

**ART AS TECHNIQUE IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S
*THE MOOR'S LAST SIGHT***

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Modern paintings have always been the most conspicuous as well as inseparably integrated aspect of the technique of narrations of the novels of Salman Rushdie. Many critics are of the view that the painterly imagination crept in the narrative technique of Rushdie for the first time in his novel *The Moor's Last Sigh*, (1995), however, the fact cannot be denied that since his first novel- *Grimus*, (1975) the masterpieces of the painters of the first half of the century have been contributing significantly to the narratives in delineating the meaning and experience inherent therein. It is undisputable that the paintings come out with great aesthetic significance in *The Moor's Last Sigh* for the obvious reason that one of the major characters of the novel is a renowned painter, thus, the author has more specific opportunity to use paintings in the narrative.

The influence of the surrealist masters like Salvador Dali and Marc Chagall is more than conspicuous in the caste of the narrative in his first novel, *Grimus*, which for the obvious reasons failed to invite sufficient critical attention in the time of its publication, yet, the fact stands beyond all questions that the novels sows the seeds of the technical predilections of Salman Rushdie that grow into a blooming garden in all his succeeding novels. The use of modern paintings is one such element that makes the first spark in *Grimus* and continues to grow in his better known novels. Salvador Dali is undoubtedly the most conspicuous influence in shaping the narrative of the first novel of the master. The fictional world of *Grimus* presents before us the primordial conflict between the time bound and the timeless which has always been on the focus of the surrealist masters of the first half of the twentieth century. The opening paragraph of the novel reminds us of the famous painting of Salvador Dali titled *The Persistence of Memory* (1931) which brings into attention the paradoxical images of the timeless and the time bound.

The eternal antithesis between the timeless and time bound becomes clearer in Dali's elaboration of the limp watches in the painting. 'Like fillets of sole,' he comments, 'they are destined to be swallowed by the sharks of time.' (quoted by Januszczak,152) it is another ironical resemblance between Rushdie and Dali that the same painting when remade after about a long gap to two decades, with a new title. *Disintegration of the Persistence of Memory*, (1954) reminds us of the last paragraph of *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*.

The delineation of the Flapping Eagle, the protagonist of the novel owes much to the surrealist fantasy of Marc Chagall. *Grimus*, frequently reminds us of the images and symbols used by Marc Chagall. The use of the ornithological images and symbols is one common aspect of the technique used by these two great masters working on different species of expression. The protagonist is given the name of Eagle which further ratifies the ornithological inclinations of the author in portraying the character of Flapping Eagle. *Paris through the Window* (1913) is one of the great works of Chagall which shares the aesthetic domain with *Grimus*. The painting unifies a cat with human figure and in the perspective, depicts a flying man. *The Juggler* (1943) is another painting which capitalizes the form and function of ornithological images in order to delineate the complex idea of human predicaments. Shearer West, commenting on this painting of Chagall, points out that Chagall's Juggler is both, 'an acrobat and a rooster standing in a ring which contains Russian village.' It becomes clear that there is re echo of Chagall's *The Juggler* in Rushdie's *Grimus*. Rushdie's debt to Chagall becomes more obvious when he delineates Flapping Eagle on a donkey;

The Gribbs' donkey, perhaps the most obedient, least mulish donkey that ever was, jogged demurely along the cobble way with a divided Flapping Eagle upon its back. (Rushdie, *Grimus*157))

The description of Flapping Eagle which makes use of Freudian discoveries of human subconscious, reminds us of *The Dream* (1927), the famous work of Marc Chagall. *The Dream* (1927) having a semi nude woman figure, on the back of a donkey, reflecting isolation and detachment.

Rushdie's second and third novels- *Midnight's Children* (1980) and *Shame* (1983) are more overtly political dealing chiefly with the socio-political realities of the Indian subcontinent. The discrepancies prevailing in the socio-political set ups of India and Pakistan constitute the axis of the dynamics of the narrative in these novels. These two masterpieces draw a very close parallel with Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) and other canvasses painted during the late thirties in the mood of fear, frustration and anger. *Guernica* is an immediate reaction to news of destruction of the small town Guernica near Madrid as a result of the bombardment by the fascist forces. There is a complex array of symbols – a bull, a horse, a distorted image of the sun, crying women and their butchered children and a lamp. These symbols, in complementation with one another, excite the feeling of rage, indignation, and impotent revolt. The comparison is however questionable on the ground that the Picasso's *Guernica* is the master's response to a single event and *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* (1983) are Rushdie's response to the political processes of Indian and Pakistan, yet the fact cannot be denied that *Guernica* foretells a gory inhuman future of mankind. 'It constitutes,' says Hans LC Jaffe, 'a warning to mankind of unleashing the forces of darkness.' (Jaffe37) The most obvious comparison between the works of Picasso and Rushdie is that *Guernica*, on one hand and *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* on the other hand, are passionate and sentimental reactions to the loss of human values. Herbert Read discussing the famous statement of Picasso that the painting is 'an instrument of war for attack and defense against the enemy,'

further elaborates the implications of Picasso that ‘one must fight everything that threatens the freedom of imagination.’ (Read160) It is obvious that the two creators had similar intentions and they created with similar passion and conviction.

The surrealist fantasy used by Rushdie in delineating the political characters in *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* owe their genesis to the surrealist masterpieces of Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali. The Widow is delineated with hallucination and monstrosity of surrealist intensity;

Now one by one the children mmff are stifled quite the Widow's hand is lifting one by one the children green their blood is black unloosed by cutting fingernails it splashes black on walls (of green) as one by one the curling hand lifts the children high as the sky the sky is black there are no stars the Widow laughs her tongue is green but see her teeth are black. (Rushdie, *Midnight's Children*249)

The character of Sufiya Zinobia is delineated through a process of surrealist fantasy. The complete perception of the character comes only if we place the character in the context of the two masterpieces of Salvador Dali – *Premonition of Civil War* (1936) and *The Young Virgin Auto Sodomized By Her Own Chastity* (1954), and Pablo Picasso's *The Weeping Woman* (1937). The three masterpieces in complementation with one another ratify and consolidate the meaning and experience inherent in the character of Sufiya Zinobiya. *The Premonition of Civil War* shows a beast distorting a woman by holding her breast. The distortion of the woman by the beast, draws a close metaphorical parallel with the essentials of the character of Sufiya Zinobiya delineated with tremendous hallucination and futurism. The second Dalinean masterpiece, *The Young Virgin Auto Sodomized by Her Own Chastity* portrays the idea of the suppression of libidos that recolor the character with new metaphorical implications that acquire graver meaning and significance in the social context of the locale of the action. Pablo Picasso's *The Weeping Woman* was painted during the World War II and the woman in the painting comes out with strong metaphorical suggestions of the suppression of rage and desires with futuristic implications.

Rushdie's fourth novel, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1991), is the work done during the exile that was an aftermath of the religious decree issued by Ayatollah Khomeini. The two characters Iff and Butt of the novel owe their origin to the sixteen century masterpiece, *Summer* (1563) by Gueseppe Arcimboldo. The masterpiece presents a human figure visualized through clever artistic manipulation of fruits and vegetables. Both the characters are the impulses of optimism that have been delineated with artistic fantasy of Arcimboldo. Iff the water genie puts a ‘purple turban on his head,’ and ‘a baggy silk pajama gathered at the ankles’ those are ‘aubergines.’ The author reverts to Chagall in delineating the character of Butt the Hoope which is a bird that leads all other birds to their ultimate goal.’ (Rushdie, *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, 55) The novel reminds us of the painting *The Portrait and the Dream* (1953) by the Jackson Pollock, which presents before us a human figure with the ordered disorder of anatomical images. In *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, there is a well controlled dynamics of the fantasy in its varied forms and the reader while reading the novel perceives the human figure that is Rushdie himself making the backdrop and imparting the meaning.

The Moor's Last Sigh is the sixth novel of Rushdie which was published in the year 1996 and as usual the novel invited controversy for a number of reasons. The most important of them was the English bulldog named Jawahar Lal. The book was banned in India for few months and

then the circulation of the book was allowed. The use of painting in *The Moor's Last Sigh* becomes more frequent in this novel as one of the major characters of the novel is an accomplished and widely known painter. It is another very conspicuous aspect of the novel that the character of Aurora draws a close parallel with the legendary painter of the first half of the century Amrita Sher Gill. She also plays a defining role in portraying the thematic contents of the novel. Aurora is delineated with the intensity of the surrealist paintings.

At the age of thirteen my mother Aurora da Gama took to wandering barefoot around her grandparents' large odorous house on Cabral Island during the bouts of sleeplessness, which became for a time, her nightly afflictions and on those nocturnal odysseys she would throw open all the windows- first the inner screen window whose fine meshed netting protected the house from midges and mosquitoes flies next the leaded glass casements themselves and finally the slatted wooden shutters beyond. (Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 07)

Aurora also served to portray the hybridization of human race. His conjugation with Abraham is termed as 'pepper love' which aptly illustrates the idea of cultural synthesis. The parallel between Amrita Sher Gil and Aurora becomes more explicit in the light of the background and foreground of the painter. Amrita Sher Gill was daughter of a Sikh businessman and a Hungarian woman. Various biographical studies and memoirs, written on Amirta Sher Gill, ratify the comparability that subsists between the young painting of the early twentieth century and the painter in the novel. Mulk Raj Anand the noted fiction writer and a contemporary of Amirta Sher Gill, writes;

Amirta Sher Gill, born of Marie Antoinette, a cultured Hungarian mother and Sardar Umrao Singh Gill, an aristocrat from Maiithia family of Amritsar, was, then, like many of the new young in the intelligentsia from big houses of that time, charged with indignation against injustice and full of human concern. Ofcourse, she could not in the feudalistic household of her uncle Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, Prime Minister of Patiala State, do more than sympathize with egalitarian urges. But she was aware of the struggle for liberation intensified by Gandhi, of whom she did sketches as he was speaking to a mass audience and she admired Jawahar Lal Nehru, hwo reciprocated her regards by going out of his way to meet her in Gorakhpur. (Anand02)

Anand portray the painter as young extrovert, enthusiast with political vigilance and awareness. It is the most conspicuous quality, which the painter shares with her fictional counterpart, Aurora in *The Moor's Last Sigh*. The narrator reveals that Aurora 'grew into a large public figure' and she is delineated as 'the great beauty at the heart of Nationalist Movement.' Aurora's extrovert behavior is further ratified when the narrator portrays her as loose hair marching alongside Vallabhbai Patel and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad when they took out processions.' (Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 118) Nehru's visit to Amrita is recreated by Rushdie when he reciprocates the appreciation of Aurora by writing her a letter;

My voice is very hoarse, I don't know why I attract these crowds. Very gratifying, no doubt, but also very trying and often very irritating. Here in Simla I have had to go out to the balcony and verandah frequently to give darshan. I doubt if I shall ever be able to go out for a walk because of

crowds following except at the dead of night. (Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 117-118)

Khushwant Singh, in his obituary to the Amrita Sher Gill also expresses the similar views and presents Amrita as same extrovert and flamboyant woman with vigilance. He writes;

I met her only twice. But those two meetings remains imprinted in my memory. Her fame as an artist, her glamour as a woman of great beauty which she gave credence in some of her self portraits, and her reputation for promiscuity snowballed into a veritable avalanche, which hasn't ended to this day and gives me an excuse to include her in my list. (Singh121)

Singh's views expressed in the obituary to Amrita Sher Gill present her a woman of fame and name, and, at the same time, tremendous social vigilance. The verbal portrait of Amrita Sher Gill, portrayed by her two contemporaries, when combined together, becomes identifiable with Aurora, and, Aurora in turn emerges as the fictional equivalent of the legendary painter of the first half of the twentieth century.

The paintings of Aurora in the novel, unlike those of Amrita Sher Gill, owe their genesis to the masters of early twentieth century. It is however interesting to note that not all the painting narrated in the novel are from the works of the great masters and many of them come out of the painterly imagination of the novelist. *The Scandal* painted by Aurora is one such masterpiece which is created in words by the narrator. *The Kissing of Abbas Ali Baig* is one of the paintings based on the actual incident that took place in Bombay in the third match against Australia 'which had not been going India's way,' and Baig's half century 'enabled the home side to force a draw.' The narrator further reveals;

When he reached 50, a pretty young woman ran out from the usually rather staid and upper-crust North Stand and kissed the batsman on the cheeks. Eight runs later, perhaps a little overcome, Baig was dismissed (C Mackay b Lindwall), but by then the match was safe. ((Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 228)

The socio-political and cultural vigilance is another very important aspect which makes Aurora and her art comparable with that of many great masters of India and Europe. Picasso's *Guernica* (1937) and Dali's irreverent delineation of Lenin in *Six Apparitions of Lenin on a Piano* (1933), are the works that confirm the political vigilance of these masters. In India M. F. Hussain has also been known for his socio-political and cultural vigilance. His series on Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Mother Teresa and film luminaries, Amitabh Bachchan and Madhuri Dixit, ratify his range and vigilance.

Aurora's Chhipkali or lizard exhibition is dominated by animal imagery with surrealist implications. The images of snakes and lizards and other reptiles owe its origin to the surrealist paintings of Salvador Dali. The paintings, like *The Visage of the War* (1940), make good use of such images with prophetic conviction and surrealist intensity. The images of snakes in the works of Dali serve to excite the feelings of fear and libidos and the fear and libidos on the paintings of Aurora depict the fear of common man due to the oppressive policies of the British Government and libidos at the same time can be correlated with the character of Aurora representing the growing freedom of woman in relatively conservative society of contemporary India. Dali while making this painting was haunted by the images of death and destruction while the inherent implication of fear in the lizard exhibition of Aurora can be attributed to the fear pervading the mind of common Indian during the first four decades of the twentieth century.

‘Spain would serve as a holocaust to that post war Europe,’ says Dali, ‘tortured by ideological dramas, by moral and artistic anxieties.’ (Descharnes96) It is understandable that Spain provides the platform to Picasso and Dali which is comparable with fictional locale (India) of Aurora in the novel.

Varied influences of Picasso are evidenced in the works of Aurora created during the narrative span of the novel. One of the most outstanding works of hers in the novel is a self portrait. The self portrait captures our attention chiefly due to interdisciplinary technique used by Pablo Picasso in many of his works painted during the early twenties where the pictures in pigments impress us for their sculptural effects. Many of his famous painting like *Three Women at the Fountain* (1921), *Two Women Running on the Beach* (1922), *Three Women at the Spring* (1921), *Mother and Child* (1921) etc are known for inducing sculptural effects on the canvass with pigments. Aurora’s *Self Portrait* owes inspiration to Picasso’s famous work *Woman with a Fan* (1906). It is remarkable that the technique which attained its peak in twenties and even in some of the paintings, of thirties, like *Reclining Nude* (1932) and *Woman in the Red Armchair* (1932), of thirties, was first seen in the his work in the early second half of the first decade of the twentieth century, little before the *Les Demoiselles D’ Avignon* (1907) appeared on the horizon of fine art and changed the history. Hans L C Jaffe, commenting of this phase or Picasso’s creative period, rightly remarks that it was the period when the plasticity of the bodies, their three dimensional existence was at the center of his interest.’ (Jaffe86) In the novel, Aurora gives the ‘anguished, magisterial, appallingly unguarded series of late self portraits,’ and a reference to Rembrandt, credited with as many as seventy self portraits, confirms the super numeracy of the self portraits and a reference to Goya, a prominent influence of Picasso reveals the essential nature of the tones and moods of the works. The narrator details the painting and confides;

Aurora/Ayxa sat alone on these panels beside the infernal chronicle of the degradation of her son, and never shed a tear. Her face grew hard, even stony but in her eyes there shone a horror that was never named as if she were looking at the things that struck at the very depths of her soul, a thing standing before her, where anyone looking at the pictures would naturally stand- as if the human race itself had shown her its most secret and terrorizing face, and by doing so had petrified her turning her old flesh into stone. (Rushdie, *The Moor’s Last Sigh*, 304)

The reference to Picasso’s *Woman with a Fan* (1907) firmly reveals the transformation of the archetypal mother image into a woman reflecting rich endurance of the vulgarity of a metropolitan city like Bombay. An interesting contrast between the painting of Picasso and that made by Aurora in the novel can be traced. Hans L C Jaffe commenting on this technique of Picasso claims that ‘for all the rigidity of the structure, these paintings clearly reflect the rest and relaxation of stay in the country.’ (Jaffe 89) It is further noticeable that the eyes in Picasso’s masterpiece are reposed with sleep whereas the eyes of Aurora’s self portrait are painted with an unnamed horror. Thus the eye image in the self portrait of Aurora are suggestive of intellectual vigilance paving way for the process of realization paradoxically leading to inert submission to the forces of history. A tacit reference to Michael Angelo’s *Pieta* (1499) cannot be denied. Miriam holding dead Christ draws a close metaphorical parallel with the self portrait of Aurora where the physical death of the son on the lap of the mother figuratively represents the emotional and ethical decay of Moor, the son. A reference to Picasso’s *Self Portrait* (1906) painted little before *Woman with a Fan* is also obligatory in which Picasso presents himself in the same mood

and tone of hard sculptural effects. The Self Portrait of Aurora in its essence is a summation of the two works of Pablo Picasso foretelling the great revolution in the world of art.

Aurora's series on Moor is another very conspicuous revelation of Rushdie's debt to the great painters of the first half of the twentieth century. In the early Moors, 'the hand' of the protagonist was 'transformed into a series of miracles.' The hand image used in the paintings titled 'early Moor', owe their imagistic worth to the paintings of Salvador Dali using the image of hand painted with hallucination and surrealist intensity. Some of the well known works of Dali using hand image, are *Apparatus and Hand* (1927), *The Lugubrious Game* (1929) and *The Hand; Remorse* (1930). The hand image of Dali is fused with the images that have their origin in the folklore to balance the centrifugal surrealist fantasy with centripetal primitivism. Aurora too fuses the image of peacock fused with the hand image. 'I was Moor as peacock, spreading my many eyed tail,' Moor reminisces, and 'she painted her head on the top of a dowdy pea hen's body.' The transformation of the fact through reverse relation contributes significantly to the hallucinatory effect of the narration when Aurora is painted as 'girlish, adorning' and the protagonist 'in patriarchal lapel gripping pose, frock coated and bewhiskered like a prophecy of all-too-near future.' The reversal of the relation between mother and child is further ratified by Aurora. 'If you were twice as old as you look,' she says, 'and I was half as old as I am, I could be your daughter.' (Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 224) the reversal of the mother and child relation is used with prophetic intentions as it foretells the son- Sanjay Gandhi overpowering his mother Indira Gandhi during and before the Emergency. The Shakespearean imagination is also transformed into the artistic imagination in Aurora's *To Die Upon a Kiss*, in which Aurora portrayed herself as 'murdered Desdemona flung across her bed while' Moor 'was stabbed Othello.' (Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 224-225) The reversal of the relation between mother and son at this point of time also recreates the milieu of timelessness created in the surrealist masterpieces of Salvador Dali and at the same time it reveals the vulgarization of human emotions.

The second phase of Moor Paintings by Aurora is represented principally by the picture- *Mother- Naked Moor Watches Chimene's Arrival*. It is a picture which according to the narrator owes its inspiration to Velezquez's *Las Meninas* (1656) but a closer scrutiny of the narrator's description reveals that the painting owes more to Pablo Picasso's series based on the same paintings by Velazquez. In one of these paintings by Picasso, which falls closest to the narrator's description of Aurora's painting, Picasso has shown a number of hooks that remind us of a slaughter house; there is a grant to whose head touches the roof of the palace. The dog of the royal family, a Cocker Spaniel, in the work of Velazquez's *Las Meninas* has been replaced by a rat. It is obvious that Picasso further intensifies the emotion of grief and tormenting isolation as the two figures in the background are painted in compositional semblance with a coffin. One of the characters in the foreground is shaped as a circle while other has been painted in typical cubistic strokes that demonstrate degradation of human values. In Aurora's painting the palace of the king is replaced by a chamber of Aurora's with sight lines. The Moor 'stands naked in the lozenge pattern technocolour. The giant in Picasso's masterpiece in the verbal description of Aurora's *Mother- Naked Moor Watches Chimene's Arrival*, is replaced by a vulture from the tower of silence. The mouse of Picasso in Aurora's painting is 'nibbling through the lacquered melon drum' of a sitar and thus killing the possibility of music and melody. The 'fearsome mother Aurora in the flowing dark robes' is holding a full length mirror' to his 'nakedness.' Aurora embodies the central emotion of Velazquez's *Las Meninas*. The three works if arranged

in precise chronology, issue forth the process of rapid vulgarization of human emotions. 'Reality and sham reality,' says Hans L.C. Jaffe, 'are interlocked in Velazquez' masterpiece.' (Jaffe120) The shadowy figure in the door of the room is replaced by glamorized Uma who 'casts an image of Sophia Lauren in *El Cid*.' Surrealist fantasy creeps into the narrative again as 'between the outspread inviting hands were many marvels-golden orbs bejeweled birds, tiny homunculi floating magically into air.' (Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 246-247)

It is clear from the above discussion that Rushdie recreates the magical chiaroscuro and imagistic magnificence of Velazquez in words. It is another very note worthy aspect of the narration of Rushdie that the recreation of *Las Meninas* in *The Moor's Last Sigh* is actually a step ahead of Picasso's recreation of the original *Las Meninas* painted by the seventeenth century master. The painting in the narrative acquires special significance in the narrative in the light of Aurora- Moor relationship which is recreated in this painting and other paintings of early Moor series as Moor is the much desired model for his mother in most of her paintings of this series. The view of Jaffe again invites our attention. Commenting on Picasso's fascination for *Las Meninas*, he confides;

In addition to the painting's Spanish character, Picasso may have been particularly fascinated by the fact that it treats-in a brilliant mysterious way-a problem that had often preoccupied him; the painter and his model. (Jaffe120)

The views of Jaffe when examined in the light of the context structured by Rushdie in *The Moor's Last Sigh* make it clear that the painting, besides constructing a bridge between India and Europe, plays the important role of narrating a peculiar aspect of the theme of the novel, that is the emancipation of the mother and child relation from the cultural orthodoxy.

A discussion on the art influence on Salman Rushdie can not be taken as complete without a reference to the works of Bhupen Khakhar. Rushdie's oft quoted admiration for Khakhar obliges a natural inference that the such a mega dimensional application of modern art in the narrative is not complete without the inclusion of a work of art by Khakhar, the master who fetched maximum accolade from Rushdie in recent years. The last triode of the Moor Paintings by Aurora can be attributed to a famous work by Khakhar titled *You Can't Please All* in which the protagonist is positioned at an altitude watching the drama of life taking place there below. Khakhar himself makes clear the role of painting in *The Moor's Last Sigh* and says that 'the painting means a lot to,' him. 'It shows,' he further describes, 'a protagonist standing stark naked as looking daringly the world below.' The protagonist painted in grey overtones makes clear the emotional void and spiritual hollowness pervading around the protagonist. '*You Can't Please All* depicts homosexuality,' Khakhar further explains, 'but not necessarily as a central theme.' (Khakhar02) The title of the last part of the Moor Paintings makes clear that the Moor in Aurora's series of dark Moors can easily be identified with the make standing naked in Khakhar's masterpiece. The painting serves to introduce a number of disparity prevailing in the modern metropolitan set up that constitute the character of the protagonist of the novel. The narrator says;

The Moor in exile sequence- the the controversial 'dark Moors', born of passionate irony that had been ground down by pain, and later unjustly accused of 'negativity', 'cynicism', even 'nihilism'-constituted the most important work of Aurora Zogoboiby.'s later years. (Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 301)

The paintings in the series of Naked Moor also owe their origin and genesis to the masterpiece of Khakhar and image of the Naked Moor is taken straight from this masterpiece and is recreated with slight compositional variations. Even in *Mother- Naked Moor Watches Chimene's Arrival*, the role of *You Can't Please All*, (1981) cannot be denied. The image of the protagonist standing as stark naked not only pervades the creative spirit of the milieu but also rules over it with despotic authority. There are however some compositional changes that have been made in narrating the paintings of the Dark Moor. The use of collage is another very significant change introduced by the narrator as there is no use of collage in the original painted by Khakhar. The use of collage, on one hand, suggests the cultural synthesis of the country, and, on the other hand, it is suggestive of the rapid vulgarization of the culture and society. The technique of the painting narrated by the narrator lacks chastity of the classic works of Rembrandt and Goya and even Picasso and Dali and suffers the inclusion of modern devices of the collage that too in the style of Dadaism. The narrator confides;

The unifying narrator/ narrated figure of the of the Moor was usually still present but was increasing characterized a jetsam, and located in an environment of broken and discarded items , pieces of crates and vanaspati tins that were fixed to the surface of the work and painted over. (Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh*, 301)

It is obvious from the above discussion that the modern painting is an inseparable aspect of the technique of narration employed by Rushdie. In the first his first novel, he makes use of the works of March Chagall in structuring the milieu defined in terms of the antithesis between the time bound and the timeless. In the second and third novel- *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* the influence of Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali acquires prominence to delineate the political realities of the Indian subcontinent. Surrealism plays a dominant role in shaping the fantasy and the interrelation of the fantasy and prophesy further confirmed in both the novels. *The Moor's Last Sigh* is the novel with most frequent and outstanding use of paintings in shaping the narrative. Again the role of Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dali becomes prominent in the caste of the narrative. *Aurora* being a natural extension of the legendary painter Amrita Sher Gill, enriches the scope of the inclusion of the paintings in the narrative. It is a very important aspect of the use of paintings in the narrative that these paintings play a functional role in almost every aspect of the technical ambit of the novel. They determine the tone of the narrator and define and meaning and experience latent there in the narrative; they also play an important role in structuring the narrative by paving way for the inclusion of new characters. The characterization is undoubtedly the highly benefitted domain enjoying maximum scintillation taken from the chiaroscuro of the masterpieces painted in the early twentieth century.

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