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BIOGRAPHICAL TRUTH THROUGH THE PRISM OF METAFICTIONAL REPRESENTATION IN IAN WATSON'S CHEKHOV'S JOURNEY

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Khikmatova Nargiza Ravshanovna

Bukhara State University Foreign Faculty Teacher, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

This study aims to spotlight the postmodern tendency of metafiction in Ian Watson's novel "Chekhov's Journey". Metafiction is self-conscious in relation to language, literary form, and storytelling in fiction. This form of fiction accentuates its construct and reminds the readers to be aware of a fictional work. Ian Watson is a noteworthy science-fiction writer, and his famous novels

are 'The Embedding' (1973) and 'The Jonah Kit' (1975), which brought him prestigious awards, while in this study we will focus on his metafictional work 'Chekhov's Journey'. This novel exhibits the subject of postmodern metafiction. In this novel, a modern-day actor uses hypnosis to simulate Anton Chekhov's 1890 journey through Siberia. The method of study adopted the metafiction theories proposed by Patricia Waugh and Linda Hutcheon. It highlights Ian Watson's texts that represent the elements of metafiction through the protagonists. Using various theories related to postmodern metafiction, the view of metafiction in the work is substantiated and explored. The postmodern perspective of metafiction is explored in Ian Watson's text and analyzed with metafiction theories. The study results are compared and discussed with other studies and contemporary texts concerning metafiction. The findings show that metafiction is applicable in the given work of Ian Watson. He projects the aspects of metafiction in his work through his writing, especially narration, both fiction and reality.

KEYWORDS

Fiction, metafiction, postmodern, self-reflexivity, post-modernism, philosophical, historiographic metafiction, criticism, non-linearity.

INTRODUCTION

Moving to the 20th century, it should be noted that metafictional experimentation and techniques reached their peak of creativity with the most recurrent production of metafictional novels of any previous time period. Waugh (1984) mentions that contemporary metafictional writing deals with a response and contribution related to reality or history. While studying metafictional work gives the effect of the novel's identity. The characteristics of metafiction are unreliable narration, self-reflexivity, and intertextuality, and they often treatise both historical and political. One of such works is Ian Watson's 'Chekhov's journey' which is "...as 'conventional' a reality-bending..."(2, p.15). Ian Watson is a popular British science-fiction prolific writer, having written more than two dozen novels. The novel 'Chekhov's journey' has the postmodern tendency of metafiction, and Ian Watson explores the incidents and sufferings of locals observed by Chekhov on his way to Syberia, which are noted down by means of hypnotizing an actor who believes he is Anton Chekhov, and revolve around the Tunguska explosion of 1908.

Many studies have been chosen regarding postmodern tendency of self-reflexivity in fictional writings. Many researchers have also conducted the study of metafiction in different works. While this study will analyze some postmodern tendencies, specifically the use of metafiction, of the novel 'Chekhov's journey'. Hence, no study has been conducted on metafictional character of this work, the given study is well justified. Accordingly, the research questions proposed in this study are:

- What are the metafiction elements in Ian Watson's 'Chekhov's journey'?
- What is the purpose of self-reflexive nature of narration in the work?

- What is the role of the reader in the metafictional text?

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Defining metafiction as one of the features of postmodernism

It should be stated that both post-modernism and modernism demonstrated the same feeling of the loss of system of order claiming constructive power of mind amongst chaos. John Barth, metafictional writer, expressed the following idea regarding the term "post-modernism": "awkward and faintly epigonic, suggestive less of a vigorous or even interesting new direction in the old art of storytelling than of something anticlimactic, feebly following a very hard act to follow"(1, page 66). So as can be inferred, although post-modernism follows some features of modernism, it presents a new anticlimactic way of storytelling that may sometimes be hard to follow, metafiction being just one part of the defining features of the mode-parody, play, intertextuality, irony. Although the definition of metafiction, whether it be non-essentially or basically defined, should be done so separately from the idea of postmodernism because the two concepts do not have the same historical referents, metafiction is essential to fiction in general and is especially common and significant in the modern day. In her groundbreaking work on the subject, Metafiction, Patricia Waugh defines metafiction. In 1970 with Gass's publication of 'Philosophy and the Form of Fiction', Gass coins the term, marking it as the name for such fictions in which forms of fiction directly impose upon other forms, which take the conventional structure of the novel and subsequently alter it. Along with Fowler, Alter, Scholes and Gass, an important defense of the metafictional form, came with the

publication *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction* by Patricia Waugh, whose works compete with that of Gass.

Scholes (1979) divides the concept of metafiction into four categories based on Gass' idea of metafiction. Formal, philosophical, structural, and behavioral are among them. Metafiction is characterized by its ability to blur the lines between author and reader, as well as its self-reflexive and experimental nature. It addresses the text's constructive aspects, particularly the examination of concepts like language, storytelling, the author's own experience, raising readers' consciousness, and the interpretation of certain issues.

2.2 Theories of metafiction

Patricia Waugh, a professor at Durham University and a well-known metafictional thinker, is a prominent member of the postmodern and modernist movements. She presents the reader an analysis of the techniques, practices, and critical reception of metafiction in her work titled "*Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*," published in 1984. In her work she states that although metafiction as a term and practice is more obvious in the fiction of the 20th and 21st centuries, the practice is quite old. Additionally, what she states through the book is that metafiction is a function traced in all novels, hence, by studying it one can get deep philosophical insights of the identity of the novel. Noteworthy, Waugh claims that metafiction is an indispensable part of all novelistic production. She further claims that metafiction alters the worn out notions of literary tradition into productive social criticism. In fact, although the reconstructive elements of metafiction are rather obvious, and linked to the postmodern, there is a certain element which Waugh outlines as

peculiar to metafictional intent, which shows authorial desire to move beyond worn forms and into something new. What is more, sustained opposition is what characterizes metafictional novels: the conflict between fictional world and reality. That is the author at the same time creates fiction and makes comments on the creation process of that fiction. This, in turn, entailed much confusion both for writers and critics, hence, some writers expressing fear about anticipated misinterpretation on the part of a reader. While the writer tried to demonstrate artificiality of a fictional work by using metafiction, a reader would comprehend the work based on expectations of the traditional novel.

Further, the best metafictional theorist, Linda Hutcheon in her book "*A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*" (1988) first used the phrase "historiographic metafiction." Hutcheon believes that the fusion of metafiction and historiography results in a novel form of experimental writing. Hutcheon addresses how historiographic metafictions have reshaped the connection between literature and history. In particular, she challenges the idea that the two discourses can be distinguished from one another. One of the enduringly unresolved conflicts of postmodernism will arise when readers of historiographic metafiction react to historical information in such works with a twofold awareness of its fictionality and its roots in real events. It should be stated here that literature and history were seen as branches of the same learning tree in the nineteenth century. Noteworthy, postmodern historical novels were referred to as "historiographic metafictions" by Linda Hutcheon. because they problematize the line separating fact from fiction and theorize contemporary historiography. She gives the following

explanation for her classification of historical metafiction: “(Historical metafiction) both challenges and benefits from the grounding of historical knowledge in the real world. For this reason, I have referred to this as historicographic metafiction” (1, page 92).

Notable metafiction thinker Mark Currie has made numerous contributions to postmodernism, particularly in the areas of deconstruction and metafiction. He has written many theoretical works, such as ‘Metafiction’ (1995), ‘Postmodern Narrative Theory’ (1998), and ‘The Invention of Deconstruction’ (2013). Currie's *Metafiction*, a small collection of critical essays on the subject that was published in the same year, was the last critical text to analyze postmodern metafictional practice. It was notable for rejecting Hutcheon's early assertions that metafiction and the Postmodern were mutually exclusive, asserting instead that metafiction “is neither a paradigm nor a subset of postmodernism (3, page 15).” He states that texts that are metafictional rely on the line separating criticism and fiction, yet they may also reflect on reality. The word “metafiction,” which describes the novel's tendency toward self-reflection, has been defined by a number of phrases that are mentioned in Mark Currie's *Metafiction* (1995 book). The terms “self-conscious,” “introspective,” “introverted,” “narcissistic,” and “autorepresentation” are among them.

METHODS

This study analyzed Ian Watson's novel “Chekhov's journey” by adopting three metafiction theories proposed by Patricia Waugh and Linda Hutcheon. According to Patricia Waugh, metafiction is connected to fiction writing, which methodically and self-

consciously describes its creation. It deals with raising issues regarding the compatibility of fact and fiction. These works offer a critical analysis of one's own creative techniques by scrutinizing the basic frameworks of narrative fiction and delving into the potential fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text. Hutcheon defines metafiction as self-referential or auto-representational since it uses language to establish its own standing in fiction. It is renowned for using a unique production and receiving technique. The metafictional book offers criticism on the story and language it tells. She deviates from metafiction by copying both the method and the final output.

FINDINGS

The metafictional techniques used in metafiction, as we have now inferred, emphasize its status as an artifact. They also turn it into a subversive genre on a number of fronts, most notably on the level of form. The non-linear narrative, the self-aware remarks of the author/narrator, the extremely intrusive author, and the reader's involvement in the narrative are some of the metafictional elements that are present in Ian Watson's novel, Chekhov's *Journey*, and which blur the traditional, unambiguous distinction between author and reader.

To begin with non-linearity, such storytelling is becoming more and more popular, mostly in literature. But where did this word come from? It is possible to think of it as a fusion of two well-known methods. One the one hand, Greek dramatists Sophocles Euripides and other writers invented the retrospective technique in the 400s BC. The term retrospective is derived from the Latin word “retrospectare,” which means “look back.” In “A Quick Look at Nonlinear Narrative,” Jules

Rawlinson observes that since Ibsen created the contemporary bourgeois drama, the approach has once again become commonplace. He goes on to say, "The phrase refers to the traditional needs for the setting, the action, and the future, and it denotes that the plot pulls back the curtain to make sense of the current conflict scenario. Tragic events can unfold in conversation without narration or speeches. (15). Conversely, the second method is called "in media res," which translates to "in the middle of things" in Latin. This literary theory phrase suggests that "the story goes straight to the point without character, plot, or storyline introduction" (15). This method is particularly popular in movies since it provides a dramatic opening to grab the audience's interest. The use of non-linear narrative has already permeated both twentieth- and twenty-first-century artistic production, including music, film, theater, fiction, and digital media. The resurgence or emergence of non-linear and broken narrative in literary and visual arts appears to be a reflection of the connections between global political shifts and the contemporary intercultural shifts. As a result of the growing exchanges between many cultures during the colonial, post-colonial, and post-cold war reconfigurations of the global landscape, non-linear forms appear to be emerging. These shattered and experimental artistic forms appear to be nothing more than a reaction to the collapse of the big tales of democracy, freedom, and progress that characterize Western developmental metaphors. As a result, the complex issue of non-linear storytelling poses a number of issues, including: What kinds of revision or resistance can this new genre offer? What particular influences—including those from non-Western cultures—can be identified in this kind of story?

As for Ian Watson's "Chekhov's journey", it becomes obvious that the novel is subversive on both levels of form and content. The narrator tries to shape his story as he wants, shifting between autobiographical report and narrator's comments on how to shape the story. As an unreliable narrator, this enables the author to combine events from different historical periods. Thereby, the book starts with Chekhov's comments on the historic journey to Sakhalin, which started in 1890: "ANTON huddled in his sheepskin jacket and military-style leather raincoat. As the buggy jolted him along through the Siberian night, numbly he watched last year's grass burning off the frosted fields..." (18, page 6). The novel starts with Chekhov's comments on severe conditions of the road, the word "punishment" being used to describe his overall impression, "... But Anton hadn't yet learned the trick of sleeping through this sort of punishment." (18, page 6) comments the author. While, in the second part, the reader is introduced the narrator of the story: a room in which a script writer (Sergey Gorodsky), a film director (Felix Lavin), an actor (Mikhail Petrov), and Sonya Suslova, a psychiatrist, communicate trying to help the narrator decide on the continuation of the story. So the reader's attention shifts between Chekhov's journey and the discussion in the room, while, further, the memories based on "reincarnation by hypnosis" of the actor imagining himself Anton Chekhov, take us to the events that historically occurred after Chekhov's death, Tunguska explosion (The Tunguska event (occasionally also called the Tunguska incident) was a 3–5 megaton explosion that occurred near the Podkamennaya Tunguska River in Yeniseysk Governorate (now Krasnoyarsk Krai), Russia, on the morning of 30 June 1908(6).) Most people believe that the explosion was caused by a meteor air burst or a stony asteroid's atmospheric explosion. "A hundred

million trees, felled all at once! Everything trembled and shook. Fountains of water gushed from the ground, so they say. A hurricane roared through Kansk, and a tidal wave raced up the Yenisey. The night sky stayed bright for weeks—don't ask me why! And whole herds of reindeer were incinerated on the spot. Others got scabs all over them—”(18, page 37). As is commented by Chekhov's fellow, Sidorov, the explosion is described as an unknown large-scale shocking event, and this is said to serve a useful material for Chekhov's journalistic work. “... “No, hang on,” said Anton. “This happened around Midsummer '88, right?”...”(18, page 38) at this point Chekhov remembers witnessing the event while his visit to the Lintvareva's summer place. So, here the author changes the date of the historical event to fit it into Chekhov's memories. This is probably done to add some mystery and dramatism to a tedious or banal description of the journey. In the next chapter, however, the author himself introduces the reader to the facts being mixed up “... “I stand corrected. Anyway, Anton Chekhov was safely in his grave by then. It certainly didn't happen in 1888, dear boy!” Kirilenko stood up too...”(18, page 43). Later the narrator tries to find out the source of this memories “..Maybe Petrov's insane?...”, so the reader is also involved in this guesswork. “...Soviet scientists are working hard on the Tunguska problem every year... And still nobody knows for sure,... damn it, it's downright Chekhovian!...” (18, page 44). Later the narrator comments of the story going beyond historical truth, “...a chaos of unhistory...”(18, page 52) that how the story described by the author himself.

Obviously, the author intends to undermine the traditional linear narrative and the cause-and-effect relationship—a defining element of historical novels—

by using a non-linear narrative in Chekhov's Journey. So, the order of events is further confused when the reader is introduced to the events happening in the spaceship called K.E. Tsiolkovsky orbiting the Earth: “... he hung just a few

centimetres away from hard vacuum and gazed at the three-quarters-lit Earth...”(18, page 56), when Mikhail claims under hypnosis to be captain of a Soviet time-ship from the year 2090 plunging out of control down the years toward the disaster in Siberia. Here the hero of the story is introduced with name Commander Anton Astrov, as if that could be the nickname of Chekhov, were he a spaceship commander somewhere in the future. In the next chapter, we are again in the inn Staraya Rossiya Hotel on Blagoryeshtchenskaya, where Countess Zelenina and Chekhov discuss raising funds for the expedition by means of staging his work called The Bear. Presumably, the author's opinion is that the chronological narration falls short in capturing the variety of Russian personalities and historical events, which is why non-linearity and digressions are necessary to undermine it. Though, in the next chapter the author self-consciously notes that In the next chapter, the reader is introduced to the narrators disagreement with this non-linearity of events: “... The whole point of the film is Chekhov's bloody journey!” swore Sergey in a passion. “Not how he sits on his ass in bloody Krasnoyarsk scribbling about something that happened eighteen years later when he was bloody dead!...” (18, page 64)

This leads us to the next feature of metafictional narrative that is author/ narrator's comments. According to Patricia Waugh, history in metafiction, even though it is ultimately a material reality, is fictional, as well as a collection of alternate worlds. The novel of Ian Watson also uses metafiction to question

the objectivity of reality by demonstrating that it is merely a creation. "...I was doing my darnedest to focus on Chekhov's Journey. Honest! But my own personal film speeded up incredibly..." (18, page 65), here the author, by means of his narrators, shows his motive behind blending reality with fiction. Thereby the line separating fact from fiction becomes less distinct when historical events are included into the metafictional setting. Later the narrator justifies this mixture of facts with reality: "... Suppose we made a different film—namely, this other film which Mikhail is handing us on a plate. It could be highly original, very imaginative!..." (18, page 98). Additionally, the use of specific lexical repertoire serves to show authors uncertainty, for instance, we find frequently repeated words like very likely, would, should, I think and so on. This uncertainty in the speeches of narrators emphasizes fictional nature of the work which supposedly had to be a biographical historical novel depicting a writer's actual trip. The postmodern questioning of solid standards and unchanging values and data is explained by the absence of certainty, objectivity, and consistency combined with contradicting attitudes and evidence. Ian Watson gives us access to history only through his account of the reality. The author seeks to demonstrate the impossibility of any accurate account of historical events by fusing fact and fiction and committing mistakes, which in part explains his determination on maintaining his own version of reality in opposition to the official one.

One important component of postmodern narratorial approaches is the narrator's degree of omniscience or dependability. Is he hesitant and uncertain, or is he knowledgeable? The postmodern project searches for contrasts and rebels against omniscience. The purpose

of narratorial tactics is to draw attention to these inconsistencies in the text and cast doubt on the narrator's sincerity. In actuality, in Chekhov's journey dependability and trustworthiness of the narrators, that is the Soviet film crew, may be impacted because they frequently argue on the acceptability of recollections of the main hero, Mikhail, to describe historical events. Is he hallucinating? Fantasizing? Or creating his own reality of past events? The narrators show their uncertainty and hesitation with the comments like "... I refuse to have any more to do with this farcical distortion of an honest project—into sheer fantasy. I'm walking out, in fact. Right now..." (18, page 99) popping up now and then. So, rather than following the modernist path of seeking a coherent whole, the work presents the reader a fragmented depiction of reality. Ian Watson is using fragmentation as a method to challenge absolutes in reality representation and to reject objectivity, which is what gives legitimacy to totality and homogeneity. In addition to challenging the veracity of history by fusing fact and fiction and utilizing magic realism, Ian Watson also uses the self-conscious narrator to highlight history as a fabrication. At some point in the story, the narrators find themselves trapped in the story. As if even time has stopped for them to end the story: "... Ain't anywhere to drive to. There ain't anything out there at the moment. We can't leave till it's all over..." (18, page 103). "... We're trapped in a time-bubble—like a soap-bubble. That's why we couldn't leave this place yesterday..." (18, page 113) that is one of the narrator's comments on the process of composing the story. And they suppose the bubble will pop once Chekhov reaches Tunguska. Here the reader realizes that what seemed real at the begging appears to be a part of science fiction, and all the narrators of historical events are themselves unreal and, thus, unreliable as

authors. But having an unreliable narrator is an important narratorial device because it gives the narrator the ability to decide what to include and what to leave out of the story, as well as to mold the events in the order he desires. Additionally, self-reflective remarks on the narrative's creation, or in other words invasive writing, enhance the text's chaotic narration and challenge the legitimacy of the conventional approach to historical writing. So, it is clear that the invasive writer attempts to impose his viewpoints on the historical record while rewriting it. In Chekhov's journey Ian Watson takes two historical events, Chekhov's journey to Siberia and Tunguska explosion, and combines them with two fictional occurrences, a trip on a space ship and a script screw trapped in time, and produces a different version of reality, or the writer's own version of history.

Linda Hutcheon, literary and art critic, contends in her book *Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox* that "The reader's task becomes increasingly difficult and demanding, as he sorts out the various narrative threads. The universe he thus creates, he must then acknowledge as fictional and of his own making" (18, page 49). Consequently, the reader's function in the metafictional text is transformed from that of a passive recipient to that of an active collaborator in the composition process. Numerous narrative techniques employed by the author compel the reader to consider the fundamentals of novel writing. A defining characteristic of both literary modernism and literary postmodernism is the ambiguous relationship between the writer and the reader. The author is calling on his readers to participate more and more. However, the novel's disjointed narrative and ambiguous character relationships might make it challenging for readers to form a clear image of the

story at points. In Chekhov's journey the writer tries to involve the reader by exposing his narrators to frequent periods of creational crisis: "Hang on... It won't do... But you're still equating Siberia with exile. Look, an underlying theme of the film has to be how Siberia spelled space for development... I fail to see how we can dispense with the convicts! Damn it all, they're the reason why Chekhov crossed Siberia..." (18, page 11). So, here the reader unwillingly becomes involved in the creation process and sympathizes the difficulty in which narrators appear. Is it more applicable to show the dark sides of history in all the gloominess they appeared or should they be brightened with at least a dim light of perspectives? Later when Tunguska explosion enters the story, the writer expresses his doubts to the event and involves the reader to ponder over the dilemma asking to complete inefficiencies by himself: "And it's all as nothing to this endless earthly monster: our own country. She swallows the incident as a cow swallows a fly. How true that disaster strikes where nobody sees or hears it! In the circumstances, happiness is quite impossible." (18, page 39)

One more feature worth mentioning in Chekhov's journey is characterization. In traditional fiction, writers consider the social, historical, psychological, and political context of their characters in order to give readers the impression that the "men and women in the novels really lived in the way that they are presented." (18, page 22) True-to-life characterization is substituted in metafictional works with characters that serve as linguistic markers that exist only inside the boundaries of the text. Consequently, "the people of [metafiction], the fictional beings will no longer be referred to as characters who carry with them a fixed personality, a stable set of social and psychological

attributes” (7, page 44) (e.g., name, gender, condition, occupation, social identification, etc.). In Chekhov’s journey, there are a few characters who the reader is introduced to, but not much background is given. At the beginning of the novel, the reader is introduced to Anton Chekhov and a driver Volodya, and the information we get about the driver can be inferred from the following lines “Imagine being driven for tens of versts by a dead body without even realizing it... Volodya was jerking on the reins. The old codger wasn’t dead, after all.”(18, page 6). Even a crew of scriptwriters (Sergey Gorodsky, Felix, Dr.Kirilenko, Mikhail and Sonya), who act as narrators of the story, are not provided with extensive characterization but suffice to a few lines of description offered as occasional remarks.

DISCUSSION

Though they address various conceptions of metafiction, many postmodern texts extensively examine its features. This study has results that are consistent with earlier researches. First, Ian Watson explores the aspect of metafiction in his work (‘Chekhov’s journey’) through the concept of memory via going back in history by means of hypnosis. D. Pandeewari, Hariharasudan A. and Ahdi Hassan (2022) found the same thing while analyzing the work of Preeti Shenoy, an Indian author, “The Secret Wish List” (2012) which utilizes the topic of metafiction via the notion of memory written in a diary, the protagonist who has written her wishes in her diary that kindles her mind to fulfill her wishes. Masemola (2020) discovered the same thing after examining Khumalo’s (2006, 2008) writings on allochthonous memory and tying memory to place, particularly South Africa.

In his two works, Ian Watson also employs self-conscious narrative strategies. Likewise, in the novels “The Secret Wish List” and Khumalo’s works the protagonists have served as tools for exploring the idea of the self-conscious narrative. Similarly, Bhadury (2013) also refers to self-conscious narrative concept in the novels by Ende (1979) and Funke (2003, 2005, 2008).

In terms of reality, Ian Watson explores some issues with reality in “Chekhov’s journey”. As it was discussed earlier, realities of past (Chekhov’s actual journey to Syberia), future (Tunguska explosion, which occurred years after Chekhov’s death), imaginary future (space ship from 2029) and present (a crew of script writers trapped in time to finish the film script) are blended within one work. In the fiction “The Secret Wish List”, reality and unreality are mixed by the protagonist, Diksha, who struggles a lot to lead her life with a workaholic person and finally comes out from her family life, while, in Indian culture no woman agrees with this kind of action of giving up her children to anyone.

The analysis of Auster (2007) and de Maistre (1794) by Butler and Gurr (2008) also contains this feature of metafiction.

As for self-reflexivity, Ian Watson’s “Chekhov’s journey” is full of narrator’s comments on the flow of events, as well this concept is linked with Shenoy’s work ‘It Happens for a Reason’. “I have created a huge wall between ‘life before Aryan’ and ‘life after Aryan’. I am now on this side of the wall.” (18, page 11) so the narrator discusses two realities “before and after”. While in Chekhov’s journey “...I refuse to have any more to do with this farcical distortion of an honest project..”(18, page 99), the narrator refuses to accept

reality that deviates from factual history. Moreover, the majority of the writings by renowned postmodern writer and theorist Thomas Pynchon address every facet of postmodernism, and in his work “Mason and Dixon” Pynchon depicts the real incidents with his connotations. This work of fiction has elements of both history and reality. David Mitchell, a well-known British writer, in his famous work “Cloud Atlas” describes the aspects of both metafiction and historic metafiction by comprising six stories in six different places with different characters. This narrative centers on a specific character who travels to six distinct locations and considers possibilities for the post-apocalyptic future. Similarly, in Ian Watson’s Chekhov’s journey, a Russian actor Mikhail experiences three realities of Chekhov’s journey to Siberia, Tunguska explosion and space mission before all realities to meet at one point.

CONCLUSION

The study of Ian Watson’s Chekhov’s journey revealed that the work can be seen as an exemplary type of postmodernist literature. In fact the focus of research has been on metafictionality which constitutes an integral part and an intrinsic characteristic of the literariness of the text. The investigation of this work, by means of deployment of experimental techniques such as non-linearity, self-reflexivity, author/narrator’s intrusion as well as reader’s involvement, has revealed that the text is highly subversive, especially on the level of form. This study has its limitation that it only researched the historical truth presented in the work. Future related studies are encouraged to focus on actual historic facts and the level of deviation from that truth. There are also other theorists on

postmodern metafiction, and so, future work are recommended to analyze the work based on their theories.

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