same dream, a nightmare of being killed in their sleep, of having their skulls crushed by angry men with rocks in their fists. (415-16)

Common people were destined to hide their daughters, younger children away from those terrorist groups to keep the children safe and to prevent the daughters from rape. They even did not dare to speak with these fighters without necessity.

Moreover, these fighters themselves had the anxiety of fear to be dead. The war-turned picture can be lucid further in the following excerpt of this historical fiction:

Interrogation of such suspects would take place behind closed doors and confessions extracted by force during these secret interrogations would be admissible as evidence provided the interrogating officer had reason to believe the statement was being made voluntarily.

Confessions made after the suspect was beaten or hung by the feet, or after he had experienced electricity or the crushing of the hands or feet would be considered as voluntary. (474)

Such type of compulsion to speak for the authority is very near to the reality of such war-enmeshed states. Similarly, the series of why? questions (484-85) make the historical fiction more realistic.

On the other hand, Rushdie tackles with the officially recorded dominant monolithic history by providing the counterhistories from the marginalized people's perspectives. To exhume these marginalized, suppressed histories one should go beyond the officially recorded history of the power holders. In this fiction, Rushdie tries to rummage the marginalized histories in this way:

July 13 last year, attack on Border Security Force camp at Bandipora, deputy inspector general and four personnel killed. August 6, one major and two junior commissioned officers slain at Natnoos army camp. August 7, colonel and three personnel done to death at Trehgam army camp [. . .]. Fidayeen bombed the police control room in Shreenagar (eight personnel killed) Fidayeen attacked Wazir Bagh base in Shreenagar (four killed). (507-08)

These are some of the examples of officially neglected histories which the power holders do not think necessary to expose to maintain their status-quo. But, in this fiction, by trying to burst all these histories- history of the elite and the histories of the marginalized, Rushdie attempts to expose the real or true history from the marginalized people's perspectives as a counterhistory.

Another equally historical foot-print is seen when Rushdie expresses this passage:

Seikh Abdullah, the lion of Kashmir, had been dead for five years [. . .]. But it was the just-concluded polls that changed everything. This was the year 1987, and the Indian government had held state elections in Kashmir. Farooq Abdullah, the Seikh's son, was the government's preferred choice. The opposition party, the Muslim United Front, named as its candidate one Mohammed Yousuf Shah, described by general Hammirdev Kachhwaha as the state's "the most wanted militant". (450-51)

In this way, Indian political instability can be observed after the secession of India into Pakistan and further Bangladesh.

This is further proved in the text entitled *Kashmir: New Voices, New Approaches* by historians Waheguru Pal Singh Sindhu, Asif and Sammi, "On Sep 8, 1982 Seikh Mohammed Abdullah passed away. Before his death, in Aug. 1981, he had appointed his political heir- his son Farooq Abdullah, a medical doctor who had been in private practice in London [. . .], lacked father's substantial organizational skills" (79).

Farooq Abdullah stood himself in 1983's election against Rajiv Gandhi who had been dispatched by Indira Gandhi as an emissary to Farooq. In late Nov. 1982, Farooq had announced his intention to ban communal and secessionist organizations within Kashmiri state as he had proceeded there to strengthen his political and organizational position as opposed to Gandhi's. On Jan. 22, 1983, his government published an ordinance that empowered it enforcing such a ban (82). As a result, National Conference won the election in Jammu and Kashmir, and whose leader, Farooq became the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir while Rajiv Gandhi became the prime minister in 1986. Along with the chief ministership of Farooq

Abdullah, some signs of improvements were seen as “the state made progress on political, economic and cultural fronts as well as with the rest of the Indian Union” (Dhar 78).

Now after political stalemate, one can look after the cultural aspects that are inevitably embedded in this historical text to mark the historical significance of that period. It is, therefore, Rushdie who attempts to create this cultural reality with fictional actors in this way:

Accordingly they had contentedly lost themselves in the comic fiction of the bhand pather, and were so immersed in their imaginary world, in creating their burlesque versions of pratfalling princes and clumsy gods, cowardly giants and devils in love, that the real world lost its charm for them, and perhaps alone of all Kashmiries they became immune to its natural beauty. (172)

This ‘bhand pather’ is the real culture for the Kashmiries. The actors Noman Sher Noman performed the role as the Muslim Clown and Boonyi as a Hindu Kashmiri dancer make their culture entertaining. About this culture Dhar writes:

The traditional bhand pather, which is the folk opera-cum-ballet still popular in the countryside, is of ancient origin, amply demonstrated by the versatility of the repertoire of the bhand (operadancers). The pathers are mostly highly dramatized anecdotes, some of the lampooning degenerating into vulgar obscenities. The paathers, nevertheless, are basically folk-operas which have lost their musical notes. (136)

Thus, this fiction has the touch on all social, political, economic, cultural religious aspects of the Kashmiri society. These all social aspects are embedded obviously to

make the novel more truthful or historical. In this way, the fiction is overseen through the marginalized people's perspective to provide country history lucidly.

Rushdie not only provides the historical events to accentuate the truths or facts which are somehow constructed or made-up like fictions by the elite people who are in power, but also creates fictions which have more proximity with the reality since there is nothing in our mind out of the real existing world because our mind is already preoccupied with the things that have taken place before our own existence. So, fiction is not completely imaginary. Instead it overlaps with history. It audaciously presents what the history cannot because history is the matter of interpretation which is recorded on behalf of the power holders according to their interest. Therefore, there will be the chance of omission of facts which are not beneficial for the power holders. But, on the other hand, fiction includes all those facts from the marginalized people's perspective. In this sense, it has the more continuity with reality, truths or facts even though it has some fantastic elements to make it interesting. Fiction gives the innermost, underlined meaning in fantastic way as allegorical modes of writing give. So, this mode of writing becomes an important asset for the fictional writers to ransack the marginalized histories of the underprivileged people. In the novel *Shalimar the Clown*, Rushdie embraces this technique to exhibit his dissatisfaction on the officially recorded monolithic history of Kashmir. For this, he brings Shalimar the Clown, Boonyi Kaul, Max Ophuls and other fictional characters with their fantastic fictional performances as overlapping. But these were the real ones if observed minutely.

Likewise, Rushdie writes this extract to emphasize fictional portion:

She talks to Shalimar the Clown as if he was sitting right beside her,
talks to him about how he's going to kill her- as if it was some small

unimportant thing, you know? - as if it was lovers' talk, can you imagine? – sweet nothing about death. Hai- hai! She asks where he's going to stab her first and how many times and what-all- how can a person ask such questions and react as if the answer excited her, as if excuse me ji they aroused her? – and she's started saying worse things, things that will be the death not only of her but of me as well. (426)

This monologue like soliloquy is remarked by Pyarelal as the anxiety of his daughter's murder/death/suicide. He was assuaging his daughter. This symbolizes the omen that is going to take place as predicted by a prophetess called Nazarebaddoor superstitiously means 'Evil Eye' (361). All these things are happening behind the neocolonial mentality of America, indirectly related to the path leading to history. Boonyi's seduction is taken as the cause of all these happenings. Shalimar is the undermined repressive force that tries to smash the (neo)colonial power through his involvement with different groups. Though the mainstream history takes him as a terrorist and wants to kill him, Shalimar represents all the repressed and undermined people. He creates his own history that is the counterhistory brought to the fore by Rushdie to challenge the officially recorded mainstream history.

That is not all Rushdie depicts. He also binds historical and fictional events simultaneously to present the counterhistory as a challenge to the power holders who are the so-called history makers for their own interest. But, on the other hand, at the same time Rushdie presents Boonyi's performance compared with that of Anarkali's in a very fantastic, and as metafiction.

Nevertheless, at the time of American ambassador's discussion on military aid and ammunition deal for India and Pakistan, Boonyi Kaul's dance and ambassador Max Ophuls's realization that his Indian destiny would have little to do with politics,

diplomacy or arms sales, and everything to do with the far more ancient imperatives of desires (296) receives the same effect. Max's performance for his ancient imperatives of his desire even in his fifty five years of old age to his national colonial interest of politics, diplomacy or arms sales shows the victory of individuals desires over the national one. Likewise, Rushdie puts the facts of John F.Kennedy's assassination along with the fictional performance of 'bhand pather' concomitantly. Meanwhile, he shows the submission of Boonyi allegorically India that represents eastern culture to the western culture when Indian foreign minister Swaran Singh chuckles with American ambassador to India : "I can see that with you as our guide, the new India will become more pro-West than ever before" (300). This is one of the most explicit instances of self incurred tutelage of India. And America, which is waiting for that great opportunity to keep India, the most powerful country in South Asia, in its own grip, in its own control , got the grand chance to rule over India in its own consent.

Talking about history or truth and fiction or illusion, Rushdie tries to clarify it in this way:

Time itself was the servant of truth [. . .]. And if time and distance could be moved and changed, if these great things were malleable disciples of truth, then how much more easily moulded was the human self! If the so-called laws of the universe were illusions, if these fictions were no more than the fabric of the veil behind which truth was concealed, then human nature was an illusion also, and human desires and human intelligence, human character and human will, would all bow to truth's imperatives once the veil was removed. No man could face the naked truth, defy it and survive. (434-35)

Rushdie says that 'time is the servant of truth' that means that no one can write beyond time and space and no one can hold time and maintain the equal distance forever because these are the natural things for constantly moving forward. These are, therefore, the subjects of change. If time and distance are malleable things of truth, human self can also be moulded easily and the laws of the universe will function no more. Fiction is the mask veiled to conceal the truths behind it. All the human desires, wills, characters, intelligence will unveil the illusions and expose the harsh naked truth if one analyzes it closely and critically. No one can remain within the boundary of complete or pure truth and also within the periphery of complete illusion, fiction or imagination. It is hereby Rushdie binds the historical and fictional or imaginative events simultaneously to provide the more truthful effects to the readers.

In course of explaining the fact/history that stands as a pillar besides the officially recorded history which is taken as a roof, Rushdie deliberately uses some fictitious experiences to provide more details. For this, it is very important to know that the backgrounded spatial and temporal location which comes forward as foregrounded in the form of text. It is also important to inspect the hands behind writing the official history and the persons who take this as only a benefit for them and use it in the same way to stick in power by maintaining their 'status quo'. But, internally this is the way of creating a path by using power which creates discourse. As a result, this discourse creates knowledge which is ultimately considered to be truth.

Similarly, 'Kashmir is used as a discourse' by both of these countries India and Pakistan but that discourse itself is not truth. Rather it is never ending process and moves towards transformation and correlation. As far as Pakistan became successful to spread its discourse about Pakistan-governed Kashmir and in the same way India

also became successful to this mission. So, now there are two imaginary divided Kashmir(s) as a part of discourse known as Pakistan-governed Kashmir and India-governed Kashmir. As a consequent, still there is unresolved tension over the cause of Kashmir between these two most powerful countries in South Asia. However, both of these countries have been ruling Kashmir in consent despite some clashes and unending duels between these countries. That is the solid form of discourse which is never-ending process but it somehow works in consent. Thus, the meaning of anything depends on how one becomes able to make discourse that is neither true nor false in itself but gives the impression of truth. India claims Kashmir as its own vouchsafe because there is Hindu authority in power whereas Pakistan claims Kashmir as its own appendage because there is the Muslim majority in population. Therefore, there is not final truth about the belongingness of Kashmir because power cannot function in the absence of knowledge or truth and there is not any finite truth. So, one can say that power is always in the persuasion of truth.

For this, Kashmir is an ideological and cultural construct that depends on the situatedness of time and embeddedness of social practices. So, Kashmir has an open-ended aura rather than close-ended one. That's why, one can make its own definition about discourse as the subject. For this, Rushdie posits:

Ideology is primary. The infidel, obsessed with possessions and wealth, did not grasp this, and believed that men were primarily motivated by social and material self-interest. This was the mistake of all infidels, and also their weakness, which made it possible for them to be defeated. The true warrior was not primarily motivated by worldly desires, but by what he believed to be true. Economics was not primary. Ideology was primary [. . .]. Everything they thought they

knew about the nature of reality, about how things worked and what things were, was wrong. (432-33)

This extract prioritizes ideology over wealth and possessions which are only useful for those who enjoy in worldly desires as well as the most significant strength of the contemporary world is information or idea. Moreover, these are the temporary things which can be extinguished. Economically motivated people are losing themselves in the mire of mistakenly perceived nature of reality. But, on the other way, ideology is immortal. It does not give importance to any material interest and worldly desires. Rather it generates the ideas that lead the world in the path of prosperity and success.

In the same context, he further says:

Before the power of truth, every knee must bow, and then truth will protect you. Truth will keep your soul safe in the palm of its mighty hand. – In the palm of it hand- only the truth can be your father now, but through the truth you will be fathers of history. Only the truth can be my father [. . .]. Time itself was the servant of truth. (434)

In this afore-mentioned extract, Rushdie emphasizes ideology rather than any material and economic interests. So, one should not be motivated by the worldly desires. In this way, ideology creates discourses and both of these auras depend upon the interpretation of individuals. Thus, ideology and discourse are the matter of individual perceptions rather than the finite, singular one. Besides this, Rushdie talks about the power of truth as Foucault does. Truth is the ultimate power that protects from any danger. If there is the equal representation of truth and power, that will be the more truthful and convincing history.

In this way, power politics plays the crucial role to create truth which, in real sense, represents for the benefit of the elites and power-holders. These power-holders

will create discourse hegemonically to curb the marginalized and suppressed people from getting up to the mainstream. Despite this, Shalimar the Clown fights and gets the ladder to reach up to the way of success for Rushdie. Unlike Shalimar, Ophuls receives his gradual miserable downfall when he leaves India. Thus, discourse tries to spread the furor whether it is true or false.

Salman Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown* touches every aspect of the postcolonial society. It, not only, shows the impacts of political discourse but also produces embryos for post-war political allegory. In this sense, Max Ophuls, a Europe-born American ambassador to India from 1965 to 1967, represents American neocolonialism and tries to impose its power upon the just- colonial ridden and partitioned country India in its own favour. Likewise, Shalimar the Clown, indirectly stands for the reprisal and reactionary force to take action against the mainstream domineering force of the super-powers. He represents dominated local Muslim's response to the hegemonic neo-colonial power; he turns to be a violent professional murderer from an innocent Kashmiri Muslim. Boonyi, a Hindu girl married to a Muslim boy represents religious tolerance and cultural harmony at first, and then allegorizes the gullible and credulous response to American neo-colonial power- Max Ophuls. Nevertheless, India Ophuls, the hybrid child of India and America, Hindu and Christian, stands for the American legacy to interfere the Kashmiri issue as she visited Kashmir to find out the root of her origin. India, a squaw, later known as Kashmira reminds the state of war-turned Kashmir as she loses her parents and becomes independent. However, it is found quite illusive when one observes the remark of Boonyi that reads, "[t]here was no Kashmira. There was only Kashmir" (355). This remark turns her back to the sense in the mid of the miserable and pitiful state when she is made childless by Peggy Ophuls, a woman who imposes coloniality as an aide

of Max Ophuls, her husband, stands for infertile, barren, so-called civilized Western cultures having no pity and mercy at all. Even though she is a woman, whom should have kind affection and tenderness, she is cruel, rude and a virago.

To provide the real picture of Kashmir that is beyond the officially recorded history, Rushdie reluctantly adds something fanciful as an exaggeration but that helps to minimize the valorized mainstream history, i.e. officially recorded monolithic history. As a counterhistory Rushdie valorizes the neglected, hidden unsung histories, which in reality are more near to truth, i.e. the history of everyone. To this signification, Boonyi is seen like that of war-turned Kashmir and her condition is similar to that of the people who suffer from the lack of housing, clothing and eating after the war. Similarly, Shalimar the Clown is brought forth as a borderless, customless and identityless subject without ethnicity as his name 'Noman' Sher 'Noman' itself signifies that he is not a man at all. So, he crosses all the local/national, international borders to take avengement against the imperial neo-coloniality of America to show the existence of suppressed minority groups who are living in religious, cultural and ethnic tolerance, and also to make their voices heard in the mainstream culture. 'The divide and rule policy' inherited from the British coloniality (qtd. in Sugata Bosh and Ayesha Jalal 165) has the landmark role to cause fragmentation as a kernel for breaking the religio-cultural harmony among these people. Max Ophuls, a brilliant young economist, lawyer, student of international relation, the master forger of the Resistance, the ace pilot, the Jewish survivor, the American ambassador cocooned in the house of power (293) is solely responsible for all those mishaps which are spreading as bad omen as Nazarebador points out.

Shalimar the Clown as a meek person believes and follows whatever he has been endowed as inheritance at the beginning. But when he knows the external world

and his dearest wife's fraud as well as the American ambassador's cunning nature, he accidentally happens to join different criminal groups to meet his mission for raising the marginalized voices to the mainstream elite culture. From this fiction, one can be enforced to the lesson of giving at least an ear to the marginalized voices that should be properly addressed and solved. Otherwise, these suppressed voices of marginalized people would be provoked at any instant of time and the equanimity of these groups may burst out resulting mayhems, extortion, ransom killings, seductions, kidnappings and so on. There would be more Shalimar the Clown(s) or Bin Laden(s) who would be prevalent on all the communities of the world in different forms. It means that criminals do not have specific identity and they are not bound to any territory, race, culture, ethnicity, religion and so on in the age of globalization.

To look upon the techniques of writing used by Rushdie in this novel, we should move ahead by giving emphasis on allegorical mode of writing, rhetorical speech, non linear (circular) plot, settings and so on. Allegory, as a mode of writing, valorizes all the marginalized, suppressed histories; therefore, allegory is a tool of resistance. It is used to rummage particularly the embedded cultures of society. In allegorical mode of writing, the real meaning is to valorize the marginalized and suppressed cultures that are embedded in the neglected society. It is therefore, the author's best choice to use allegory as a mode of writing to portray the reality as it is.

It is basically Shalimar the Clown also known as Noman Sher Noman, one should analyze allegorically to understand Rushdie's rhetorical mode of writing. He is presented as a simple joker or clown who provides entertainment to the people by acting. But Rushdie valorizes this title character to exhibit all the histories of those underprivileged and neglected figures. Allegory, thus, emphasizes the suppressed

voices to be raised in the mainstream history, whereas symbols, unlike being allegory, accentuate the elitists' culture to maintain their status-quo.

Almost all the characters allegorically stand far beyond what they really are. The Europe-borne American ambassador to India and later French resistance hero Ophuls represents American neocolonialism. At first, he seems a mere ambassador but later his 'Tsunami' like violent nature is exposed particularly with the behaviour of an innocent Kashmiri girl Boonyi, who allegorically represents Indira Gandhi and generally whole Indian people, conspicuously leave some seeds to spring the neocolonial super-power in all over India. Boonyi stands for India indirectly that accepts self incurred tutelage. Similarly, Kashmira is not only a victim as presented in the fiction but beyond it she is presented as a rootless girl and a product of India, Pakistan and America. So, she swings like a pendulum between these countries and becomes identityless. She represents the plight of those Kashmiri women who want to blur the geographical, religio-cultural, socio-political boundaries. As a whole, America as the superpower of the world wants to lead the world in its own path. For this, America has to counter so many obstacles but moves ahead ignoring all them and in whatever it gets hurdles with; it tries to wipe out this in the name of 'ethnic cleansing'. It embraces "kill one, scare ten" (483) policy to clear its path from the obstacles that minority group arouse to make their voice heard in the mainstream elite culture. As a result, Saddam Hussein, a dictator of Iraq, had been executed.

Rushdie is even seen in defending the blasphemous charges he has been accused with by the Islamists and its supreme leader Ayatollah Khomeini when he puts, "The man he was going to kill was a godless man, a writer against God who spoke French and had sold his soul to the West. That was all he needed to know. He

should not need to ask questions. It was a simple job” (448). Besides this, Rushdie’s another extract leaves the same trace when one ponders at it:

[S]tating that owing to his poor command of the English language he had misunderstood certain statements regarding the Kashmir issue made by Maximilian Ophuls on a television talk show and had been quite erroneously driven to assassinate a man he had mistakenly thought of as an enemy of Muslims. The killing was therefore the result of an unfortunate linguistic lapse and he was consequently consumed with remorse. (610)

In this pastiche, Rushdie tries to defend himself from the charges he has been endowed with in course of writing *Midnight’s Children*. Rushdie often allegorizes it in some sense as a political matter :

Indira Gandhi had asked for and been given powers to outlaw groups that questioned Indian sovereignty over the valley. A Kashmiri girl ruined and destroyed by a powerful American gave the Indian government an opportunity to look like it would stand up and defend Kashmiris against marauders of all types – to defend the honour of Kashmir as stoutly as it would defend that of any other integral part of India [. . .], the new president, Zakir Hussain, was making angry statements in private about the godless American’s exploitation of an innocent Hindu girl. [. . .]. He was no longer the well-beloved lover of India, but her heartless ravisher [. . .]. The Vietnam war was at its height and so was American unpopularity in Asia. Draft cards were burned in Central Park and Martin Luther King led a protest march to the United Nations and in India the goddamn American ambassador

was apparently fucking the local peasantry. So war-torn America turned on Max as well, his alleged oppression of Boonyi becoming a short of allegory of Vietnam. (339-40)

This fictional seduction of the made up character Boonyi by a powerful American ambassador Max allegorizes the neocolonial imperialism of America over India. In addition to this, the historical figures like Indira Gandhi, Zakir Hussain, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, Martin Luther King going up concomitantly with these fictional characters bind history and fiction simultaneously at the same place to make it different from the officially-approved history accentuating the credible history of India, especially of Kashmir.

In course of allegorizing the fictional events with the historical ones, Rushdie even connects the historical events, i.e. the attack on Sept. 11, 2001, at Pentagon in New York by Usama Bin Laden and his group al-Quaeda. This group is marginalized one after America's exploitation when this is used for America's own benefits. And when America turned its jaundiced eye to look it especially the Muslims in different way, al-Quaeda turned against America and attacked it as retaliation. This is one of the most important factors that one should not be prejudiced against one's cultural, religious and political matters to oppress his/her customs. Otherwise, its repercussion will be like that of the attack upon Pentagon, and there will be more terrorists and terrorism all over the world. There will be more Usama Bin Laden(s)' birth, Shalimar the Clown(s)' entry will be its disguised form. Hundreds of thousand Ladens and clowns will get birth to take actions against this kind of suppression and oppression. Therefore, one should keep his/her mind open to look all the people even they are in minority or in majority. There should not be prejudices and biases for anyone. S/he should be free to keep his/her opinions without any hindrances, without

hesitation. Otherwise, the equanimity of the minority group will get burst out resulting unimaginable great disaster.

As the cause of this disaster, the attack on Sept. 11, 2001, the so-called super-power of the world, America has erected various camps in Iraq and Afghanistan with its heavy military equipments and large number of soldiers in these countries not to raise their voices against the super power. America is even waiting for a chance to attack on Iran, a Muslim country to make the Muslim minority group's voice unheard in the mainstream history. As a result, it is conspicuously, seen that the crime is not decreasing, but in contrary, it is increasing day by day, and many lives have been sacrificed in vain. There are the more terror spreading groups all over the world along with the influx of suicide bombers. They are sacrificing their lives in the name of Mashihah. But, Shalimar the Clown, though born by Muslim, negates the suicide killings thinking that it takes the innocent lives. Rushdie spreads this idea in such a way:

Shalimar the Clown had never liked the use of fideyeen suicides, which struck him as an unmanly way of making war, but Bulbul Fakh was increasingly convinced of the tactic's value and was rapidly moving from military raids of the iron commando type toward fideyeen recruiting and training activities [. . .] Shalimar the Clown who had therefore decided to make his break with the iron mullah as soon as he could think of a way of doing so that wouldn't lead to his execution for desertion. The explosions in Shirmal solved that problem. (517-18)

Shalimar is against these kinds of cruel human treatments towards other innocent people as Bulbul Fakh was. However, the explosion in Shirmal village when he was

outside solved this problem to assist this stone-hearted cruel man. When he got liberation from this man he headed towards his mission freely.

These amateur suicide attackers have kept their lives in auction in the hope of getting liberation from servile to the so-called super powers. This is also one of the vital tenets of postcolonial writing to attack back to the authority with the weapons that are provided by the countries which have the neocolonial errand inherently got as the retaliation. This also takes one back to the postcolonial reading of *The Tempest*, where the colonized Caliban uses the same language given to him by his master Prospero to abuse him. And the same language is the strong tool to strike back to the colonial authority. It also reminds one the ‘writing back’ or ‘striking back’ theory of Shalimar the Clown and even of Laden’s al-Qaeda. Both of these representatives use the same weapons that were provided to them at first to use in the favour of super-powers. However, the weapons turn against the super-powers themselves when they start neglecting these minority groups as mean, worthless, tiny and useless terror-spreading groups. As a consequence, these minority groups form other different groups to fight against those who are called the mainstream super-powers of the world as counter terrorism as Laden, and Shalimar the Clown does in this fictional text. However, this seemingly private/personal affair affects the public life all over the world. Thus, the demarcation between public and private matter has been reducing day by day.

It is important here that Rushdie has dealt with the novel in a circular plot which has enhanced the theme of the novel as he desires. The plot accentuates the war-enmeshed state of Kashmir signifying ironical strategy of Rushdie to present the then situation of Kashmir. Rushdie supplies this context at first as, “Then the ambassador was slaughtered on her doorstep like a halal chicken dinner, bleeding to

death from a deep neck wound caused by a single slash of the assassin's blade. In broad daylight!" (5). And at last, he posits the same incident in this way, "Strangely, even though the murder of Maximilian Ophuls had taken place on a bright sunny L. A. day, there were no eyewitness" (617). The plot revolving around this assassination signifies that there is not any fundamental progress in Kashmir since 1947. The narrative takes us to the roots of an assassination. In the opening scene, India Ophuls sees her illegitimate father Max Ophuls, a retired diplomat and spy, has been butchered at the entrance to her swanky Los Angeles apartment by Shalimar, ever-polite Kashmiri driver and at last that is also mentioned. Therefore, this messy and jumbled plot contributes to the theme and post-war setting of Kashmir.

Rushdie uses dark images to portray the dark sides of the war. In war, no one can win; everyone loses. He tactfully mixes the dark comedies with politics, sex and war and terror, romance and mythology, and shows the plight of this beautiful village, "Who lit the fire ?, Who burn that orchard?, Who shot those boys?, Who shot those girls? Who smashed that house?, Who knifed that aunt?, Who broke that old man's nose?, Who broke that young girl's heart?, Who killed that lover?" (503-504) are some of the representative examples for moving the readers along the novel. The condition of other war-saved refuses is not less pitiable. Moreover the heart-breaking atrocity can be generalized through this remark, "Then his beard was set on fire. Then electricity was offered to his eyes, his genitals and tongue. Afterwards he claimed to have been blinded in one eye [. . .]" (477).

The introduction of mythical and allusive portion makes the novel more engaging as:

Boonyi in the Sita role, had freely chosen to run her off with her American Ravan and willingly became his mistress and bore him a

child; and Ram- the Muslim clown, Shalimar, misplaying the part of Ram- fought no war to rescue her. In the old story, Ravan had died rather than surrender Sita. In the contemporary bowdlerization of the tale, the American had turned away from Sita and allowed his queen to steal her daughter and send her home in shame. (429)

This Muslim Ram, Shalimar and the neocolonial hegemonic American power, Max Ophuls in the role of Ravan portray the ancient myth in reverse. The new version of this old myth turns everything upside down and inside out. In old myth, Sita had been enforced by Ravan who accepted death rather than to release her. But in this modern myth, Boonyi in Sita's role freely chooses herself to run off with the American ambassador Max Ophuls in Ravan's role, who deliberately leaves her after deflowering. Meanwhile, Shalimar the Clown in Ram's role fought no war at all to release her.

In this way, Salman Rushdie in his interdisciplinary text *Shalimar the Clown* revisits the history, myth, allusion to counter the so-called truth, which is officially-approved by the authority that is in power. So, it is the interest of the power holders to write the history for their own benefit. It helps one to understand it from the marginalized people's perspective. Thus, this revisionist, rewritten history exhumes what is hidden and neglected from the side of power holders. So, Rushdie's historical fiction gives voice to the voiceless people by blurring the boundary between history and fiction or by constructing the double bind between history and fiction.

IV. Conclusion

Salman Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown* as a post-war allegory, especially allegory about post-partition Kashmir, valorizes the marginalized Kashmiris like Shalimar, Kashmira and so on and takes both histories, the history of the mainstream elite culture on the one hand and the histories of those deserted unsung heroes on the other simultaneously to expose the decades veiled history of the marginalized and underprivileged people giving equal weight to both of these histories. Rushdie revisits the officially recorded monolithic singular history of Kashmir to present the more trustworthy histories from the marginalized people's perspective. And these rewritten, revisited counter histories embody all the embedded spatial-temporal, religio-cultural, socio-political aspects of the contemporary Kashmiri society. This revisionary approach to history helps Rushdie to raise the voices of the voiceless and overview the then contemporary society very minutely.

As is the case in Rushdie's all fictions, the political conflicts with which he is primarily concerned are played out micro-cosmically in the lives of his central characters. In this instance, Western interest in Kashmir is ciphered by the European-born, Jewish American ambassador to India, Max(imilian) Ophuls, who in his younger days fought in the resistance against the Nazis, but who latter has become a secret negotiator for American interest around the globe. His involvement in Kashmir is registered through his impact upon the lives of Boonyi, whom he seduces, impregnates and abandons, and the eponymous Shalimar, her husband, who embittered by the loss of his wife becomes involved in guerrilla activities takes revenge over Ophuls, i. e. Shalimar assassinates Ophuls. This incident blurs the boundary between private and public matter.

This allegorizes how America's power seduces, its affections imprison, its commodities corrupt and it abandons after sucking what it has once taken. As a result, those neglected, minority groups form different groups to fight against the cruel, inhuman behaviours of the power holders. That produces various Shalimar the Clown(s), Usama Bin Laden(s) and his al-Queda, Lasker-a-Taiba, Talibans, LTTE and many more, resulting to the unending terror. It is, therefore, Rushdie analyzes the cultural and religious fundamentalisms as causes of oppression and secession violence particularly in Kashmir and generally in this global world. So, he critiques American neocolonial intervention over the private affair of the other countries of the world. Besides, he opines that the voices and the sentiments of the minority class should be listened and addressed properly. Otherwise, the consequences would be intolerable, unbearable as New York attack on 9/11, 2001. Further, the story of love and revenge, tussle between coloniality and independence, provocation of offensive acts are some of the repercussions of suppression to the minority groups here, especially the Islamist group baptized as religious fundamentalist by the Western world cannot be healed without understanding their sentiments and motives for being terrorism.

Therefore, Rushdie through this fiction, tries to inject the penicillin of tolerance, co-existence, love, forgiveness and understanding which are the keys to unlock the door of humanity, fraternity, brotherhood among the various religious, cultural, political groups in the global world including Kashmir of this twenty first century. This simultaneous and concomitant binding of historical and fictional events makes this historical fiction more inclusive because it gives 'voice' to the 'voiceless' and at the same time challenges the authenticity of the so-called 'official history.'

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