

Magical Realism: Blurring Demarcation between Historical Reality and Fiction in Lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders

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Abstract

The research delves deep into the concept the mixing of reality and fiction. Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyper reality is used to unveil the fact that the copy of reality is more real than reality. The implication of hyper reality is best suited on the genre of magical realism, where reality is blended so well with the fiction that it seems more real than the actual reality. For this purpose Georges Saunder's novel has been taken as key text. Baudrillard's concept of hyper reality and magical realism provides ample space for the text to be scrutinized that there is amalgamation of historical reality and fiction in this novel. The world of magical realism is presented so naturally that it becomes difficult to differentiate between reality and fiction.

Keywords: *Hyper reality, Magical realism, Bardo, Historical reality, Fiction.*

Introduction

The term "magical realism" is widely used to refer the writing style or technique, which blends the magical as well as supernatural elements with reality and narrated in a realistic way, without any doubt about its authenticity. This term was first coined by German art critic, Franz Roh in 1925, in order to describe Post-expressionist German painting. Roh published his book named as Post Expressionism, Magical Realism: Problems of the Latest European Painting at the climax of modernist avant-garde movement in Europe after World War I. Roh contrived the oxymoron "magical realism" and post-expressionism as an amalgamation of two opposite tendencies: impressionism and expressionism. Roh's contrast between expressionism and post-expressionism can be applicable to magical realism and

realism. Magical realism encompasses the terms like myth/legend, fantastic/supplementation, defamiliarization, imagination/negative capability, mysticism/magic, meta-narrative, open-ended/expansive romanticism, while on the other hand realism is associated with terms like history, mimetic, familiarization, narration, empiricism, rationalization/causes, and closure-ridden / reductive naturalism.

Magical realism was revitalized in Latin America in 1940 and reached to its climax in 1970. Initially, Latin American writer started this movement to represent their culture as dynamic, vibrant and complex. In this attempt, these writers blend reality with magical and extra ordinary elements. It is considered to be originated by Spanish American writers such Miguel Angel Asturias and Alejo Carpentier with their novels, *Men of Maize* and *The Kingdom of World* respectively in 1940. Both of these writers used the native aspects of their culture like folk lore in their works. The most prominent authors of magical realism in literature are Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Mikhail Bulgakov, Carlo Fuentes, George Luis Borges, Isabell Allende and Laura Esquivel.

To elaborate further magical realism the elements of imagination and reality are blended so well that the story which it created does not resemble to its original one. The combination is elaborated so perfectly, that the events in story look like real and natural, and readers accept it as reality without any doubt. In narrative structure, writer creates an atmosphere of ambiguity regarding names, time and place, in order to blend the supernatural with real. In stories having magical realism, the characters are created as an archetype, showing collective unconsciousness of society.

In magical realist novel the events takes place as if they are in the real world. In stories having magical realism phenomena are not imaginative and subjective, but they are represented as concrete and objective, in order to establish balance between reality and magic. The writer tries to incorporate strange and bizarre events with a reality-based statement. The reason for these incredible events is not to be questioned and investigated. Events and characters survive in both real and supernatural world. There is no distinct boundary between the real and the supernatural world. The incidents seem reliable, believable and natural.

Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyper reality is used for the research. According to his concept of hyper-reality, the copy of reality is more original than the real. Further, the effect of magic being more powerful than reality is the blend phenomenon of magical realism. Moreover, Baudrillard theory of simulation is the best implement to the genre of magical realism because the magical reality becomes the simulated reality. Baudrillard has opinion that magical world is a better copy of original one. Simulation of reality or the imaginative reconstruction of the reality is absolutely powerful. Hyper reality being a post modern philosophy blends illusion with reality in a way that distinction between them is blurred and merged. All these will be applied

Magical Realism: Blurring Demarcation between Historical Reality and Fiction in Lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders

on George Saunder's novel *Lincoln in the Bardo* In his novel Saunders blurs the historical reality of with fiction so skillfully that it becomes the whole truth. The novel begins with the fictional characters of ghosts, narrating their stories, and later incorporated, so well with the historical incident of Willie' death, Civil War of America, and Abraham Lincoln. To make it fictional historical novel, Saunders quotes different references from the newspaper, records and letter, and blend these with the fictional concept of bardo and ghost's narrations.

Literature review

Kurkus Review has published its remarks about George Saunders debut novel *Lincoln in the Bardo* and states that the bardo is the core concept in Tibetan Buddhism: a liminal or spiritual space where souls are sent between physical lives. This title is the perfect metaphor for Saunders novel, because it revolves around suspension, personal, historical and familial domains. The *Lincoln in the bardo* in the novel is the 16th president, Abraham Lincoln, who is not only mourning over the death of his son, Willie; rather he is in deep agony. Saunders skillfully blend the historical account with his own multi-voiced and fragmentary narration as young Willie trapped in the bardo, and his father is the only link between the living and the dead. Saunders through his brilliance talks about the individual loss and connects it with the nation's state of chaos. In 1862, Civil War in America was on it full rage and Abraham Lincoln was in great despair due to Willie's untimely death. Because of Willie's death, Lincoln developed a deep insight, upon which he decided that "swift halt [to the war] (therefore the greatest mercy) might be bloodiest". This is harsh reality, that brutality may save later lives and this point gives novel a bitter moral reality. In the novel, the conference of multiple voices overlaps, argues and enhances the narrative scope of the text. It is also callous and rigorous not only because of Lincoln, but also due to existential state of the graveyard and Lincoln's himself. Like all the ghosts, who are present in this book, Lincoln has also become a shadow himself.

Michael J. Sander's review about *Lincoln in the Bardo* has been published by Kenyon Review. In his review Sanders makes comparison *Lincoln in the Bardo* with *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* which is a comic reincarnation in American fiction. W.Y. Evan, the theosophist observes that the novel's Tibetan title symbolizes the "The Liberating by Hearing" on the After-Death Plane (bardo). But it is shown that the souls wander for seven weeks, it is easy to get Evans-Wentz two words re-echoed in *The Crying of Lot 49*" (1965). Likely, Don Dellilo has often quoted that the title "White Nose" (1985) was *The American Book of Dead*. Similarly, this idea of *The Tibetan Book of Dead* as an allegory for the American nation, has impact of making characters, the reader, and America to attempt through their own experiences. All these three works eagerly catches the voices of the voiceless stirring all around the world. *Lincoln in the Bardo* starts with the chapters substituting between pure fiction

and parody of historical accounts. Saunders limitizes himself and even any voice to go for more than a few lines, creates a scenario for the reader like the historian. The enchanting result, that appears as every page is a narrative itself in a bardo, an in-between state between reality and fiction, imagined life and real life. Saunders recalls us that in today's world, we are still coping up with white and male privilege, the horrors and tragedies of a war economy, racism and slavery.

Bill Gates in Gates Notes accounts his review about Lincoln in the Bardo and states that lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders gave him a new prospect on America's 16th president No doubt, it is a work of fiction but it leads towards new path to look at his life. The novel takes place over the duration of one night, when Willie Lincoln died, Abraham Lincoln's 11 years old son. The "bardo" symbolizes the purgatory like place where spirits linger on after death, because they do not consider the reality, that they are dead. Willie refuses to leave bardo, as it is dangerous place for children, because his father has promised him to visit him again. The major part of book centers on the other spirits in bardo, who try to convince Willie to leave the bardo. Saunders also uses incidents from historical context. Saunders combines history and fiction. Some of the incidents have been quoted from the real sources. The same is the case with ghosts, some ghosts are based on real people, other are imagined. Saunder's portrays Lincoln as a man who is crushed by the burden of despair and remorse as well as responsibility. The grief of losing child is unbearable for any parents, while Lincoln is also under pressure of responsibility as president. The president has come to a new understanding about the families of soldiers who send their sons towards battlefield in grief of loss and uncertainty. Lincoln in the Bardo is a worth reading stuff having multiple dimension of reality and fiction.

Michiko Kakutani in The New York Time expresses his views about Lincoln in the Bardo, that it is like a strange folk art where cemetery gets alive. The supernatural elements in the novel grow with the passage of time in the novel. The voices of ghost gain emotional height as the novel continues. This links to Lincoln's own grief to the losses which are suffered by the nation during Civil War. Saunders' novel gets a compelling impact when it centers on Lincoln as a stout, grave, compassionate figure under the burden of personal gloom and pressure of war, indulged in depth of his humanity. Saunders beautifully portrays Lincoln's personal bardo where he is in deep sorrow of his loss. Saunders quotes about Lincoln, "His mind was freshly inclined towards sorrow, towards the fact that the world was full of sorrow; that all were suffering".

Random House has published review about the novel and praises the expertise of George Saunders that he blends the historical truth with unforgettable story of familial love and loss. It liberates it from realistic, historical framework into a supernatural realm, which is at a time humorous and frightening. Lincoln in a Bardo is a wonderful stunt of imagination and a story step forward taken by the most

Magical Realism: Blurring Demarcation between Historical Reality and Fiction in Lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders

important writer. Saunders has invented a miraculous form that unfolds a kaleidoscopic, purview of voices- living and dead, fiction and reality, historical and invented.

In *The Atlantic*, Caleb Grain talks about sentimental sadism about George Saunders' *Lincoln in the Bardo*. The story has taken place in bardo, a term Saunders borrows from Buddhism and is called "just after life". In this state the ghosts leave their physical body, and entangle between the worlds where they do not know either they are alive or dead. The ghosts linger on in this world. This phenomenon can be seen in movies like *The Sixth Sense*. The novel is blend of film script and historical account of Civil war, in which some incident are original and some are fictional. Willie Lincoln wants to stay in bardo due to his father's grief and visit, despite of the danger in staying in bardo. Here Saunders introduces the principles of ghostology that is the physical decline which overcomes ghosts who lingers on after their death.

Sadism and sentimentality is prevailing all over in the novel. Saunders Lincoln relegates that "we must try to see another---as suffering, limited beings". *Lincoln in Bardo* is Civil War land which is painted brightly and counts the era in detail in well-curate manner. The ghosts who seems trickster at the beginning of the novel, become heroes. It is the blend of salty-sweet mixture of brutality and nostalgia.

Jason Sheehan shares his views about the novel *Lincoln in the Bardo* as it takes a simple start with a party and with a death. But party is not a simple party as it is a state dinner at the White House which was hosted by Abraham Lincoln and Marry Todd Lincoln, just at the beginning of the Civil War. It was not the simple death because it is the death of Abraham Lincoln's beloved son Willie and he has been buried in George Town cemetery.

Saunders story is full ghosts like soldiers, children, rapists, virgins, slaves, fools, drunk and many more including Willie Lincoln , all of them are tangled in bardo. The spirits continuously gives advice to Willie to leave that place. It is not an easy novel but it becomes easier as we read it. At first it looks like a jumble of interruption but there are moments of transcendent beauty. With the quality of stream of consciousness, it is told with beautiful voices.

Saunders through his ghosts and historians creates an array of grief. Lincoln's sorrow was witnessed by the ghosts and experienced by Willie. The pain deteriorates the president into his own bardo. There is a comparison between civil war stricken America and Lincoln's own dejection. Lincoln's goes to cemetery in the middle of story's single night and opens Willie's casket, holds his body in his arm. He wants to mourn alone and sense the weight of his body one more time in his lap. He stands at the brink of war, which will smother thousands of lives. Saunders seeks harsh truth, "that all lives end to soon. That no one leaves complete. That letting go is the best, hardest thing anyone- even dead can do".

Research Methodology and Theoretical Framework

This is a qualitative and interpretive research. Lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders has been taken as key work. Different articles, research papers have been taken for support and references. Jean Baudrillard has been considered as key theorist for the research. Jean Baudrillard's concept of hyperreality is used as key concept of this research. The work of Baudrillard 'Simulacra and Simulacrum' is going to provide the basis for the research. In his work, Jean Baudrillard focuses upon the concept of hyperreality in postmodern world. The very start of the cult text brings to light the fluid nature of reality and truth. "The simulacrum is never that which conceals the truth....it is the truth which conceals that there is none. The simulacrum is true" (Baudrillard, 1994). Baudrillard theory of simulation is applicable to the genre of the magical realism as the magical reality becomes the simulated reality, as the reality of Disneyland. According to Baudrillard, the simulated version of reality, specifically the magic reality, is no longer a question of copy or parody. It is a matter of altering the signs of the real for the real. Baudrillard questions the absolute and fixed nature of reality and proposes that in the postmodern world, reality is as varied as people to perceive it. He is also of the opinion that simulacrum copy is never exchanged for the real. It is actually exchanged for its own self. In the words of Baudrillard, the following are the stages successive phases of an image- a creation of mind, a magical reality. It is the reflection of a profound reality and veils the profound reality. It curtails the absence of a profound reality. It has no relation to any reality. According to Baudrillard, magical world is a better copy of the original. He says our current society has replaced the actual reality. The society we move in is lacking in actual meanings. Simulation of reality or the imaginative reconstruction of reality is quite powerful. It's not fake. It bubbles with creativity and meanings.

Analysis

Postmodern literature especially magical realism provides the road map for the contextual analysis of the text which reflects the idea of magical realism and hyper-reality. Magical realism refers to the genre in which facts and reality are blended with magic in such a way that they look like more real than real. According to Jean Baudrillard hyper-reality depicts the idea of mixing illusion with reality to blur and merge the distinction between them

George Saunders in his experimental novel Lincoln in the Bardo uses the techniques of magical realism and hype-reality to merge the historical reality with fiction. In doing so he creates a more realistic way to portray human emotions and historical realities. In his novel he narrates the story of the 16th president of United States of America, Abraham Lincoln. The story starts in a cemetery and the narrators are ghosts. The novel begins at that stage when America was going towards Civil War and Willie Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's beloved son died due to typhoid. After the burial of Willie, Abraham Lincoln out of immense grief visits the cemetery at almost

Magical Realism: Blurring Demarcation between Historical Reality and Fiction in Lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders

midnight, where Willie's ghost and other ghosts witness Abraham Lincoln mourning at Willie's tomb. The ghosts try to convince Willie to leave that place which is called bardo, but Willie refuses when he sees his father coming to his tomb and promises to visit him again. At last the ghosts become succeeded in convincing Willie to leave that place and goes towards heaven. Abraham Lincoln at the end of novel encounters a new insight through which he realizes that acceptance of reality is the only choice, we humans have in the course of life. Moreover the parent-child relationship can be seen in its most affectionate way that Willie refuses to leave bardo despite of the danger and Abraham Lincoln comes to hold his boy for the last time irrespective of the fact his presidency.

First of all the title is very symbolic because it demarcates the distinction between reality and fiction. Bardo in Tibetan Buddhism is a place like purgatory, where souls after death, go to purify their souls before entering to heaven. Now according to title the situation is ambiguous because it is not confirmed which Lincoln resides in bardo, Willie or Abraham. There is possibility of both stances because Willie is dead and his ghost becomes entangled in bardo, or Lincoln in title is Abraham Lincoln because, due to desperate grief of loss he is in bardo to purify his soul. Saunders from the title, indicates his readers that they are going to read something unusual.

The story is narrated by the speeches and the narration is passed from hand to hand, mainly among trio-ghosts consisting of a young gay man, who has committed suicide after being rejected by his lover, an elderly reverend and the middle-aged printer who was killed in an accident before he could consummate his marriage to his young wife. These ghosts share their stories in manner that it becomes difficult to understand whether they are dead or alive. One of the ghost named as Hans Vollman accounts the accident before his death in a realistic way as it looks like that he is narrating his daily routine, "I went to my printing offices in the morning fighting the gravitational pull that bid me stay home. And that day-alas-was the day of beam" (Saunders, 2017, p.5). Hans Vollman even denies accepting the reality, that he is dead rather he considers his coffin as sick box. He thinks that he is just sick and will be fine after physician's treatment. Even he talks about his funeral when his coffin is carried towards cemetery, "Then the physician returned, and his assistants carried my sick-box to his sick-cart, I saw that-I saw that our plan must be indefinitely delayed" (Saunders, 2017, p.5). In these lines Vollmans regrets over his unfulfilled desire and hopes that he will fulfill his desire to consummate his marriage after recovering. He does not realize that he cannot fulfill his desire. The character of Vollmans is a fictional character, but how does he share his story makes him a real character blurring the line between fiction and reality. Afterward Hans Vollmans and his fellow ghost named as, Roger Bevins III talk about the funeral of Willie Lincoln and feel pity

that at very young he has been given a sick-box because they think like them, the boy is just sick not dead, "My apologies. Good God. To be confined to sick box while still a child" (Saunders, 2017, p.6). Then in chapter nine the second ghost, Roger Revin III explains about his suicide in a very philosophical manner. Revin III after rejection from his lover cut out his wrist out of dejection. But when he sees pool of blood, only then he realizes that life is the most beautiful blessing which God has blessed the man with. Even after cutting his wrist he tries to save himself by crawling down to kitchen from his room. But unfortunately no one was to see him and Revin III dies due to loss of blood. Bevin III narrates his story and says, "I changed my mind. Only then did I realize how unspeakably beautiful all of this was, how precisely engineered for our pleasure, and saw that I was on the brink of squandering a wondrous gift..." (Saunders, 2017, p. 25). Saunders narrates the traumatic event of the ghosts in so heart touching way that they look like the story of every person in the world. The sorrows of unfulfilled wishes which are expressed by the ghosts are related with the desires of every common man, who becomes unable to acquire his desire due the hurdles of life and harsh realities. Moreover, interestingly Saunders incorporates the stories of ghosts so naturally that they are considered as autobiographies of actual person. While portraying ghosts' stories, Saunders shows his talent by blending the fiction with realities of life.

Saunders shows his expertise by intermingling, the historical events with fiction. Like when the story begins it was the time of Civil War. Saunders quotes different historical report, letters and notes from history in the novel. There is a clear reference of war when Saunders quotes, "The war was less than a year old. We did not yet know what it was (In "A Thrilling Youth: A Civil War Adolescence," by E.G. Frame.) (Saunders, 2017, p.12). Moreover, Saunders depicts the whole event of state dinner which was organized by Abraham Lincoln and Marry Todd Lincoln in White House, at the brink of Civil War. To elaborate the grandeur of the state dinner, Saunders highlights the actual reports which were recorded at that time, "Mrs. Lincoln had engaged the esteemed caterer C. Heerd of New York. The cost was rumoured to be over ten thousand dollars. Nor had any detail been overlooked; the chandeliers were garland with the flower, the serving tables decorated with rose petals scattered over cut rectangles of mirror. Brunt, op.cit." (Saunders, 2017, p.13) Through these detail Saunders explains the lavish state dinner which was actually the part of history and has factual basis. Meanwhile it has been accounted historically the state dinner was at that night when Willie was severely suffering from fever due to typhoid. Abraham Lincoln and Marry Todd were pretending as courteous hosts while in depth they were in deep worry due to Willie's illness. They were performing their responsibility Abraham Lincoln as president and Marry Todd Lincoln as the first lady to entertain their guests, but they were like ordinary parents when it came to Willie. Saunders accounts the feelings of Abraham Lincoln and his wife when he quotes, "Yet

Magical Realism: Blurring Demarcation between Historical Reality and Fiction in Lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders

there was no joy in the evening for the mechanically smiling hostess and her husband. They kept climbing the stairs to see how Willie was, and he was not doing well at all. Kunhardt and Kunhardt,op.cit.” (Saunders, 2017, p. 15). Saunders closely captures the feelings of the parents who are in great trouble due to their ill child. The child parent relationship is so pure that even at the peak of responsibility, parents never forget their children. Willie Lincoln was the beloved son of Abraham Lincoln and he perceived Willie like a gentle man who would be a great man of USA. Willie Lincoln from his childhood shown his deep side of maturity and humanity that everybody within or outside the White House admired him. Saunders quotes historical records in appraisal of Willie Lincoln, “Willie Lincoln was the most loveable boy I ever knew, bright, sensible, sweet-tempered and gentle mannered. In “Tad Lincoln’s Father,” By Julia Taft Bayne” (Saunders, 2017, p. 51). After Willie’s death his parents remain in torment of their grief for so long that people around them feel the agony and gloom of Abraham and Marry Lincoln. After the burial of Willie, Abraham Lincoln out of his desperate grief goes to cemetery at mid night on to hold Willie’s body and to mourn for his death in his solitude. Here Saunders intermingles the reality with fiction when Abraham holds the body of Willie for ten minutes, then the ghost of Willie sees his father and even tries to call him. Out of frustration Willie enters the body of himself in struggle to communicate with his father and tries to make his father feel his presence, “The boy began to enter himself, had soon entered himself entirely, and at this, the man began sobbing anew, as if he could feel the altered condition of that which he held” (Saunders, 2017, p. 59). This scene of Abraham Lincoln holding the body of Willie depicts the deepest feeling of a father towards his child that even after his death, the father never let him go. This sense of selfless love of parenthood has universal appeal, which Saunders has depicted in his novel, by blending fiction with reality. Even the ghosts get moved when they see the melancholy of Abraham Lincoln. The ghosts recall their own relatives who never ever show such pure love towards them as Abraham shows towards Willie. Abraham Lincoln promises the dead boy that he will visit him again despite of the fact that he will never be get alive again. The promise by Abraham Lincoln has been affirmed by the ghost, named as The Reverend Everly Thomas, “He said he will come again, he said. He promised. I found myself immeasurably and inexplicably moved” (Saunders, 2017, p. 63) Moreover, Saunders depicts the characters of ghosts as alive human beings because they feel and express their emotions towards Willie and Abraham Lincoln in a natural way even, they themselves forget their own grief unfulfilled desire and experience the pain of a father and child. Despite of ghost they show the pure love and respect for both Willie and Abraham Lincoln and admire the relationship between them. Here Saunders again the power of magical realism intermingle the real fact with fiction that they seem to represent and encompass the most pure form of love and care. The ghosts like well

wisher try to convince Willie to leave bardo because they know that this place is unsuitable for him rather it is dangerous for him. These all element combining together blur the fiction with reality because even after death the ghosts show the perfect human side of humanity.

Saunders through the characters of ghosts puts forward his philosophy about life. The ghosts converse with each other about sorrows, losses and reality of life, that it seems, that they are alive, intellectuals not ghosts. When Willie Lincoln finally abandons bardo, Hans Vollman associates his and his ghosts friends sorrow with the suffering of human life, "At the core of each lay suffering; our eventual end, the many losses we must experience on the way to that end", (Saunders, 2017, p.308). At the start of the novel their conversation was ridiculous but as novel develops, their conversation becomes mature. Even the ghosts narrate the experience of Abraham Lincoln that finally on the departure from the cemetery, he becomes calm and accepts the reality of loss and composes himself to fight with the challenges of his life as president, "He was in a fight. Although those he fought were also suffering, limited beings, he must..." (Saunders, 2017, p. Although those he fought were also suffering, limited beings, he must..." (Saunders, 2017, p. 309). These lines also depict the human limitation that no matter what the rank and status does a man possess, he is helpless in front of his fate and limitation. No one can go beyond the limitations which have been set by God. Even ghosts become the mouth piece of Saunders when he tries to criticize the decision of Civil War made by president. They show the humanly emotions related to soldiers and war and try to depict the horror of war. Being the ghosts they have nothing to do with the soldiers or war but they are commenting on this like alive human being more accurately like historians. They are exploring the deep insight which can be related to the feelings of the families of the soldiers. They represent themselves like philosophers who are pondering about the human condition during war, "He must do all we could, in the light of the many soldiers lying dead and wounded...more of these boys, each of whom was once dear to someone" (Saunders, 2017, p.306). Actually by these philosophical notes, Saunders presents his ghost in quite a different manner from the gothic novel. While comparing Saunders' ghost with typical ghosts of gothic, it becomes clear that ghost in Lincoln in the Bardo are not merely representing the gothic element rather they are showing themselves more humanly characters than any other character in the novel. They become the hero of the novel when they save Willie. By this outlook of the novel, it is considered as the best experiment done by Saunders being made ghosts the heroes of his novel. He presents his ghosts in so realistic manner that they can be compare with human beings in their intellect, feelings and thoughts.

Saunders account many historical events in the novel, and it can be said that some of them are real events while other are the products of his minds. It becomes difficult to differentiate among the events that which one is true and which one is

Magical Realism: Blurring Demarcation between Historical Reality and Fiction in Lincoln in the Bardo by George Saunders

imagination, blending historical reality with fiction. Like in chapter twenty there are a lot of controversial statements, which show the aggression of the people about Abraham Lincoln and Civil War, "Vain, weak, puerile, hypocritical, without manners, with social grace, and as he talks to you, punches his fits under your ribs. In "The War Years", by Carl Sandburg, account of Sherrard Clement" (Saunders, 2017, p. 232). Now from this quotation one can understand that it is about Abraham Lincoln and his views about war but it is not clear that whether these comments are real or imaginative.

From the above analysis it can be said that Saunders in Lincoln in the Bardo creates a world of narration where fiction is blended so well with historical reality, that fiction becomes the part of historical reality and vice versa.

Conclusion

From the above discussion it can be concluded that George Saunders in his novel Lincoln in the Bardo has created a wonderful world, full of humanly ghosts, where we can find each and every universal instinct of humanity. By using magical realism and hyper reality, Saunders unbounds the historical realities and amalgamate them so immensely into a fictional world that it becomes more real than real. Saunders, for his narration selects very different kind of narrator and in a very unique manner that this novel undoubtedly called an experimental novel having brilliance of intellect and expertise. Abraham Lincoln which has been portrayed in the novel gives the more accurate sketch than any historical book. Even the narrative style which Saunders has chosen is very enigmatic. Saunders with his narrative technique portrays his ghosts so realistically that they seem like real historians and philosopher. Saunders blends the historical reality with fiction in a manner that it becomes a hard task to differentiate between reality and fiction. Magical realism and hyper reality give the novel an atmosphere of unusual being narrated in a usual manner.



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