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Depiction of Nicaraguan Civil War: Realistic Reading of Salman Rushdie's *The Jaguar Smile*

Tribhuvan University

Depiction of Nicaraguan Civil War: Realistic Reading of Salman Rushdie's

*The Jaguar Smile*

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By

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**Letter of Approval**

This thesis entitled “Depiction of Nicaraguan Civil War: Realistic Reading of Salman Rushdie's *The Jaguar Smile*” submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Mr. Buddhi Ram Pandey has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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## Abstract

Salman Rushdie's portrayal of Nicaragua stands as a realistic picture of Nicaraguan society, history, culture and politics. *The Jaguar Smile* as a travelogue is not merely an anthology of Nicaraguan society, history and politics; it stands as a realistic picture of Nicaragua. Rushdie, through his observation, experience and visit to Nicaragua explores the real picture of Nicaragua. His visit gives birth to the realistic portrayal of Nicaraguan politics especially incorporates the issues of Sandinista, Contra and FSLN. He time and again visits the people of Nicaragua and takes information so as to make himself determined. Not only that the sorrows suffering and pains of poor people is also reflected in his work since he traces the examples of poor people who are bound to join the Contra army and get killed. Due to the twin problems— volcanic eruption and civil war and destruction, Nicaraguan socio-political scenario becomes worse. The economy of the country falls down and runs with foreign aids only. The description of the facts and realities of Nicaragua is also mingled with the geographical topography too. He finds the major cities totally ruined and countryside miserable. Remaining in the frontier, Rushdie observes the Nicaragua's socio-political and economic condition and traces out that the situation is really touching and real.

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## I. Salman Rushdie: A Prominent Literary Voice

Salman Rushdie, an Anglo Indian writer was born in 1947 June 19, almost exactly two months before India gained independence from Britain. His parents, Anis Ahmed and Negin Rushdie, were devout Muslims and Salman grew up a believer in the Islamic faith. After the partition of India and Pakistan, many of Rushdie's relatives moved to Pakistan but Salman's parents chose to remain in the predominantly Hindu and cosmopolitan city Bombay where Salman could receive a British education. At the age of 14, Rushdie left for England to attend Rugby school. He had always idealized British society, so it was a shock for him to find that he was considered an outsider at school. He was treated with hostility by both students and teachers and was often excluded from social activities. This bitter experience with racial prejudice was a shock that caused him to rethink much of what he had been taught. During this period, he poured his thoughts into a short autobiographical novel called *The Terminal Report*.

Rushdie graduated in 1968 with a Master of Arts in history with honors and returned to his family home in Karachi. He spent two successful years working at a television station, whose constant censorship frustrated him. He returned to London in 1970. His first book, *Grimus*, a novel was published in 1976 but the bizarre science fiction version of an Old Sufi poem received mixed, though most poor reviews.

His second book, *The Midnight's Children* brought him critical acclaim and the Booker Prize in 1981. Then, his third book *Shame* which criticized the leaders and society of Pakistan, also won acclaim when it was published in 1983 but not as *Midnight's Children* had received. Then after he wrote a travelogue, a short book *The Jaguar Smile*, which deals his brief trip to Nicaragua in 1986. His

later novel *The Satanic Verses* was published in 1988 and earned widespread critical praise which established and ruined Rushdie as well. *The Satanic Verses* presents a challenge against Islam and received protest from Muslims. It was immediately banned in India.

Salman Rushdie's visit to Nicaragua became a boon to write a book. He accounts the different historical records or the real life experiences, civil-war events and his own experiences. His writing is just like recording a history in the sense that the writing records the daily events especially travelogues. In the prologue of *The Jaguar Smile*, Rushdie notes:

On 27 June, the International Court of Justice in the Hague had ruled that US aid to *la Contra*, the counter-revolutionary army the CIA had invented, assembled, organized and armed, was in violation of international law. The US house of representatives, meanwhile went ahead and approved President Reagan's request for \$100 million-worth of new aid for the counter-revolution. (5)

Rushdie pictuarizes Nicaragua as fragment with war effects— the human bodies are scattered everywhere and it looks like a graveyard. The intention of Rushdie is not to fictionalize the world, but to present a fact, record, history, real life experience that he himself has seen, read or observed. He captures the picture of Nicaragua as broken with earthquake as well as by civil war and volcanic eruption which caused the loftiest buildings fallen down and it looks empty in the middle of the city which was used to be the centre.

The travelogue *The Jaguar Smile* has been read and interpreted from various perspectives. However, the approach of present study is to look at Rushdie's singular attitude towards historical political and religious aspects of

human society, effects of imperialism in terms of history, the mythologized past of the origin of Nicaragua. This research aims at finding out the answer of why Rushdie colors the novel with these issues:

I was in Nicaragua for three weeks in July. What follows, therefore, is a portrait of a moment, no more, in the life of the beautiful, volcanic country. I did not go to Nicaragua intending to write a book, or indeed, to write at all; but my encounter with the place affected me so deeply that in the end I had no choice. (5)

It also portrays the war events and destruction of war. Rushdie beautifully presents the war, destruction, natural hazards and the lifestyle of people in the then Nicaraguan society. He records the destruction as "Managua sprawled around its own corpse. Eighty percent of the city's buildings had fallen down in the great earthquake of 1972, and cost of what used to be the centre was now an emptiness" (7).

*The Jaguar Smile* aims to analyze the journalistic, non-totalized and open ended form of realistic discourse to justify his argument on socio-political mapping of Nicaragua. By bringing various discourses like that of historical, political, religious and national, Rushdie privileges a totalistic form of discourse i.e. Realism to make a point that a single discourse about any truth is insignificant. Thus, he wants to excavate the realistic vision of Nicaragua. When he was in Nicaragua, he visited most of the places, famous persons, writers and recorded a real picture of Nicaragua, its people, and their feelings.

Rushdie asserts his novel champions "doubts, on certainties". "It dissents from the end of debate, of dispute, of dissent (*Imaginary Homelands* 396). To oppose certainties of all kinds whether they originate in the east or the west,



Rushdie is clearly positioning himself as a writer in the world where nothing can be asserted with assurance. "I am a modern, and modernist, urban man," he insists in the same essay, "accepting uncertainty as the only constant, change as the only sure thing" (404-05). This refusal to countenance any of the grand narratives that have governed eastern or western civilization is precisely the stance that Jean Francois Lyotard identifies as central to the postmodern condition.

Rushdie in his travelogue tries to excavate the war-torn socio-political and economic condition of Nicaragua. Remaining in the frontier, Rushdie tries to portray the realistic picture of Nicaragua. The excavation of Rushdie shows the socio-political realism. He tries to present the picture of Nicaragua that is in the vicious circle. The people have no other choice than to contribute the nation despite of ruler and party member's corruption.

Salman Rushdie's novel *The Jaguar Smile* has received different criticisms from different scholars, critics and intellectual persons. Some of the critics argue that *The Jaguar Smile* is a masterpiece of sympathetic yet critical reporting. Some view it as a journalistic writing like newspaper, some criticize the novel for its filthy expression. Sabina Sawhney and Simona Sawhney argue on the writing of Rushdie:

When Rushdie, implicitly identifying with Muslims and Pakistanis, calls for a secular political space in Islamic societies, or when he condemns the corruption and tyranny of many Islamic governments, it is easy to agree with him. (434)

Rushdie's works deal with the politics and corruption of government which is a realistic issue in the then Nicaragua. Rushdie further condemns that the Islamic governments are corrupted which resulted the painful life of Islamic countries and is the sole cause of Islamic countries' backwardness:

Certainly Rushdie is not the first writer to present us with a set of political writings incongruent with the general trajectory of his work. But since he is a public figure writing on current events, and since the issues he addresses are so relevant to postcolonial studies, we felt we could not ignore his recent journalistic writings. (437)

Rushdie is not the first writer to present a political agenda in his writings rather he is a public figure who writes about the things happened in the society. Rushdie also takes risks while telling the truths like in *The Satanic Verses*. Rushdie's intention of denoting politics is to criticize the way politics is practiced in Islamic countries, the corruption of government, the non-loyalty towards public are visualized in his book *The Jaguar Smile*. Furthermore, the civil war that is going on and on is another problematic issue which appeared as an obstacle for socio-economic progress of Nicaragua. Supporting the writing of Rushdie's earlier novels they further assert:

Rushdie's earlier novels tend to represent symbolically the brutalization of individuals in the form of stigmatic mutilations. He introduces a cast of troubled freaks, victims either of nature, culture, or both, into his inclement, if mythical or stylized, socio-historical landscapes and lets them wander in search of respite, and, perchance, salvation. (373)

Rushdie's earlier novels tried to visualize the brutality of leaders/ rulers. The symbolic presentation of troubles, victimized people and culture are some of the features of earlier novels. But, the later novels are much changed which Ahmad Sadri views:

Mr. Rushdie's "sentence" of execution. To be forgotten is not what Rushdie wishes for. A resolution of the crisis which now seems to

be within reach presupposes the continued interest of a section of the educated public. The most likely members of such a group are those scholars who have a professional interest in intercultural exchanges as well as the many emigre intellectuals and cultural hybrids whose very intellectual existence is set in terms of cultural cross-currents. (371)

Rushdie has interest in resolving the problems and crisis with the help of education. Rushdie also talks about the scholar's professional interest in intercultural exchanges— the exchange of culture, religion and the societal behaviours of different groups. As Rushdie goes on observing the culture of Nicaragua, Sadri further comments on Rushdie's writing:

Salman Rushdie's own contributions to the interpretation of his work seem to provide material for an exceptionally intriguing debate, especially because his readers can take into account the character of his apologies ?aimed as they are at softening the somewhat exaggerated public image of his work ?and adjust for it. Even after making such an adjustment however, my own reading of the motives behind Rushdie's fiction diverges significantly from his own declarations of intent. That the author is not necessarily aware of all the tensions and significations inherent in his work is a canon of literary criticism to which Rushdie subscribes explicitly both and implicitly. (372)

Rushdie frankly admits his writing style and interprets his own works. He provides material for an exceptionally intriguing debate because his readers can take into account the character of his apologies. He is capable of making adjustments in front of the public. But the fact Sadri sees is his adjustments

cannot last longer that is to say that Rushdie's declarations go just reverse. It shows the inherent tension in his works and much criticism from the public as well as from the literary and religious canon. In this context, John C. Swan praises Rushdie for being able to cope with different place, culture, religion because Rushdie has an experience of cultures from first world as well as from the third world countries. As Swan asserts:

It is not false that Rushdie has shown himself capable of being infatuated with the Left-he is excessively uncritical of the Sandinistas in his nonfiction *The Jaguar Smile*, for instance-but summing his worldview up in terms of his leftist prejudices is falsifying. It is not true to the rich complexity of his immigrant outsider's outrage at the political leadership that contributed so unrelentingly to the suffering of the powerless in the various countries he knows best. (436)

Rushdie is himself capable of being infatuated with the left especially uncritical of Sandinistas. Swan sees that the powerless Sandinistas have been suffering in their own country whereas the Left is waiting to grab the chance of being victimized. Rushdie portrays the power of Sandinistas in the various situations with the critical eyes. Swan further asserts:

His eloquent advocacy of the Palestinians, immigrant Pakistanis and Indians, Sandinistas, the dissident and the dispossessed, emerges from his experience and in his language, with all their limitations in terms of that which is excluded from his frame of reference. But for all of that, his portrayals of the political and social conditions of the people he has championed are no less valid in what they do communicate. (436)

Rushdie's writing about the Palestinians, immigrant Pakistanis and Indians, Sandinistas came from his own life experience since he is also one of the expatriates. Swan sees Rushdie excluded from his frame of reference. Being Muslim, Rushdie cannot live in his own country and have to fly to Europe. Swan also vies that though the portrayal of political and social conditions of the people are beautifully presented they are no less valid. Rushdie's portrayal lacks the validity. He further writes:

As information professionals, we have constructed indexes, thesauri, and other tools of storage and retrieval that often reflect the specialization and fragmentation of knowledge and literature so busily carried out by the specialized, narrowly focused clients we serve. Inevitable? No doubt-jargon must be employed to retrieve jargon. But the need for a more connective, even a holistic, approach to a vast array of pressing problems in our political, economic, and physical environments is now obvious to nearly everyone. (441)

But connecting oneself with the root and defining as such is problematic. In this regard Salman Rushdie, a problematic critic of Muslim orthodoxy, expresses his bitter reality: "That it is my present that is foreign, and the past is home albeit a lost home in a lost city in the mists of lost time"(9). Regarding the condition of postcolonial writer caused by the globalization process, Rushdie further writes:

It may be that writers in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates, are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim, to look back, . . . But if we do look back, we must also do so in knowledge which gives rise to profound uncertainties—that our physical alienation from India almost inevitably means that we

will not be capable of reclaiming precisely the thing that was lost; that we will, in short, create fictions, not actual cities or villages, but invisible ones, imaginary homelands, India as of the mind. (10)

So, the effort to recreate the home, to some or a greater extent, has given rise to a sense of hopelessness.

Though *The Jaguar Smile* has received some of the criticisms it remains to be studied from the point of view of socio-political realism. The excavation of the political and social realism with regard to Nicaragua remains to be explored and is the virgin territory. Thus, the present research will explore the realistic presentation of the *The Jaguar Smile*; as it visualizes the image of Nicaragua after the volcanic eruption and civil war and its destruction. The horrible lives of the Nicaraguan can be viewed through it. The present research focuses on the issue of socio-political realism along with the realistic and valid inferences as captured by Rushdie.

The research is divided into four chapters where the first chapter deals with the background of *The Jaguar Smile*, literature review and the justification of the present study. The second chapter deals with the methodological tool of the study i.e. Realism. The third chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of facts. In order to justify the hypothesis of the study, this chapter will excavate the realistic features in the travelogue *The Jaguar Smile*. The final and the fourth deals with the conclusion of the entire study. At the end of the study works cited will be enclosed.

### **1.1 Rushdie and Realism**

Broadly defined as the faithful representation of reality or verisimilitude, realism is a literary technique practiced by many schools of writing. Although strictly speaking, realism is a technique, it also denotes a particular kind of subject matter,

especially the representation of middle-class life. A reaction against romanticism, an interest in scientific method, the systematizing of the study of documentary history and the influence of rational philosophy all affected the rise of realism. Where the romanticists transcend the immediate to find the ideal and the naturalists plumb the actual or superficial to find the scientific laws that control its action, realists center their attention to a remarkable degree on the immediate, the here and now, the specific action, and the verifiable consequence.

Realism is an attempt to reproduce the actual world in literature. It arose in 19th century as a reaction against the sentimental, supernatural and optimistic elements of romanticism. Realists generally choose the common or ordinary for subject matter and they focus on the presentation of character instead of on plot. In drama, Henric Ibsen, and Anton Chekhov, are responsible for the turn to realism on stage; Guy de Maupassant, Henry James and Edith Wharton are forerunners of realism in fiction.

Realism is a mode of writing that gives the impression of recording or reflecting faithfully an actual way of life. The term refers to a more general attitude that rejects idealization, escapism and other extravagant qualities of romance in favor of recognizing soberly actual problems of life.

Realism, in fact captures the accurate image of society or the world of everyday life. It captures the things as it is of a fixed place and period. It usually refers more specifically to a writer's accuracy in portraying the speech and behaviour of a character or a group of characters from a low socio-economic class.

*The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* defines realism as:

A mode of writing that gives the impression of recording or 'reflecting' faithfully an actual way of life. The term refers, sometimes

confusingly, both to a literary method based on detailed accuracy of description (i.e. verisimilitude) and to a more general attitude that rejects idealization, escapism, and other extravagant qualities of romance in favour of recognizing soberly the actual problems of life. (281)

For Auerbach, realism is die literary form which finds the workaday life of men and women supremely valuable in itself. One of the earliest examples of this in English writing can be found in Wordsworth and Coleridge's *Lyrical Ballads*, which, in however idealizing a form, speaks up for the common life as a source of creativity. The novel for Auerbach is an incipiently democratic kind of all, hostile to what he sees as the static, hierarchical, dehistoricized, socially exclusive art of classical antiquity. Ramon Seldon, on his discussion about "Soviet Socialist Realism" states:

The doctrine expounded by the union of Soviet writers (1932-34) was a codification of Lenin's pre-revolutionary statements as interpreted during the 1920" (Seldon 27). Art and literature propounded by Soviet Socialist writers against formalist theorists was founded upon the nineteenth century tradition of Russian realism. (27-34)

The Soviet Socialist Realism as a doctrine to Seldon is codified with the flavor of Lenin's revolutionary statements. The literature, art and creativity of the socialist writers is supposed to be against formalist theorists.

Goldmann builds up his theoretical promise on the ground that, "a society comprises of different classes of people, ranging from the reactionary to the revolutionary: all having their own world out-look" (62). David Forgace discusses Goldman's theory and genetic model as "it is centered on the origins, causes and determinates" (183). According to him, "Goldmann is of the opinion that literary



works are not the expression of "the author's self but of the social class of which the author is member." In some way they are the collective products" (184).

Realism in the sense of verisimilitude—truth to the —is not necessarily revolutionary. As Bertolt Brecht remarked, putting a factory on stage will tell you nothing about capitalism,

If realism means showing the world as it really is, rather than how some ancient Egyptian priest or medieval knight conceived of it, then we are instantly in trouble, since how the world is a subject of fierce contention. Suppose some future civilization were to discover a copy of Samuel Beckett's play *Endgame*, in which two elderly characters spend their time sitting in dustbins. They would not be able to tell whether the play was realist or non-realist simply by looking at it.

It is dangerous, then, to talk about realism as representing 'life as it really is', or 'the experience of the common people'. Both notions are too controversial to be used so lightly. Realism is a matter of representation; and you cannot compare representations with 'reality' to check how realistic they are, since what we mean by 'reality' itself involves questions of representation- Anyway, what is so impressive about 'realist' representations? Why are we so struck by an image of a pork chop that looks exactly like a pork chop? Partly, no doubt, because we admire the skill which goes into forging the resemblance. But perhaps also because of a fascination with mirroring and doubling which lurks deep in the human psyche and which lies at the roots of magic. In that sense realism, which Auerbach sees as the most mature of forms, may also be the most regressive. What was intended as an alternative to magic and mystery may itself be a prime example of them.

Not all novels are realist, but realism is the dominant style of the modern English novel. It is also the yardstick of so many critical judgments. Literary characters who are not 'realistic', in the sense of being credible, animated, well rounded and psychologically complex, are generally awarded low marks by the critical establishment. It is not clear where this leaves Sophocles's *Teirrsias*, the Macbeth witches, Milton's God, Swift's Gulliver, Dickens's Fagin or Beckett's Pozzo. Realism is a kind of art congenial to an ascendant middle class, with its relish for the material world, its impatience with the formal, ceremonial and metaphysical; its insatiable curiosity about the individual self; its robust faith in historical progress. In his classic study *The Rise of the Novel*, Ian Watt regards all of these as reasons why the modern English novel emerged in the eighteenth century. He also adduces the middle-class interest in individual psychology, its secular and empiricist view of the world, and its devotion to the concrete and specific. As far as the Ceremonial is concerned, it is also worth noting that the novel is not an 'occasional' form, like those masques, odes or elegies written—perhaps for an aristocratic patron—for special occasions. This, too, is a mark of its routine rather than patrician status.

As Roland Barthes comments:

The real is not representable, and it is because men ceaselessly try to represent it by words that there is a history of literature . . . literature is categorically realist, in that it never has anything but the real as its object of desire; and I shall say now, without contradicting myself. . . that literature is quite is stubbornly unrealistic: it considers sane its desire for the impossible. (224)

The situation which Lukacs depicts in *Theory of the Novel* is truer of the twentieth century modernist novel than of the nineteenth-century realist one. 'I lie

great works to nineteenth-century realism, from *Pride and Prejudice* to *Middlemarch*, are still able to relate fact and value, objective and subjective, inner and outer, individual and society, however much these relations may be under strain. As such, they spring from a buoyant, dynamic episode of middle-class history. It is this history which Lukacs's later work on literary realism is concerned to investigate. It is only when middle-class civilization enters upon a major crisis, one which is at its height from the close of the nineteenth century to the end of the First World War. That literary modernism arises, and the novel shifts from being a primarily comic to a predominantly tragic form.

In *Realism in the Balance* (1938) Lukacs' defense of literary realism the initial intent of Lukacs' essay *Realism in the Balance*, stipulated at its outset, is to debunk the claims of those who depend Expressionism as valuable literary movement. He maintains that this dialectical relation exists between the "appearance" of events as subjective, unfettered experience and their "essence" as provoked by the objective totality of capitalism. Lukacs explains:

Good realists, such as Tomas Mann, create a contrast between the consciousness of their characters appearance and a reality only as it appears to themselves and their characters Mann succeeds because he creates this contrast, conversely, modernist writers fail because they portray reality only as it appears to themselves and their characters subjectively. (78)

The realist novel represents one of the great revolutionary cultural forms of human history. In the domain of culture, it has something like the importance of steam-power or electricity in the material realm, or of democracy in the political sphere. For art to depict the world in its everyday, unregenerate state is now so

familiar that it is impossible to recapture its shattering originality when it first emerged. In doing so, art finally returned the world-to the common people who had created it through their labour, and who could now contemplate their own faces in it for the first time. A form of fiction had been born in which one could be proficient without specialist erudition or an expensive classical education. As such, it was especially available to groups like women, who had been cheated of such an education and shut out from such expertise.

Realism has been responsible for a massive impoverishment of language as much as for an enrichment of it, as the average novel published nowadays in the USA or UK bears dismally uneloquent witness. The use of language as a pick and shovel is one of the least endearing aspects of contemporary realism.

Although Realism grew as a dominant literary tendency only in the eighteenth century, its roots can be traced back to as early as the 1st century AD. The detailed rendering of everyday objects on the wall of Pompeii, a first century art work, is among the earliest of the realistic representation of life in art. The art of Jean Baptise Semeon Chardin (1699-1779) "anticipate many of the concern of the 19th century Realists."

One very important aspect of the realistic writing is that it should be based on local color, whose implication moves from socialized to a more generalized meaning and finally gains a universal connotation. According to M.H. Abrams, local color is the "detailed representation in prose fiction of the setting, dialect, customs, dress and ways of thinking and feeling which are distinctive of a particular region" (145). Readers wanted to know what their country looked like in reality, and how the varied races which made up their growing population, lived and talked. In fact, "it was the age of the first mappings and surveying of the west; it was the age in which the rails

of the first transcontinental railroad had bound East and West (Reuben 1). Realists hold that human have a certain degree of force that they can exercise to affect their situations. Realism is intimately linked with Naturalism. Majority of the naturalistic writings deal with the theme of survival, determinism, violence and taboo, which are also to a great extent, the themes of realistic writings. The main vent of the movement is that human beings gain nothing by exercising free will, as it is an illusion, and man in totality is guided and governed by predetermined destinies and the natural environment he lives. The writings of Stephen Crane, John Steinbeck, James T. Farrell, John Dos Passos, Richard Wright, Norman Mailer and Saul Bellow can be especially mentioned as the representative examples of the naturalist American writers.

The basic disagreement of realism is that is with romanticism. This is obvious because realism developed in France as a reactionary movement against the dominant romantic tendencies in art. Romantics do not consider the realities of the world enough to trigger creativity. They do not find reconciliation with the worldly realities and often find refuge in the imaginary world. Baudelaire has contrasted realism with romanticism as "I consider it useless and tiresome to portray things as they are because nothing that exists satisfies me. Nature is ugly, and I prefer the monsters of my imagination to the tiredness of actuality." (622)

Realism differs from romanticism particularly in its emphasis on an objective presentation of details and events than a subjective concentration on personal feelings, perceptions and imagining of various characters. Realists also reject the idealized perceptions, imaginative and exotic setting, and improbable plot twist characteristics of romance. They often rely heavily on local color, deliberately attempting to portray

faithfully the custom, speech, dress and living and working conditions of their chosen locale.

Bruce King takes the account of Rushdie's presentation of realism as:

I am surprised how seldom Rushdie is concerned with ideas, esthetics, or world politics; the interviews are mostly about himself and his art, especially problems of narrative technique in each of his books [. . .] Rushdie's reading appears to be mostly in fiction and in research for his books rather than in ideas (159).

The interviewer is surprised about the ideas, issues and the world politics that Rushdie grasps and presents in a that reveals the real social phenomenon— a fact, a truth and a singular notion of world. King further observes Rushdie's works as:

Rushdie usually spoke of himself as a Marxist when he really meant something like trendy British version of a liberal. He was against American involvement in Vietnam and Nicaragua; for similar reasons he was against oppression in India and Pakistan. (160)

Rushdie, as a spokesperson tries to present the society as it is. He tries to capture the minute details of society where people are divided into bourgeois and proliterates. The writing of Rushdie, usually centres around the problems of people from margin that is to say, Rushdie frequently chases his eyes after social phenomenon, social reality and social dogma. Rushdie whets up himself in order to excavate the mutality of margin against the voices of center. The reality for him can be grasped from the margin, the laymen.

Fawzia Afzal Khan mentions the interview of Rushdie in New York Times, interview where Rushdie claims his writing to be a radical work as a social reality as a socio-economic phenomenon. Khan mentions, "Rushdie asserts in the New York

Times interview, is "massive elephantine", and consequently "uncontainable" in any form (p.22). Thus, the "epic" form becomes a "strategy of liberation" - - - but a "comic" one because the tragedy it masks is too painful to be otherwise expressed; also a mythical and surreal strategy because "Realism" says Rushdie later on in *Shame*, "would break a writer's heart" (138)

Khan mentions that Rushdie as he is criticized for his earlier writings pays the debt to the world when he writes *Shame*. The "Realism" as presented by Rushdie is not less painful to the literary canon in general and the western writers in particular. As it is said that "The truth is painful", the revelation of Rushdie's realism is as much painful as if it is a truth. The truth, which reveals the fact, unbiased and unfortunate realities, becomes painful.

George Lukacs talks about the reality as a social and political phenomenon. He argues that when the superficial one comes into the contact of Reality, it ceases to exist. He says, "By seeking inner harmony men cut themselves off from society's struggle. Such "harmony" is illusory and superficial; it vanishes at any serious contact with reality" (203). Commenting on Rushdie's style of using imagination for the depiction of realities, Sadik J. Al-Azm writes:

I find in Rushdie's imaginative depictions of contemporary realities, a reassuring measure of healthy cynicism which makes whole again, because it never degenerates into fashionable pessimism and/or nihilism. His admirable critical ironic detachment prevents his satire from becoming a mere camouflage for despair and guards his art against the pitfalls of dogmatizing and moralizing anew. (8)

Al-Azm grasps the idea of imagination that Rushdie uses as a depiction of reality, a real world view. Depicting on the same argument, he also says that the

righting of Rushdie stand up above the camouflage or despair. It prevents art from being pitfall or dogmatized by generating a moralizing new idea, world or view. Commenting on the issue of Rushdie's liberal tolerance and his later works Talal Ashad says, "This is no time for liberal tolerance. Contrary to what reviewers have said about the book, Rushdie's latter reading insists that its message is not doubt but conviction, not argument but war". (243)

Rachel Falconer writes, "Considering the city as a chronotope, what is interesting about Rushdie's Bombay is the tension between its two roles, the one historical and material, the other mythic and extra temporal. Rushdie's work is often classed as "magical realist." (473)

Considering the aforementioned commentaries from the prominent literary voices, the researcher came to the point that it is essential to conduct a study and to excavate the realistic issues that Rushdie captured being objective, truthful and unbiased in his presentation of the worldly picture of Nicaragua. The focal point of the researcher is to adopt realism as a basic methodological tool to analyze Rushdie's *The Jaguar Smile* in order to establish a new critical point— a brilliancy in the contemporary study of Realism.



## II. An Outsider's View: Realistic Portrayal of Nicaragua

This chapter makes an explorative study of Salman Rushdie's *The Jaguar Smile* in order to prove it as a realistic text. The depiction of reality in the travelogue of Rushdie makes verisimilitude to the contemporary Nicaraguan society and politics as well as war destruction and counter revolution. Rushdie, remaining in the frontier observes the society, culture, politics and other social issues in order to give a stance of reality in painting of Real Nicaragua. What Rushdie writes is that he had never written before that is to say the reality different from place to place and context to context and, Rushdie makes general survey of political events, social events and presents the objective reality of Nicaragua depicting on the theory of unbiased, unfortunate and the fact. He more or less tries to make himself unbiased in his writing. He writes, "I did not go as a wholly neutral observer. I was not a blank slate" (4). Regardless of his intention of being neutral observer, he might somewhere mentioned the unreal but what he makes most of the time is real. For his mistake in writing, he asks for an excuse. He writes, "There are one or two small howlers. In the account of the death of Julio Buitrago, I gave the impression that Doris Tijerino, among others, died with him. At the very moment I wrote this, Ms Tijerino was alive and occupying a prominent public position. Sorry, Doris." (xvi) Thus, what made Rushdie sorry are the petty mistakes in his writing. One might argue on the basis of such rehearsal of blames to claim it as a fiction but will not last for long in front of real. The depiction of reality has already covered the face of fictional quality in *The Jaguar Smile*.

The experience of Rushdie has been portrayed in his *The Jaguar Smile* as he himself visits Nicaragua. The real portrayal of Nicaragua influences him to write. He asserts:

I was in Nicaragua for three weeks in July. What follows, therefore, is a portrait of a moment, no more, in the life of that beautiful, volcanic country. I did not go to Nicaragua intending to write a book, or, indeed to write at all; but my encounter with the place affected me so deeply that in the end I had no choice. (5)

Thus, what is there in Nicaragua has been portrayed in his travelogue. The real way of life of Nicaragua and the actual scenario has been presented in his travelogue.

Supporting the argument of Rushdie, William J. Long observes the term realism as:

In realism— that is, the representation of men exactly as they are, the expression of the plain unvarnished truth without regard to ideals or romance— the tendency was at first thoroughly bad [ . . . ] they saw only the externals of man, his body and appetites, not his soul and its ideals, and so [ . . . ] they resemble a man lost in the woods, who wanders aimlessly around in circles, seeing the confusing trees but never the whole forest, and who seldom think of climbing the nearest high hill to get his bearings. Later, however, this tendency to realism became more wholesome. (240)

Long opines that the realism is a board term and it should be excavated thoroughly because whatever we search we many not find in surface level or if we see too, that may not be what we wanted.

In the same way, Rushdie's attempt of finding out the reality can be supported with his own visit to Nicaragua. His observation with his own eyes, and his own experience with people of Nicaragua can give a real picture; a socio-political and geographic scenario.

In a more concrete way, the geographical information and the landscape also represents the reality of Nicaragua. What happens when the earthquake comes, we can realize here with Rushdie as he portrays life as it really is in Nicaragua. The portrayal of Rushdie generates a sense that same things might happen to us in near future. As Rushdie gives the real picture of Nicaragua he goes on describing the geography of the city as, "Managua sprawled around its own corpse. Eight per cent of the city's buildings had fallen down in the great earthquake of 1972, and most of what used to be the center was now emptiness" (7). The depiction of the reality presented in his travelogue is further accelerated by the description of people of Nicaragua. He finds cities of Nicaragua filled with dead bodies, if not with emptiness and destruction.

Rushdie further continues his exploration of reality with the reduction of population because of the civil war. He writes:

Nicaragua's population was under three million, and the war continued to reduce it. In my first hours in the city streets, I saw a number of sights that were familiar to eyes trained in India and Pakistan: the capital's few buses, many of them donated quite recently in Alfonsin's new Argentina, were crammed to bursting-point which people who hung off them in a very subcontinental way. (8)

Rushdie, furthermore, gives a glimpse of Nicaragua's population which is about three millions and the effect of war has reduced it. He observes the realities in city streets. He also notices few buses which are donated recently by different countries. It is obvious that when there are calamities, funds come for help and capital's few buses are one of the examples of it.

Supporting the portrayal of Rushdie's reality John Abrams says that realism "represent (s) life as it really is. Realistic fiction, he opines, is "writing to give effect

that it represents life and the social world as it seems to the common reader, evoking the sense that its characters might in fact exist, and that things might well happen" (127).

Realism, it would appear, is out of favour because the ordinary readers get delighted in the exotic and extravagant, 'the irony is that the novel in form is wedded to the common life, whereas the common people themselves prefer the monstrous and miraculous.

The depiction of objective and historical reality can be traced from Rushdie's travelogue as he goes on writing as if he is a news reporter. He traces the example of historical fact as:

The killing of some 20,000 Nicaraguans until he himself was shot, at a ball in Leon, by the poet Rigoberto Lopez (who was himself killed by the National Guard an instant later); and that, after a brief period of (slight) liberalization under one of Tacho I's sons, Luis, the other son resumed normal Somoza operations in 1967. (11)

The reportage of the killing of sum 20000 Nicaraguans and the devotion of Nicaraguans show that it is the socio-political reality that people cannot tolerate their brothers, sisters, father and mothers lying dead in front of them. Thus, the violence goes on and on in Nicaragua with the protest against Sandinistas. To make it more vivid Rushdie writes, "The bunker was the reality of totalitarianism, its hideous remnant and reminder" (11). Rushdie portrays that the bunker that Somoza used to dominate the people, shows the reality of totalitarianism. The hideous outlook of the bunker is the symbol as well as reality that some violence is going on in there.

Rushdie also shows the corruption of Somoza. It is obvious that in a transitory phase, the state is full of corruption. Rushdie asserts the corruption of Somoza as,

"The road to Camoapa was made of brick, like many roads in Nicaragua. Somoza used to own a brick factory. After the '72 earthquake he insisted that the nation's through fares be reconstructed in Presidential bricks, when he then sold to the nation at high prices" (16). It shows that Somoza used to own the brick factory and used to sell the bricks to nation at high prices which shows the poor reality of Nicaragua. Rushdie also finds the phrase that he heard time and again during his stay. He asserts: "Many thousands of ordinary Nicaraguans had already been given AK-47 automatic rifles as well as other hardware. If the Pentagon could be convinced that the US body count would be high, it might make an attack politically unsealable. Nicaragua will not be like Grenada for them" (19).

This is what Rushdie portrays the social reality of Nicaragua when the Contra Army was brutal in their act, the ordinary people snatched the rifles and now they own it. The protest of the ordinary people as well as revolutionary group Sandinistas use those rifles turning against the brutality of Somoza regime. Rushdie shows that different business companies have drawn back their services and equipments calling Nicaragua an impoverished country:

IBM had withdrawn all service facilities from Nicaragua, obliging an already impoverished country to change, at great expense, from IBM computers to others, less ideologically motivated brands. (What would become, I wondered, of the IBM word processor Serigo Ramirez had shown me with all the eagerness and pride of a new-technology nut?) Most recently, Oxfam America had been prevented by the Regan administration from sending a \$41000 shipment of seeds, hoes and farm equipment to Nicaragua. (24)

It shows that different business companies rolled back their services and equipments from Nicaragua. The agricultural equipments which are about to sold were halted calling Nicaragua an impoverished country which cannot afford such computer technologies and agricultural instruments. This shows that the great volcanic disruption and civil war became the problems of Nicaragua which destructed the entire city Managua. The dependency of Nicaragua is also revealed when it is found running with funds and imports:

There was a shortage of beans in Managua (Imagine Italy running out of pasta). Some day it was hard to get corn to make tortillas. Inflation was close to 500%, and prices had gone crazy. It could cost you six head of cattle to get your truck serviced. The economy was hugely dependent on imports. (25)

It shows that Nicaragua had gone worse in its economic development. The shortage of beans and the high prices of goods can be the examples of such instable economy. Due to the high prices of cannot afford the goods especially machinery goods i.e. truck. In addition, Rushdie further coins the examples from some newspaper or from economic report of Nicaragua as he writes:

In the five years of the war, the Nicaraguan economy had suffered an estimated \$2 billion-worth of damage. In 18985 Nicaragua's total exports had been valued at \$300 million; imports ran at \$900 million. Two billion dollars was roughly the same as one year's gross national product. So Nicaragua had lost one entire year's production in the last five, with most of the damage occurring in the second half of that period. (25)

Rushdie takes support of newspaper or journal and states that in the last five years of the war, the economy of Nicaragua have experienced aghast that damaged about \$2 billion. In the same way, Rushdie extracts the line that states the numerical fact that in 1985, Nicaragua's total export was \$300 billion and imports \$900 billion. The damage as the calculation reveals that one year's national growth has been lost.

On the other hand, the US contra is trying to persuade surrounding countries like Honduras and Costa Rica for breaking their diplomacy with Nicaragua. The political strategy of US is revealed as:

I can see the break of diplomatic relations with the US coming very soon' he said. 'It's even possible that the US may persuade Honduras, Costa Rica and Salvador to break with us as well. They can't get the support of all the states in the region for an invasion, so it seems they want to set up a little mini-group, and then that mini-group can invite them to attack us. But the Nicaraguans would never be the ones to make the diplomatic break. It's our position that a dialogue is essential'.

(47)

The Nicaraguans, despite the loss of national growth and apocalyptic disasters like volcano, are ready to fight against the US. They do not want their nationality to be snatched by others. They cannot let their country ruined by others. The Nicaraguan people do not want US invasion. Supporting the argument of Rushdie, Bruce King observes Rushdie's works as:

Rushdie usually spoke of himself as a Marxist when he really meant something like trendy British version of a liberal. He was against American involvement in Vietnam and Nicaragua; for similar reasons he was against oppression in India and Pakistan. (160)

It is the social reality that one never wants to lose the dignity, pride and national voice. So, the Nicaraguan people naturally opposed the US invasion especially fighting against the Contra.

Excavating the reality on the basis of Rushdie's own observation, he notes down the reality as he has seen there:

The reality is that these people have been funded, are being funded, and will continue to be funded. And they give you trouble. Those are facts'. He then said he thought Father Miguel looked pretty intelligent.

'And intelligent men don't want trouble. And you've got trouble. (50)

It shows that the Nicaraguan people have been funded, are being funded and will be funded. The economy of Nicaragua in such a chaos situation cannot take rapid progress. Thus, it certainly depends on funds provided by different countries. The reality, as Rushdie observes that they are funded and will be funded. This shows that the future of Nicaragua is not a bright since they have to depend on others. The infrastructure is totally damaged for the economic progression.

The issue of press right is also raised by Rushdie since he finds press are funded by others. The press also cannot run independently:

All countries have the right to censor the press in wartime, La Prensa was being financed by the CIA: it was an important part of the US strategy of opening an internal front, just as they did with the paper El Mercurio during the destabilization campaign against the Allende government in Chile. (51)

Rushdie also explores that the press is also captured by CIA. The CIA is working for the US strategy of opening an internal front. The fund was definitely some sort of domination. In a situation like that, the press is also controlled by others. The money



has played a central role to control press, politics and the whole nation. As Rushdie comes to elicit the example of Chili where also EI Mercurio was also funded, came to an end with campaign against the government. Rushdie also observes the paper used for publishing newspapers. He comments that the paper of such newspapers, are also of very poor quality. He writes, "I've lived in a country, Pakistan, in which the press is censored from the right, by a military regime. And to tell the truth the papers there are better than they are here" (52).

Rushdie comes to observe the newspapers which are funded by some organization are of poor quality. The quality also revealed the economic status of such newspapers which are totally dependent on others and whatever they receive. They have managed with what they receive from others.

Rushdie, as a writer telling the truth, reveals his own experience of banishment from his own country for writing *The Satanic Verses*. He also sees the possibilities of negative reaction to *The Jaguar Smile* from the state. His eagerness to write tell the truth to whole world is being revealed by himself:

I had spent my entire life as a write in opposition, and had indeed conceived the writer's role as including the function of antagonist to the state. I felt distinctly peculiar about being on the same side as the people in charge, but I couldn't avoid the truth: if I had been a Nicaraguan writer, I would have felt obliged to get behind the Frente Sandinista, and push. (53)

He shares his own experience that he writes in opposition. His role is generally about the truths as truth is painful, he tries to 'excavate the painful side'. Here, too he states that he is also ready to sacrifice for he is committed to write truth. He advocates on the side of people in charge because he could not avoid the truth. And, truth for him is

on the side of people in charge, the minorities and the general laymen. Supporting the argument of Rushdie, Lukacs explains realism in this way:

Good realists, such as Tomas Mann, create a contrast between the consciousness of their characters appearance and a reality only as it appears to themselves and their characters Mann succeeds because he creates this contrast, conversely, modernist writers fail because they portray reality only as it appears to themselves and their characters subjectively. (78)

Rushdie also observes the countryside in Nicaragua where he finds very few vehicles running in the roads. He also observes that the cattle and dogs have shared the road with cars:

Forested mesas flanked the road; ahead, the multiform mountains, conical, twisted, sinuous, closed the horizon. Cattle and dogs shared the road with cars, refusing to acknowledge and supremacy of the automobile. When the trucks came, however, everybody got out of the way fast . . . Women in fatigues carried rifles over their shoulders, holding them by the barrels. (55)

Rushdie observes that the roads of Managua have been destroyed. He goes on observing the countryside. He observes Matagalpa, a region of mountains where he sees the cattle including dogs carelessly running in roads because the roads are short of vehicles. The limited vehicles gave rest to the roads. It shows that the countryside roads are completely useless for vehicles; they are not busy ones. He also comes to examine the shops where the stuffs have been emptied:

The ice-cream shop had no ice-cream because of the shortages. In the toy shop the evidence of poverty was everywhere; the best toys on

display were primitive 'cars' made out of a couple of bits of wood nailed together and painted, with Coca-Cola bottle tops for hubcaps.

(56)

It is the social reality that when the goods producing companies stop producing goods, there is the shortage of goods and stuffs. Rushdie also observes that due to the economic crisis the shops lack the goods. He points that ice-cream shops had no ice-cream. He finds the toy shops selling their best toys which are primitive 'cars' made out of wood. In the same way, he observes some shampoo shops and finds no good shampoos at all.

Due to the shortage of things, the Nicaraguan people are compelled to produce foods and goods with their own hand. On the other hand, they are also in danger from the Contra who regularly kidnapped and killed them if they refused to grow food for counter-revolutionary soldiers. Rushdie writes:

The people were also in danger from the Contra, who regularly kidnapped *campesinos*, or forced them to grow food for the counter-revolutionary soldiers, or killed them. But wasn't it also true, I asked that many people in those areas sympathized with the Contra? Yes, Paladino replied some men had gone to join them, leaving many women with children behind. (56)

It shows that when the country undergoes economic crisis, there takes violence. The people are forced to join some violent group or being killed. The peace, prosperity and human rights are in a greater amount, demolished.

The 'roof only policy', as it was called, offered the uprooted families exactly what its name suggested: a roof. They had to build the walls out of whatever materials they could find. It was not a policy

calculated to win hearts and minds. But Paladino insisted, the state was doing its best, and international volunteer brigades and relief agencies were helping, too. (57)

Due to the lack of economy the government's policy was also changed. The people who are homeless are being sheltered with the 'roof only policy' where they are provided roof of the house or tent, or some kind of zinc plate and they have to make the wall from whatever they find. The miserable social status of the people makes us clear that the natural disasters as well as the national violence has made the lives worse. It is evident that when the government is economically weak, it can only provide things only after the funds are raised by other.

Alike to this, he goes on presenting the entire documentation of destruction as, "In November, 1985 at Santa Rosa hundreds of Contra were killed since then in the attacks on the new co-operatives, hundreds more" (58). It is the historical reality that in 1985 at Santa Rosa about hundreds of Contra were killed. The killing of the contra is also the reality that in war time the killing is not a new phenomenon. The social picture of the Nicaragua with the prices high can be seen in Rushdie's writing. Rushdie writes that the costs of goods and services have been so much high that a person cannot get a car serviced:

Was it true that it cost six head of cattle to get a car serviced? They laughed. 'Or ten hectares of maize', said Carlos Zamora. So, then I said, if prices are that high, tell me about corruption. They looked embarrassed, not unexpectedly, but they didn't refuse to answer. Yes, Zamora said, there was, er, some. 'About the car service', he said. 'You see, a mechanic will tell you that a certain part is unavailable, or can be

ordered for crazy money, but he just happens to have one at home, for a price'. (59)

Rushdie is struck by the information that haunts him whether it costs six head of cattle to get a car serviced. The prices of the services have been so much raised that a general officer cannot get his car serviced. He also finds out that for servicing a car it costs six heads of cattle or 'ten hectares of maize'. During the war time, the corruption also takes place. While talking to Carlos Zamora and his friends, Rushdie comes to reveal the fact that corruption and black market have been ruling the cities and countryside as well.

Rushdie also points out the rural life and the problems of rural people. He traces the example of a disease that killed many children. He writes, "The disease was the main child-killer in the rural areas" (63). He comes to reveal that due to the shortage of medicines, the child gets killed in rural areas. The diseases are the main child killers whereas the young ones are killed or forced to join the Contra group. The young boys are jostled in the frontier of war and get wounded. Rushdie in his interview with the doctor in a hospital finds out that most of the patients are young ones:

The average age of the patients was twenty-one. Ten percent of them were regular soldiers, thirty per cent came from the peasant militias, and no less than sixty per cent were youngsters doing their military service. (67)

Rushdie's depiction of reality can be observed in his description of war-mongers and the wounded soldiers. He points out that about sixty percent of the youngsters who are the building blocks of national economy have been wounded in the war. He also

points out the numeric data of wounded soldiers as ten percent are regular soldiers and thirty of them are from the peasant militias.

In recent months, many of the hospital's patients had been mineblast victims, and almost all of these had died. Otherwise, the main injuries were from bullet wounds. 'Eighty-three per cent heal completely', said director Caldera, who knew his statistics. 'Six to seven per cent survive with disabilities'. That left ten per cent. I didn't ask what happened to them. (68)

Rushdie further goes on describing the recent accidents of mineblast that took hundreds of lives. The doctor Caldera's statistics showed that most of the people are victims of mineblast and bullet wounds. He also says that eighty percent of them heal completely. Rushdie, being one of the outsider remains alienated from the data and says the doctor knows all his statistical data. Rushdie also points out the doctors data that six to seven percent of the victims survive with disabilities. But the remaining ten percent is unknown to him and Rushdie didn't ask for them.

The true depiction of the reality of Nicaragua can be supported with the objective truths i.e. the statistical data. According to the statistical data, the revelation of true or reality of Nicaragua is that most of the people are victims of war, violence and terror. Most of the creative and productive people or building blocks of the nation have been killed or disabled. Nicaragua is living as a handicapped nation from the perspective of economic development.

After the depiction of war events, Rushdie comes to preview a glance of election that took place after the war is over. The picture of general election depicts the political reality that is what occurred in Nicaragua:

In the general election, the FSLN won sixty-one of the ninety-six seats in the Assembly. The others were divided between six opposition parties, four to the right of the Frente and two tiny ones, the PS and the Marxist-Leninist MAP, to its left. (The left parties regularly attacked the Sandinistas for being fakes, not revolutionaries at all; the Frente leadership seemed to enjoy these attacks.) (70)

Rushdie traces out the numerical data that is what the reality of general election is. In the general election the FSLN won the sixty one of the ninety six seats in the assembly. It is evident that the FSLN won most of the seats. The depiction of numerical data suggests that the it is objective reality of the election that six opposition parties have occupied fewer seats.

Rushdie also raises the voices of journalists, writers and cultural speakers about the constitution. The new constitution is about to be formed and many debates have been remained to be discussed. It is obvious that people are curious about the new constitution. Rushdie presents the debate in constitution making process as:

At the forum of journalists, writers and cultural workers, one speaker demanded that the constitution should 'amplify the concept of public liberties, freedom of expression and information'. Another insisted that is must 'define the State's policy regarding communication'; a third, more ambiguously, that 'there should be no restriction on freedom of expression, especially for parties representing the working class'. (72)

The expression of ideas, views and visions can be seen from different intellectual persons regarding the constitution's structure and content. It is true that the questions are raised whenever the new thing is going to happen or going to be created. The ambiguity appears in them regarding the constitution's content. Some of the people

demanded that the constitution should amplify the concept of public liberties, freedom of expression and information and others insisted that constitution should define the state's policy and some other stressed on the freedom of expression.

During the constitution making process, it is the social reality that different voices are raised from different sectors. In Nicaragua too, as Rushdie has presented there appeared different voices regarding the constitution. The exactness of Rushdie's portrayal can be supported from various constitution making processes and the hot debates among different parties. Rushdie further pastes another dominant voice— the voice of females: "The right to abortion on demand had come up most often. Women all over Nicaragua had demanded that this right be included in what many of them considered a very male constitution" (72).

It is obvious and real that people demand for freedom in every sector. The voice of females demanded for the abortion. It is not the new phenomenon that abortions take place in great number. Before the legal provision is established, people used unsafe methods for abortion. Thus, according to the demand of time, the females' demand of right to abortion can be seen as a voice arousing in contemporary society. It is also the reality of Nicaragua that the right to abortion should be granted. In the process of making new constitution every people wishes to create his identity a new reality, ". . . people trying hard to construct for themselves a new identity, a new reality, a reality that the external pressure might crush before construction work had even been completed" (74).

It is obvious that the Nicaraguan people want to create their own constitution without the obstruction or pressure from external forces. The desire of the Nicaraguan people in a greater amount focused on securing their right, liberty and identity.



On the other hand, with the process of change, the new markets have been establishing. The new process has been established in order to manage the disorder and chaos in the city markets. Man, as a social animal is greedy. Man does not want to lose something. The problem in the marketers can be seen when the new market was established and government wanted them to migrate in Mercado Roberto Huembes market. Fearing that their regular customers would not be able to find them, they do not want to migrate. As Rushdie writes, "When the big new covered markets like the Mercado Roberto Huembes were constructed, the traders didn't want to leave their sides at the Oriental market. They were afraid their regular customers wouldn't be able to find them in the cavernous new location" (79). Rushdie further shows that the shortage of goods created a big problem for service holders:

In different parts of the market you could buy furniture, arts and crafts, shoes, household goods, food, more or less anything that the shortages (an inflation) permitted. Some of the shoes cost more than a month's salary for an office worker. (80)

It shows the social reality of Nicaraguan in the then society. Due to the destruction and violence and volcanic eruption, the economic condition of Nicaragua became worse. The people can only buy goods that the shortage permitted or people cannot buy whatever they like they have to buy whatever there is. Rushdie also shows the social problem as an office worker needs to spend more than one month's salary for a pair of shoes. This very explanation shows that the price hike has become problematic to the general public. Rushdie points out, "And of course the prices made people angry. They could hardly afford a bottle of shampoo these days" (80). Due to the price hike people are angry. He also shows the pathetic condition of Nicaraguan people since they hardly can afford a bottle of shampoo. Then Rushdie goes on to describe

his conversations as the businessmen are greedy for earning money they do not want peace to be established:

The FSLN was attacked all right, until you asked: What should the government do? Should it talk to the Contra, should it make some accommodation with the US, should it sue for peace? The answers to those questions were in an altogether different tone: no, no, of course they can't do that. The war must go on. (81)

It shows that people are naturally selfish and it is true too. Rushdie examines the psychology of businessmen whether the peace is to be established or not. No doubt, people demanded peace, progress and prosperity but the businessmen do not want to do so. The businessmen do not want the war to be stopped rather they say 'the war must go on'. It is because people are selfish in themselves. By nature, businessmen do not want anything rather money.

The realistic issue that Rushdie portrays is that of the president's new spectacles and debate on its price. Rushdie excerpts the New York paper's news and writes:

The next day, the New York papers splashed the story of how the President of impoverished Nicaragua had spent \$3,200 on new spectacles. 'That much money', Rosario said. 'I never dreamed glasses could cost so much. It's true we bought a few pairs including sunglasses for the children, because we cannot get such things here, but still ! (84)

While relying on the New York paper that has pasted an interesting story of a President of Nicaragua who spends \$3,200 on new spectacles. It is obvious that people who are in power misuse their power and exploit people. The reality of such

corruption can be observed from the above excerpt. It shows the ironic reality that president wears spectacles costing \$3,200 and people cannot feed their stomach. Supporting the argument of Rushdie, Fawzia Afzal Khan mentions the interview of Rushdie in New York Times, interview where Rushdie claims his writing to be a radical work as a social reality as a socio-economic phenomenon. Khan mentions, "Rushdie asserts in the New York Times interview, is "massive elephantine", and consequently "uncontainable" in any form (22). Thus, the "epic" form becomes a "strategy of liberation" [- - -] but a "comic" one because the tragedy it masks is too painful to be otherwise expressed; also a mythical and surreal strategy because "Realism" says Rushdie later on in *Shame*, "would break a writer's heart" (138).

The people are suffering from hand to mouth problems. It is the social reality that reflects the Nicaraguan the then society. Rushdie further goes on tracing the contribution of poets and domination from Contra groups and Somoza regime as well:

I remembered another instance in which Cardenal had adapted an old poem to a new purpose. He had drafted a poem about the death of Sandino, and the fact that his grave was unknown. Then, in 1954, an attempt to capture Anastasio Somoza Gracia, the then dictator, ended in failure. One of the conspirators, Pablo de Leal, had his tongue cut out before being killed. (88)

Rushdie shows the killing of poet Cardenal. Cardenal drafted a poem about the death of Sandino. It shows that people are killed and their body is not found. It is true that in violence time anything happens including such events of unknown grave. Rushdie also shows the protest of Nicaraguan people against the government:

. . . and in every inch of Nicaragua where your body isn't buried,  
you were reborn.

They thought they'd killed you with their order of

Fire !

They thought they'd buried you

an all they had done was to bury a seed. (89)

From the above extract of a poem written by Cardenal we can observe the protest of people who are killed ruthlessly. It shows that the more people are killed, the more they are strong and reborn from each inches.

Rushdie further goes on to observe Bluefields and finds out that the countryside is really impoverished. He observes the landscape of Bluefields and finds it backward from the technology:

In Bluefields you couldn't receive Nicaragua's *Sandinista Television*, so you watched the Costa Rican programmes instead. . . There was no road link between the coasts. The few air flights filled up weeks in advance, and the only other route involved travelling 100 kilometers on a slow ferry down . . . the ferries had been frequent targets for the Contra. The banks of the river were thickly jungled, and the ferries were sitting ducks; but the people, having no option, continued to use the route. (96)

Rushdie observes that in Bluefields one cannot receive Nicaragua's *Sandinista Television*. He shares his experience of watching Costa Rica programmes because he cannot watch *Sandinista Television*. He also reveals that there was no road link between the coasts. He also writes that the air flights are filled up weeks in advance. He also maps the alternative way to reach Bluefields by travelling 100 kilometers on a slow ferry down which are the frequent targets for the Contra. Rushdie describes the

riverbanks thickly jungled but the people are compelled to use the route having no option.

Rushdie finds that the racial discrimination was prevalent in Bluefields. He observes that the army on the Atlantic coast was wholly *mestizo*. He finds distinction between soldiers and civilians. He experiences the discrimination at the Bluefield airport as, "The army on the Atlantic coast was almost wholly *mestizo*. This racial division between soldiers and civilians hit me the moment I arrived at the long wooden hut that was Bluefields' airport terminal" (98).

Rushdie further meets Cathy Gee, a US citizen working with a local development agency and finds that the Rama language is about to die. He asserts:

We got back to the Rama language. There were only twenty-three people alive who could still speak it: the other Ramas had already lost their tongue. A French linguist had spent months with the ageing twenty-three, to record the structure and phonetics of the language before it disappeared. [. . .] most of the old Ramas had lost their teeth, so they couldn't pronounce some of the words properly. Yeah. False teeth were much too expensive to be an option [. . .] Nicaragua is a land of small tragedies as well as large ones. (101)

Rushdie finds out that the Rama have been disappearing from the earth. He also finds out the demographic data that there were only twenty-three Rama people alive. He also reveals that Ramas have already lost their tongue. He also comes to find out an event that astonished him that is a French linguist had spent months with the ageing twenty-three studying about the structure and phonetics of Rama language.

The killing, looting and kidnapping has become natural in Nicaragua. Rushdie further knows that in a nearby village Contra had kidnapped more than two dozen children:

In a nearby village, the Contra had recently kidnapped more than two dozen children, many of them girls aged between ten and fourteen, 'for the use of the Contra,' Mary told me. One girl had escaped and got home. The villagers had heard that five other children had escaped, but had been lost in the jungle. That was five weeks ago, and they had to be presumed dead. 'It's so sad going there now', Mary said. 'The whole village just cries all the time.' (110)

Rushdie finds out that the Contra used innocent people in their revolution. He also comes to know that one of the girls escaped from Contra. He is also told that five other children had escaped and lost in the jungle. The girls are guessed to have died. Rushdie becomes said heading the reality that innocent people are caught in the war and get killed or compelled to die. Supporting the argument of Rushdie, Talal Ashad writes, "This is no time for liberal tolerance. Contrary to what reviewers have said about the book, Rushdie's latter reading insists that its message is not doubt but conviction, not argument but war". (243)

The suffering can be seen in the villages since whole village laments and cries all the time. The default reality of Nicaragua is the war. The revolutionary parties have their own policy to kill people as Rushdie is told:

That's the third doctor they've lost in a year. It was Contra policy to kill the professionals when they attacked such communities, but on this occasion fate had lent them a hand. In a small society like ours, Mary said, 'each death is really noticed. You can imagine what a hole

twenty-four deaths make. They had the last funeral yesterday. It was a week before they could cut the body out of the wreck and give it to the family. (111)

Rushdie is also informed that Contra has a policy to kill the professionals on occasions. In a peaceful society when the violent or death occurs it is intolerable for the people. The cutting of the body out of the wreck is also the another example that gives a picture of death and in war death is a normal case. The people are also afraid of the future of their child. Rushdie writes, "She was afraid her son might one day have to fight in the war. She had already become enough of a Nicaraguan to think of the war as a long-term, near-permanent reality" (111). Regarding the violence, terror and death Mary reminds Rushdie that people nowadays expect their death. The youths of the country are being killed, "'You learn to live with it. If it happens, it happens' Mary said. 'People here have come to expect death. The country's youth is just being thrown away'" (113).

Not only violence, terror, death and revolution are the realities of Nicaragua, the backwardness and the belief in supernatural elements are also prevalent in them. Rushdie himself gets chance to hear such belief: "It started to rain as my car arrived. Rigby said goodbye. 'Soon it going to rain less', he said. 'In the old days, if Somoza told the rain to stop, it stopped. I don't know what wrong with these Sandinistas'" (115).

The belief of the people have been changed in Sandinistas came to revolutionized the country. The people of Nicaragua believed that Somoza is God that has a power to stop the rain or Somoza is something superpower. In the wartime, Nicaragua has experienced the domination of government in press sector:

Thus we see, and the world sees, that the government is taking off its mask, and revealing itself as a Marxist-Leninist, in Dona Violeta's mouth, was a final condemnation, a judgment from which there was no appeal. The TV and radio are state controlled' she said. This paper was the only thing left, and now it has been taken away. I queried her assertion about the radio- there were, were there not, numbers of independent local radio stations? (118)

Rushdie's observation showed that the people do not the country to be Marxist-Leninist. The TV and radios are stated controlled. The government has snatched the only one newspaper that has remained to be controlled. He finds not a single radio stations that is independent and broadcasting independently.

Rushdie gives an example of state's control over press. He finds everything including an editorial line is also controlled:

The government says that in time of war your editorial line is unacceptable, that you support the counter-revolution. I said. She repeated, unanswerably: 'Everything we printed was passed by the censor's office. (120)

It shows the brutal government that has restricted even the editorial page of the newspaper to be published without their consent. If the editorial is counter-revolutionary, it becomes unacceptable. It becomes more vibrant that the censor's office has power over newspaper rather than the editor himself. The revolution as understood by the Nicaraguan is against themselves:

The people of Nicaragua who are not Marxist-Leninist are very sad. This is why we have this war of Nicaraguan against Nicaraguan. What was her solution, I wondered. 'The situation in Nicaragua should be



resolved without the intervention of Soviets, Cubans or North Americans', she answered. But nothing will be resolved in this country, no matter how many hundreds of millions of dollars are spent, until Daniel Ortega learns to talk to the people. (123)

It becomes clear that the people who are not Marxist-Leninist are sad because the war is waged by Nicaraguans against Nicaragua. The people are angry with the intervention of Soviet Union, Cubaans or North Americans. The futile effort of controlling the country with dollars is impossible since people do not want their Nicaragua to be others they are the nationalists. The people want to Daniel Ortega to speak on behalf of Nicaraguan people not of the Soviets, Cubans or North Americans. Rushdie realizes the fact that the view of aristocratic lady is really true. He found her more close to people than that of Paladino in Matagalpa, Ellsbrg in Bluefields or Daniel Ortega himself because she has a love for the Nicaraguan people. It is true that when people are being loved they also try to love others:

But the truth is that I found the idea that this aristocratic lady was closer to the people than the likes of, oh, Carols Paladino in Matagalpa, or Mary Ellsberg in Bluefields, or even Daniel Ortega, very unconvincing. (123)

Rushdie's realization shows that the fact that lady has a power to make people closer not by violence, terror and threatening to kill but by love which Paladino, Ellsberg and Ortega lacked. In fact, people expect love when they love others.

Rushdie's observe further shows that there were no publishing houses in the whole of Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan writers need to go in Spanish speaking world and publish it and if the government allows, bring it to their country:

In the time of Somoza, there had not been a single publishing house in the whole of Nicaragua. The only way for Nicaraguan writers to get into print was to find a publisher elsewhere in the Spanish-speaking world and then have the books brought in, if possible. (124)

It shows that Nicaraguan government is not loyal to people in general and intellectuals and writers in particular. It is the reality that when the anti-revolutionary voices are supposed to be raised against government, they ban the publishing of books or any other form of literature.

Then, Rushdie asks about the content of the book and finds out that the books are capable of drawing the real picture of society:

. . . I started asking Sergio Ramirez all the questions that writers get to hate: how real was it? Were the characters drawn from life? 'It's all true', he told me. 'Everything in the novel comes from actual events.' Ramirez had spent years studying the history of the Sandino period before he wrote the book. 'There really was someone like Indio Larios', he said. 'Always top of the wanted list, but actually he was never in Nicaragua. (126)

Rushdie finds out that from Sergio Ramirez that the books have depicted the real life situations. Ramirez tells him that everything in the novel comes from the actual events, depicting the realistic society. Though Ramirez had spent several years studying about the Sandino period, his books depicted the real picture of Nicaragua; but never visited Nicaragua. Rushdie's visit also confirms that besides his study he himself has visited Nicaragua for making it real—a real picture, an unfortunate, unbiased, fact of Nicaragua:

. . . Nicaraguan government later banned all foreign volunteer workers from the war zone, one of the saddest pieces of news I heard after my return [ . . . ] from now on any foreign aid workers found in the war zone would be treated as enemy agents. (131)

At last, for the establishment of peace the Nicaraguan government banned all foreign volunteer workers from the war zone which made Rushdie sad. The foreign aid workers are treated as enemy agents. It shows that when the government banned the foreign workers, the foreigners will not get chance to mobilize their people in Nicaragua. Supporting the argument of Rushdie, George Lukacs talks about the reality as a social and political phenomenon. He argues that when the superficial one comes into the contact of Reality, it ceases to exist. He says, "By seeking inner harmony men cut themselves off from society's struggle. Such "harmony" is illusory and superficial; it vanishes at any serious contact with reality" (203).

Seeking the superficial harmony through domination, killing and violence, the country cannot feel inner peace. When the FSLN leaders ruled the country accepting reality as a final truth, they tried their best to make new constitution and freedom in every sector though the press is not considered to be important:

She felt the FSLN leaders didn't really understand why the freedom of the press was so important. "They are boys, who went from school to the mountains to jail or into exile. Are they really properly prepared for the running of a State? (134)

Rushdie explores that FSLN leaders who left school have experience of going to mountains, jail or exile. They do not know how important the press is; how important the communication or information is. The question comes that whether they are

properly prepared for running a State? It is because the young FSLN leaders lack the experience of ruling a state that is why they ignore the press independence.

Towards the end of *The Jaguar Smile*, Rushdie realized that exploration of reality is possible through experience, observation and participation not by watching it from distance. He writes, "To visit Nicaragua was to be shown that the world was not television, or history, or fiction. The world was real, and this was its actual, unmediated reality" (135). Rushdie also realizes that in world there are two elements which depict the reality of the world they are, monsters and giants. He also points out that the reality is immeasurable power that comes from the will. He finds Nicaraguan people's voice, their resistance, their national feeling as immeasurable power. Rushdie's visit explores the Nicaraguan people's will of surviving is stronger than that of American weapons. He writes, "In the real world, there were monsters and giants; but there was also the immeasurable power of the will. It was entirely possible that Nicaragua's will to survive might prove stronger than the American weapons.(135). Supporting the argument of Rushdie, Theodore Adorno writes, "literary work does not give us a neatly shaped reflection and knowledge of reality but works within reality to exposit its contradictions"(104).

### **III. *The Jaguar Smile* and Real Picture of Nicaragua**

Salman Rushdie's portrayal of Nicaragua stands as a realistic picture of Nicaraguan society, history and culture and politics. He sees the smile of Nicaragua as a pathetic one since it is caught in the vicious circle of natural calamities, political instability and economic degradation. Rushdie observes Nicaragua and creates an image in his mind that, he calls—the image of Nicaragua giving a poor smile to foreign observers.

At the beginning of the travelogue, Rushdie enters Nicaragua only for diplomatic purpose not for literary, but what made him write the travelogue is his thorough observation of the smiles and cries of Nicaragua. The more Rushdie goes on observing the Nicaragua's landscape, misery and smile, the more he is haunted by the reality and came to write about it. During his stay he visits the Managua city and reveals the destruction of city by volcanic eruption and instability of politics. He finds emptiness everywhere which used to be the center before the volcanic eruption had taken place. The dead bodies are scattered everywhere; the buildings are totally ruined by the disaster. Rushdie's observation reveals that the politics of Nicaragua under Somoza regime is performing brutal acts, guided entirely by foreign aids and volunteers not for the benefit of Nicaragua but for exploiting and making Nicaragua weaker. The reflection of US invasion is the example of foreign domination in the name of aids and volunteers. The dedication of Nicaraguan people for the preservation of their nationality has become more concrete when the people are suppressed more.

Nicaragua undergoes the internal war which lasted for five years. The economy has undergone and failed to take forward steps for improvement. The economic depreciation creates big problem for people. The price of goods and

services has been so much raised that ordinary people cannot afford even a single bottle of shampoo neither can an officer has money to buy a pair of shoes. The black market has flourished everywhere. The government has become corrupted since all the aids have been misused. The roads have been destroyed. But on the contrary, in countryside his observation reveals that the roads are empty only dogs and cattle are sharing the road. He finds out that in countryside shops, new goods are not available.

On the other hand, Rushdie reveals the corruption prevalent everywhere. The Contra group was fighting against Sandinistas. The killing and kidnapping are increasing day by day. In the hospitals too, Rushdie reveals that sixty percent of the victims were youngsters. The youth have been destroyed by war. The statistics revealed most of them were shot down or killed in mine blast.

Towards the end of the travelogue he presents that the constitution making process starts. In the general election, the FSLN party wins sixty one seats out of ninety one. The domination of press independence has been continued because the young leaders of FSLN cannot understand the importance of press. At the beginning of the travelogue the press right was totally dismantled even the editorial page needed to be passed from censor's office.

Rushdie reveals that when the foreign aids are stopped and the foreigner volunteers are taken as the representative of enemies he becomes sad. But at last, he reveals that the realistic picture of Nicaragua through observation and experience. His visit has become boon for the exploration of Nicaragua though he said he was not interested at first.

In conclusion, what can be said about *The Jaguar Smile* is that the pace in which Rushdie writes is not less than jaguar. His exploration of reality in a short time makes us judge him as a neutral observer and praise his unbiased judgment. In

addition to this, the portrayal of Nicaraguan people who have been suffering from a long time have respect for his work. His jaguar pace has become boon for common people to understand the reality of Nicaragua. Thus, what is not revealed by others is being revealed by Rushdie in the sense that no one dared to write against the US invasion. Not only that, it is noteworthy that Rushdie as a keen observer of war and destruction, religion and science, makes a crucial judgment that until and unless the superpowers surround nation with volunteers, the reality cannot be spoken, it cannot be revealed—the reality lies at the bottom, at the hand of sufferers. Being a prominent literary critic who has been regarded always challenging in the literary field, accomplishes a challenge of unveiling the truth, the hidden traces of Nicaragua. *The Jaguar Smile*, based on the observation of Rushdie establishes himself as a vagrant observer and researcher.

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