Schema Disruption in the Re-writing of History: Salman Rushdie's *East, West*

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ABSTRACT

Salman RusMie is well-known for his spectacular new versions of history, both Indian and world history. As he re-writes the events, exploring the contentious fault-lines of cultural debate, he uses an approach that involves inserting the innovative or unexpected into the familiar. In this study, we show how the familiar schema of KINGSHIP is dismpted by its interrelation with other schemata like SALESMANSHIP, LOVE and CHIVALRY, in the stop "Christopher Columbus and Queen Isabella of Spain Consummate Their Relationship (Santa Fé, AD 1492)" in Rushdie's 1995 collection of short stories, "East, West". Through application of Guy Cook's theory which is based upon a combination of discourse analysis, schema theory and literary theory, we can point to the instances in the text where the norms contained in the schemata, which encapsulate the reader's expectations once they have been triggered, are questioned by discourse deviation and schema refreshment. Here, Christopher Columbus is presented as a salesman trying to sell his product, or a medieval knight fighting for his lady. The formal discourse of the narrarion and of the concept of chivalry is also dismpted by an informal discourse proper to travelling salesmen. Thus the historic and momentous meets the quotidian.
KEY WORDS: Salman Rushdie, *East, West,* discourse deviarion, schema refreshment

RESUMEN

A Salman Rushdie se le conoce por sus nuevas versiones de la historia. tanto de la India, como de otras panes del mundo. Escribe los acontecimientos de nuevo, explorando las contenciosas líneas de falla del debate cultural. Para hacer esto, utiliza un enfoque en que lo novedoso o inesperado se insertan en un fondo familiar. En este estudio, demostramos cómo el "esquema" familiar de "El Rey" es afectado por su interrelación con otros esquemas como "El vendedor ambulante", "El amor" y "El caballero andante", en el relato "Christopher Columbus and Queen Isabella of Spain Consummate Their Relationship (Santa Fé, AD 1492)" en el volumen de cuentos de RusMie de 1995, "East, West". Al aplicar la teon'a de Guy Cook, que se basa en una combinación del análisis del discurso, de la teoná de los esquemas y de la teoná literaria, podemos señalar los ejemplos en el texto donde se cuestiona lo familiar contenido en los esquemas. los cuales representan las expectativas del lector, una vez despenadas. Se cuestiona mediante la desviación del discurso y la actualización o el reciclaje de los esquemas. Cristóbal Colón es presentado como vendedor ambulante o como caballero andante, así que lo trascendental se encuentra con lo cotidiano en una nueva versión de los hechos.
PALABRAS CLAVE: Salman Rushdie, *East*, Wesr, desviación del discurso, reciclaje de esquemas

0. INTRODUCTION

   Salrnan Rushdie has consecrated his life, at great risk to it, to the post-colonial re-writing of world history. While he explores those "rnost contentious fault-lines of cultural debate --metropolis/periphery, atavism/modernity, fundamentalismí multiculturalism--" (Bhabha 1994), he works in the interstices of another pair of opposites: the rnornentouslthe insignificant. Indeed, his reviewer, the writer Horni Bhabha, says he has "a fine sense of the little things of life" (Bhabha 1994). Another Rushdie hallrnark is a trernendous sense of hurnour. rnanifested through verbal wit in the tradition of Laurence Sterne. It is small wonder that in one of his latest collections of short stories, East, West, (1994) (1), there is a pastiche Shandean re-writing of *Hamlet*, called "Yorick".

   This collection questions the strict dichotorny of East/West (it uses a comma rather than a stroke to separate thern), and brings the two together, especially in its final section. It has three sections, each with three stories. Section One ("East") has three rnodern but Oriental tales, Section Two ("West"), starts with the "Yorick" story and ends with one about Spain and the discovery of Arnerica: "Christopher Colurnbus and Queen Isabella of Spain Consurnrnate Their Relationship (*Sante* Fé, AD 1492)". The final section, ("East, West"). has three stories which explore East-West relations in literature, the occult, the cinema, and such rnodern ailrnents as terrorisrn. So, for example, in the second story, "Chekov and Zulu", we have diplornats involved in the assassination of Indira Gandhi playing out *Star* Trek fantasies.

   On the front cover there is a remark about Rushdie by Nadine Gordimer: "The rnost original imagination writing today." Like all Rushdie's fiction, East, *West* is a feat of the irnagination. For imaginative writing to be successful, the writer rnust have sorne control over the irnaginations of his or her readers, in order to be able to carry the reader along. Horni Bhabha describes Rushdie's unorthodox rnethod of creating narrative suspense:

> In Midnighr's *Children*, it is the tic and twitch of Padrna's thigh rnuscles, as they respond to every twist and turn in the story of Cyrus the Great, that provide Saleern Sinai with his first lesson in storytelling: '[…]what happened is less important than what theauthor can persuade his audience to believe.'[…] The silences in these stories occur whenthe narrator pauses to rnake sure, like the young Saleern Sinai, that he is carrying hisaudience with him; that their rnuscles are twitching in time with the tale. (Bhabha 1994)

   The path of the imagination is run in leaps and bounds by Rushdie, with significant silences interpolated. In this essay, we contend that Rushdie is able to rnake these leaps and bounds and carry the reader along because he works with schernata which are recognisable to the reader. He may jurnp frorn one field to another, there rnay even be apparent incornpatibility of schernata, but because they are inherently structured, the writer knows that sorne elernent in the structuring of one scherna will tie in sornehow with one or more elernents in the other scherna or schemata evoked in the reader's rnind.

   To illustrate this thesis, we are going to focus upon the tale about Christopher Colurnbus. The rnodel for analysis which we are going to use is that invented by Guy Cook to detect, analyse and describe the functions of schernata in texts. It sets up frameworks in the form of scenarios in which the events are re-enacted. Rushdie recreates rnornentous

events of history --here the discovery of America-- and asks us to review thern in a new light, which invariably involves the "little things", the quotidian. In the Columbus story. he explores the interface of power and sex. But the seriousness of the momentous occasion is subverted by his disrupting the tone and register of the formal discourse with a contemporary informal discourse. Firstly, we will rnap out the schemata that dominate the tale, and then briefly describe Cook's schema theory model. Finally, following Cook's approach, we establish the structures in the different schemata and trace the relationships between them that account for the coherence and also the verbal wit in the tale.

I. THE PRINCIPAL SCHEMATA INVOKED IN "CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS AND QUEEN ISABELLA OF SPAIN CONSUMMATE THEIR FELATIONSHIP (*SANTA FÉ*, AD 1492)"

The opening of "Christopher Colurnbus..." evokes, quite naturally, the scherna of KINGSHIP. but curiously, it evokes at the same time a WOMAN scherna, as the anonyrnous narrator refers to *Queen Isabella:*

> Columbus, a foreigner, follows Queen Isabella for an eternity without entirely giving up hope. (107)

But the next schema evoked is that of LOVE, for an anonymous cornmentator then speaks:

> *In what characteristic postures?*[…] But, on his first arrival at court,when the Queen herself asked him what he desired, he […] rnurmured a single, dangerous word. 'Consumrnation.' (107)

The next schemata introduced are those of a MAN schema, and of a DOOR-TO-DOOR SALESMAN, with a "confidence-man's charm". This "confidence-man" has already been described as a foreigner, so the schema of NATIONAL/FOREIGN is introduced. A more striking scherna is that of the KNIGHT in shining armour, where Columbus wants to "tie the Queen's favour to his helmet, like a knight in a romance." This is subverted by the addition "(He owns no helmet.)", and the next statement of the narrator's which is from an informal register: "He has hopes of cash.", thus breaking the formal tone of the narration. The final scenario evoked in the opening passage is that of children reciting poetry or playing with words at school: "in fourteen hundred and ninety-two, sailing across the ocean blue."

II. GUY COOK'S MODEL FOR ANALYSING SCHEMATA IN TEXTS

While the main work in which Guy Cook describes his findings is his 1994 *Discourse and Literature* (Cook 1994), he offered a preview of his ideas on schema theory in a plenary lecture at the *Primeras Jornadas Internacionales de Lingüística Aplicada* held at the University of Granada on 11-15 January 1993:

> The general proposal of schema theory concerning discourse processing is

> well-known: a schema is a mental representation of a typical instance, and various types of schema have been proposed. The relationship of schemata to discourse would be as follows: enough detail is given in a discourse to trigger the selection of a schema in the receiver's mind. This schema is then used in top-down processing. Other than that. details are given only where there is a divergence from the schema. Unrnentioned details - default elements as they are called - can if necessary be retrieved from the share of knowledge, from the share of schema. (Cook 1995, 146)

In his "Introduction" to *Discourse and Literature,* Cook states his intention to clarify certain processes in writer-reader relations that underlie and account for the power of some texts. He says the following: "there is a type of discourse which has a particular effect on the mind, refreshing and changing our mental representations of the world. […] It derives, I believe, from an interaction of textual form with a reader's pre-existing mental representations." (Cook 1994, 4) Cook traces the history of schema theory from its origins in the Gestalt psychology of the 1920s and 1930s. In reviewing the general principles of schema theory, he acknowledges that pragmatic analysis of discourse assumes both shared knowledge and processing rules, and that he personally belongs to the school which stresses the importance of the former. His defínition of the function of schemata is as follows:

> A theory of knowledge in interaction with text is provided by the notion of 'schemata'. These are mental representations of typical instances, and the suggestion is that they are used in discourse processing to predict and make sense of the particular instance which the discourse describes. The idea is that the mind, stimulated either by key linguistic items in the text (often referred to as 'triggers' (see Pitrat 198511988), or by the context, activates a schema, and uses it to make sense of the discourse. In this sense schemata are 'norms' and individual facts are 'deviations'. (Cook 1994, 11)

The mental ability in the reader to add to the norm, to supply details by reading them in in their absence, is of particular relevance to literary narrative. The reader is prompted by a point of reference and left to use his knowledge or imagination to fíll in the possible gaps. This filling in is not totally arbitrary, but governed by the limits of the schema. The postulation of the functioning of schemata at both a conscious and a subconscious level can help to account for the mechanisms of ommission and retrieval and the background conditions for the activation of these processes. Charles Filimore, in his article "Frames and the semantics of understanding" had shown how certain word groups are held together by "the fact of their being motivated by, founded on, and co-structured with, specific united frameworks of knowledge, or coherent schematizations of experience" (Filimore 1985,223). He uses the general word "frame", drawing upon Minsky, Winograd and Charniak (all 1975). while pointing out that his own earlier "scene" (1977), Bartlett's "schema" of 1932, taken up by Rumelhart (1975 and 1980) and favoured by Guy Cook, Schank and Abelson's "script" (1977), de Beaugrande and Dressler's "global pattern" (1981), Lakoff's "cognitive model" (1983) and Lakoff and Johnson's "experiential gestalt" (1980) are all essentially describing the same phenomenon. Meanings are not "contained" within the text, but are constmcted in the interaction between the text and the interpreter's background knowledge. The goal of Fillmore's model of "U-semantics" is to uncover the nature of the relationship

between linguistic texts and the interpreter's full understanding of the texts in their contexts (Fillmore 1985, 231). He shows how a frame is invoked when the interpreter, in trying to make sense of a text segment, is able to assign it an interpretation by situating its content in a pattern that is known independently of the text. (Fillmore 1985, 232). But Fillmore, with his semantic theory, is not the only one to take up frame or schema theory, it has been pressed into service in other areas like second and foreign language learning (e.g. Carrel and Eisterhold 1988) and story processing (e.g. Rumelhart 1975).

Cook picks upon the seminal model of schema theory put forward by Schank and Abelson in their 1977 book *Scripts, Plans, Goals and Understanding.* Despite ongoing modification by the authors, Cook maintains the superiority of this model for his purposes. The main advantage of schema theory, as set out in their model, to explain effects in literature, is that while schemata enable us to omit a sequence of well-known causal links. thus saving time and making for compression of thought, they enable us to provide them if needed. Hence a writer can assume that a reader is following him or her, since once a schema has been activated, the links in the chain underlie the overt representation made by the selected items, and the reader may be either consciously or subconsciously aware of them. If a writer wishes to explicitly mention all the links, he or she has that option available for whatever purpose.

Cook claims that the Schank and Abelson version is one of the most "detailed, rigorous, well-known, and influential" versions (Cook 1994, 80) of schema theory, but before we can apply it in *East, West,* we must obviously show how Cook explains and applies it himself. We refer particularly to Chapter Three of *Discourse and Literature.* Here, Cooks shows that the basic claim of schema theory is that human understanding, and here, text understanding, can be represented as a hierarchy of levels of schemata in which failure to understand on one level can be corrected by referring to the level above. A theory of coherence may be extrapolated from this, whereby failure of correction at a lower level may be referred to a higher one. What exactly are these levels that we are talking about? Schank and Abelson define them in the following paradigmatic terms:

> THEMES
> GOALS
> SUB-GOALS
> PLANS
> SCRIPTS

Cook explains these, working through the categories from bottom to top.

SCRIPTS

Scripts are structures "that describe appropriate sequences of events in a particular context [...] a predetermined, stereotyped sequence of actions that defines a well-known situation" (Schank and Abelson 1977, 41). They fall into three main categories: situational, personal and instrumental. A script may have a number of "tracks", which are different but related instances of the same general category. Each script is represented from the point of view of one of the participants and his or her role in it. Each script also has an "essential precondition" and a "main consequence". In addition, each script has a number of "slots" (similar to default elements) whose realization can be assumed unless there is information to

the contrary. The slots in a script are: a nurnber of props, the roles of participants, the entry conditions, results and scenes and their sequence.

The **distinguishing feature** of scripts, as a type of scherna, is that these slots are instantiated by quite specific **entities** and events. Cook (1994, 81) gives **us** the exarnple of a "trial" script frorn the point of view of a **judge**. The props would be a wig or a gavel, and the roles would be defendant, lawyers, witnesses, etc. **The** entry condition would be "being appointed to hear the case"; the **result** would be the verdict and **punishment** or exoneration. and the scenes would be indictment, plea, defence case, etc. A script, it is clairned. is activated by any one of a nurnber of "headers" **concerning** the preconditions. It can be activated by specific mention of one of the participants, the **occupant** of a slot, or a location habitually associated with the script. In text understanding, script activation enables details to be bypassed, or provided by the default elernents of the script, as required. Alrnost no script would function in a straightforward way **within** a text, however, or it would **have little** to recornrnend for itself. Most are cornplicated with obstacles, **deviations**, and errors, **usually** to foreground one aspect or other. Cook **lists** the **following** to look for: the incidental mention of potential "headers" for other scripts, the concurrent activation of rival scripts which will then compete to be the one used in understanding, the concurrent **running** of more than one script, or of one script as part of another, "headers" which may **create** "scriptal **ambiguity**" as to which of a number of scripts that share them **is** the one to activate, obstacles to the course of events which rnay necessitate either a loop back to an earlier point, or script abandonment, unexpected events which may lead to scripts being abandoned or held in abeyance **until** the event has run its course, movernent frorn one script to another (Cook 1994, 82).

PLANS

Schank and Abelson define plans and **distinguish** thern frorn scripts by saying that there are experiences which are so novel and unpredictable as to dernand interpretation with **reference** to a structure which is not so specific in **its** elernents. A "plan" is therefore a scherna in the sense that **it consists** of ordered slots, but **it is** far less **explicitly connected** to specified places, **individuals**, or locations. **Plans** are ordered **in** that they realize goals, which rnay thernselves be subordinate to higher goals. The recognition of the goal, or sub-goal, and the stages of the plan to realize it, establishes **coherence**. Suspension of goal revelation by the writer is **accompanied** by growing dernand for knowledge of the goal on the part of the reader, which rnust be satisfied at sorne **later** point.

GOALS AND SUB-GOALS

Schank and Abelson identify five main goals as **objectives** of possible plans or scripts of agents in a discourse. They are: satisfaction, **enjoyment**, achievernent, **preservation** and crisis handling. The dividing **line** between goals and plans **is** fuzzy, but there are certain "basic" goals most people can agree upon. Literary writing very often **concerns** itself with departure frorn expected goals.

THEMES

Just as plans and scripts dernand goals, so goals need explanation too. In text comprehension, if a goal is not **recognized**, or is unfamiliar, recourse rnay be made to **some**

higher level. Schank and Abelson propose the category of themes, divided into three, as follows: role themes, interpersonal themes and life themes (Cook 1994, 80).

Cook refers to G. Edelman's *Brighr Air, Brillianr Fire* (Edelman 1992), in his conclusion about themes and our understanding of them in texts. He refers to a possible genetic role in the interface of "intelligence" and neurophysiological activity:

> This process of explanation at higher and higher levels is potentially endless. but the explanation of themes, as *SPGU* point out, is beyond the scope of the investigation of text understanding. Further speculation would need to consider such issues as the interaction of the nature of intelligence with the neurophysiology of the brain, and the degree to which an intelligence is 'programmed' genetically or environrnentally. Indeed, the notion of themes correlates well with the neural Darwinist notion of an innate, individually variable, value system dictating the development of cognitive structure (Edelman 1992). (Cook 1994, 90)

Cook summarises his theory of schemata before making his analyses in Chapter Four, and offers the following symbols:

$ = script
II = plan
I = goal (sub-1 = sub-goal)
O = theme.

Cook discusses his analysis, noting that the naming, classifying and assigning of schemata in this way is "highly speculative and highly problematic". Yet it is worth the attempt as the results emerging make our intuitions about schemata and coherence more explicit. (Cook 1994, 109). Coherence is created, or may be, depending on the reader, when the reader perceives comections between schemata. The comections rnay be causal, or inclusive, in that one schema rnay be contained in another.

Excluding processes rnay signal deviance. "Deviance" as part of a mutually defining binary pair along with "normality", can only have significance in relation to this norm. Since schemata represent the norm, for they encapsulate the reader's expectations once they have been triggered, the essence of schema theory is that "discourse proceeds, and achieves coherence, by successfully locating the unexpected within a framework of expectation." (Cook 1994, 130).

Cook postulates a theory based upon a combination of discourse analysis, schema theory and literary theory: "A theory of discourse deviation: schema refreshment and cognitive change" (Cook 1994, 181-211), in which he shows how defarniliarization, to use the Russian formalist notion, can make a crucial contribution to a theory of the relation between literary text and reader's mind at work on the text. A writer may introduce a schema only to dismpt and radically alter it. In its static nature, an altered or subverted schema suffers the foregrounding of certain of its components or aspects. This deviation may have a meaningful or aesthetic effect which contributes to the power of the text. The levels at which the defamiliarization rnay take place are at those of language schemata, text schemata and world schemata. Cook demonstrates three aspects to the introduction of changes in schemata: existing schemata rnay be destroyed; new ones may be constmcted, and new

connections may be established between existing schemata. Cook calls this "schema refreshment", for which disruption is a pre-requisite. The different procedures are reinforcing, preserving and adding, and the disruptive procedures are refreshing through destroying, constructing and connecting. Cook claims that it is the primary function of certain discourses--particularly literary and publicitary ones--to effect a change in the schemata of their readers.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE SCHEMATA OF "CHIUSTOPHER COLUMBUS AND QUEEN ISABELLA OF SPAIN CONSUMMATE THEIR RELATIONSHIP *(SANTA FÉ*, AD 1492)"

We have seen that the opening paragraphs of the story activate schemata concerning kingship, salesmanship, love and medieval chivalry, as well as the maní woman and the national/ foreign dichotomies, since Columbus is presented immediately as a foreigner. They also establish a formal narrative tone which is occasionally broken, either by a sudden descent to an informal tone, or by the introduction of humorous word-play. The text also modulates between third person narration by the anonymous narrator, and use of a theatrical approach including the actual dialogue of characters on the scene who appear to be two courtiers. The schemata in this tentative list fall into two categories: schemata about discourse types and schemata about the world.

III.1 SCHEMATA ABOUT DISCOURSE TYPES

III.1.1 Text Schemata

$S	(script-like schemata)	II	(realising plans)
$S	NARRATION (WRITTEN)	II	INFORM, ENTERTAIN
$S	DRAMA (ORAL)	II	INFORM, DRAMATISE
$S	CHILDREN'S POETRY (ORAL)	II	ENTERTAIN, INSTRUCT

III.1.2 Language Schemata

$S	(script-like schemata)	II	(realising plans)
$S	FORMAL LANGUAGE (WIUTTEN)	II	INFORM, INSTRUCT
$S	INFORMAL LANGUAGE (ORAL)	II	INFORM, ENTERTAIN

III.2 WORLD SCHEMATA

$S	(script-like schemata)	II	(relevant plans)
$S	KINGSHIP	II C	RULE IUNGDOM
$S	SALESMANSHIP	II C	SELL A PRODUCT
$S	MEN	II C	PROTECT, EARN LIVING
$S	WOMEN	II C	LOOK AFTER FAMILY DO DOMESTIC TASKS
$S	NATIONAL	II C	BE BETTER, FAMILIAR

$S	FOREIGN	II C	BE DIFFERENT, SUSPECT
$S	LOVE: MALE HETEROSEXUAL	II C	PURSUE WOMAN
	FEMALE HETEROSEXUAL	II C	BE PURSUED BY MAN
$S	KNIGHT	II C	REPRESENT KING OR WOMAN
			WIN IN COMBAT

111.3 DISCUSSION

III.3.1 Text Schemata

As Cook points out, "knowledge of what types of evidence are reliable is of crucial irnportance to an individual. To call assumptions into question is to undermine the basis of all knowledge." (Cook 1994, 232) In this story, traditional versions of the account of Colurnbus's persuading of Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand to be his patrons for the enterprise of sailing westwards to the Indies are called into question through the device of presenting, not one, nor two, but three. eye-witnesses. The narrator is the first eye-witness, as he or she presents the events as developing before his or her very eyes. This effect is achieved in several ways: firstly, through the use of the present tense, which is rnaintained throughout, right to the end of the tale: "'Yes. ' he tells the heralds. *Yes. I'll come.*" (p. 119) The second way is in the narrator's recall of the actual words of the protagonists. as in this quotation. Another way is through the omniscience of the god-like narrator; he has all the answers: "Obvious answers first." (107) The second and third eyewitnesses are the unnamed characters who speak in the text, breaking up the narrator's discourse. The first is introduced by a single curved line, and the second by a double one. This discourse is dramatic and like a play in that it is pure dialogue, with no stage-directions. The lack of stage-directions produces silences in between which force the reader to deduce information about the speakers. At the end of the story we deduce that these commentators are heralds, as we see them speaking directly to Columbus, persuading him to return:

> The heralds dismount. They offer bribes, plead, cajole.[…] *She's waiting for you in Santa Fé. You must come at once.* (119)

As heralds or courtiers, they are able to give inside information about Queen Isabella's intimate reactions. This, in tum, contrasts with the traditional children's poem "in fourteen hundred and ninety-two, sailing across the ocean blue", thus providing an intimist re-writing of the event.

III.3.2 Language Schemata

The tale is begun by the narrator using a formal register, referring to "preferment" (107) and "Italianate blandishments" (108). The anonymous narrator's tone evokes a scherna of history books instructing us in the orthodox version of important historical events. This tone is then subverted by the narrator introducing colloquial and unconventional speech from a lower register. This is done by the use of exaggerations and anachronisms: "man-sized diapers" (112), " a one-man debauch" (109). Anachronistic modem usage, bordering on the disrespectful and offensive, subverts with humour, such as when a herald comments on

Columbus's behaviour: *"'The nerve!'"* (107), or Columbus mentally calls the Queen a bitch (117). Colloquial and metaphorical expressions such as "take a hint", "turn a deaf ear", "go too far", "look after herself", "cuts him dead", "eats like a horse", conuibute to the intimist tone of the "inside story" version of the events. The two contrasting scenarios are brought together in exchanges like:

> 'Her face is a lush peninsula' [...] 'Her legs are not so great.' (113)

III.3.3 World Schemata

Our assumptions about kingship are that the model is usually patriarchal, and that if the monarch is female, then she is, in a way, usurping male power, or at least assuming it. The traditional view of Queen Isabella as being powerful, almost masculine, is maintained. Her husband, King Ferdinand, is called by the narrator "an absolute zero: a blank". There is also humorous word-play here, in that "absolute zero" contrasts with the reference to her as "an absolute monarch" (110). This is no feminist sub-plot, however, as her power lust, her efficiency and energy: "The more of the land she swallows, the more warriors she engulfs, the hungrier she gets." (112) are replaced by a more capricious motivation. Her enigmatic refusal to be satisfied with the known and knowable, is shown to be the hidden reason for her change of mind and decision to become Colurnbus's patron. Her initial unwillingness is not attributed to lack of faith in his enterprise, or to personal and institutional avarice, as it was in the current mythical views of the events. Her fascination for the new in terms of kingship and impenalism is tied in with a similar sexual curiosity. Rushdie here explores the interface of desire on the imperial level and on the personal level. When Columbus is cast as a foreigner and as a travelling salesman, he both anracts through difference, and has to anract with his product. In this schema, Queen Isabella is tumed into a housewife, and as Columbus gets his foot in the door, she is seduced by his product: a paradoxical and risky, but apparently viable, plan to obtain great wealth through travelling to the East via the West. The riskiness for the Queen is emphasised by the fact that his foreign unreliability is exaggerated by his drunkenness and dirtiness, probable side effects of his peripatetic profession. But a step further on frorn the schema of Colurnbus as salesman, is that of the great discoverer as lover. This is rnade explicit in the text by paradigmatic comments by Columbus on his own story:

> 'The search for money and patronage,' Columbus says, 'is not so different from the quest for love.' (112)

> 'The loss of money and pauonage,' Colurnbus says, 'is as bitter as unrequited love.' (115)

Medieval knights are also often unrequited lovers, and can be "errant" like travelling salesrnen, so again, the next schema is easily assimilated. A model for the Queen Isabella - King Ferdinand - Christopher Columbus triangle, which brings together both the LOVE and CHIVALRY schernata, would be that of King Arthur, Queen Guinevere and Lancelot. In our story, the king is never mentioned by narne, his nonentity is summed up in that the only reference to him is as an adjunct to her: "her husband". The fact that King Ferdinand served

as a model of the modem prince for Machiavelli and had four children out of wedlock (2) does not seem to back up this idea historically, which reminds us that Rushdie is re-writing history for fictional purposes.

Queen Isabella's susceptibility to the charms of Columbus as salesman, lover and knight, therefore disrupts the schema which attributes a monopoly of power and decision to the monarch, not to mention the chaste connotations of the *Carholic* Monarch. In her caprice, based on desire and dream, there is implied negation of the rationalism that was begiming to be felt with the transition from the medieval world to that of the Renaissance. As we examine all the details in the text which belong to the most important world schemata in the story, it will become apparent that these details interrelate and create comections and implicit cohesion.

IV. SUMMARY OF A READER'S INTERPRETING WORLD SCHEMATA

We can postulate the following script-like schemata ($S) for the world knowledge in the story. Under each $S we name the words and phrases from the text referring to defaults. and the relationship they have to the main concept. These words are all "headers in the text". We see a dominance of qualities and attributes (IS or HAS) and actions (EVENTS). As Cook says: "it is often shared attributes and actions which create a metaphoric link from one schema to another." (Cook 1994, 219)

1. $S KINGSHIP

INSTANCE:	QUEEN ISABELLA OF CASTILLE
PROPS:	HAS a court, a military victory, *a ring often kissed, apperires.* castles, armies, battle plans, conquests, citadels, flags, triumphs, *rreasure chesrs*
IS:	an absolute monarch, a tyrant, all-conquering, omnipotent, (default element: IS *nor* a man)
EVENTS:	foils conspiracies of assassins, negotiates treaties, swallows land, wins battles

2. $S LOVE

INSTANCE:	QUEEN ISABELLA OF SPAIN
PROPS:	HAS an olive hand, hair to braid, breasts to fondle, *a ring often kissed,* sexual *appetites*, flirtatiousness, infidelities, *rreasure chesrs* (= breasts)
IS:	touched by tentacles of warmth, a turbulence
EVENTS:	offers the ecstasy of her glance, reaches peak of ecstasy
INSTANCE:	CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
PROPS:	HAS sexual *apperires,* quest for love, *charm*
IS:	(at end) [like] a requited lover, a groom on his wedding day
EVENTS:	*offers rhe possibiliy of embracing his scheme wirh a lover's*

abandon

3. SS SALESMANSHIP

INSTANCE:	CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
PROPS:	HAS *a scheme,* a confidence-man's *charm*, a certain saucy vulgarity, shoes […] a little thin
IS:	knee bent, fawning, ingratiating
EVENTS:	is running out of sales talk, *offers the possibility of embracing his scheme with a lover's abandon*

4. $S MEDIEVAL CHIVALRY

INSTANCE:	CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
PROPS:	HAS tuneless serenades, coarse epistles
IS:	a medieval knight, a hero, a knight in a romance, a man of action, unrequited, (default element: is not the husband)
EVENTS:	ties the Queen's favour to his [non-existent] helmet, carries her flag and her favour, wears man-sized diapers under [his] armour because the fear of death will open the bowels

5. $S FOREIGN

INSTANCE:	CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS
PROPS:	HAS sea-dog raffishness, excessively colourful clothes, the dusty patchwork cloak of his invisibility
IS:	(default element: a traveller), invisible
EVENTS:	dreams of entering the invisible world, is [pushed] beyond the frontiers of [the] self, […] beyond his mind's rim

V. CONCLUSIONS

In terms of plans and themes, the enterprises of Queen Isabella and Christopher Columbus associate through a cornrnon plan on two levels. Isabella's "treasure chests" are to be both filled and fondled by Columbus, and her ring is to be kissed as Queen and mistress, just as his scheme is embraced by both with a lover's abandon. Rushdie conveys the urgency of the desire and the inevitable coupling of the two narnes for all time:

> [H]e must must must carry her flag and her favour beyond the end of the end of the earth, into exhaltation and immortality, linking her to him for ever with bonds far harder to dissolve than those of any mortal love, the harsh and deifying ties of history. (117)

Isabella's plans are to extend her sphere of power, and with the hindsight that the advantage of time affords us, we know that it was the beginning of a great empire. She used the

foreigner Columbus to achieve her ends, thus engulfing the foreign. Rushdie comments ironically on the controversial centre/periphery dichotomy through one of the heralds: "there are quaners in which (hard as it is to accept) we ourselves would be considered foreign. too!" (108). Within the FOREIGN schema, we have another apparent paradox, which takes us from the visible and concrete to the invisible and abstract, and that is the idea of coloured /colourless. At first, Columbus's colourfulness is censored, but then, in the course of the story, it becomes positive. Columbus depends on Isabella's crucial decision, because it will. and did, make or break him. He is caught in the interstice between the old and the new worlds: "This old world is too old and the new world is an unfound land." (115). He is going mad in a no-man's land of nothingness. Her decision to be his patron saves him from oblivion, or invisibility to history, and makes his foreign colour or colourfulness visible to history and no longer culturally negative. We see from the level of the quotidian that it was a hit or miss affair.

In terms of schema connections, the contents evoked in the text yield a number of cross-references, which we have emphasised with the use of italics. The most obvious is the paradigmatic relationship between the structure of kingship, with the position of the king or queen at the top, and that of love or chivalry, with the lover or knight looking up to the lady. If the cross-reference of "treasure chests" is not understood at the level of the script, then meaning must be sought at higher levels, those of a king/queen or lover's plans and goals, and the general theme of kingship.

Finally, we appreciate the disruption of the KINGSHIP schema when we find the default element of a strong, rational, male monarch absent. In its place, we find contradictory elements in the interplay of strong and weak, rational and irrational, male and female. The accompanying discourse deviation is seen in the disruption of the written, history-book norm by the low-register oral interventions. Rushdie is reviewing history in fiction, where fact matters but is inconsequential, where the momentous is seen to depend upon the "little things of life", and where historical personages tum out to be (fictional) real people with personal problems that are often as interesting as the great feats they have accomplished. Thus the event or the person is not an isolated phenomenon, but pan of a complex context, and the novelist has a much freer hand than the historian. The lingering suggestion Rushdie throws out to the reader who has followed his imaginative leaps and bounds, is that the original historian may have been as partisan in the creation of history through discourse, as a novelist like him.

NOTES

1. The edition used is Salman Rushdie, (1995) *East, West*, (London: Vintage)
2. Hernando del Pulgar wrote of the King: "amaba mucho a la reina, su mujer, pero dábase a otras mujeres." Quoted in a preview to Juan Eslava Galán, (1996) *La vida* y *la época de los Reyes Católicos.* (Madrid: Planeta). in *Ideal.* 6 October 1996, "Revista". vii.

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