

Inside the Black Box: Poetics of Dream Narration in Salman Rushdie's Fiction
(Working Title)

Abstract:

The aim of this dissertation project is to analyse the representations of dream sequences which persistently recur in the fiction of Salman Rushdie and influence the architecture of his work. The focus of the thesis is on the structures and functions of dream narration in Rushdie's work and on the complex nesting of dreams into the body of a narrative. The project seeks to follow the evolution of Rushdie's use of dreams as a stylistic device over the course of time, by investigating his early novels in conjunction with his more recent work. The analysis of temporal progression in the treatment of dream sequences in Rushdie's fiction might offer a broader and more comprehensive view of dreams as a shifting category in his work and demonstrate the development of author's poetic thought and practice. I argue that dreaming as a textual and interpretive device is in relation to the boundary crossing, while dreams as an anomalous, textual Other represent a thin, porous membrane that ruptures easily. I intend to combine the close reading of Rushdie's texts with psychoanalytic and neuro-psychoanalytic theoretical discussions, and to rely on the insights from the nature of knowledge search within sciences. All these fields are engaged in dream analysis and they consequently challenge or reinforce the narrative, so they will be read together in the hope of examining their interplay but without subsuming dreams under any of the theories. The main perspective of the thesis remains that of literary and cultural studies.