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## **Revisiting postcolonial ethos: towards postmulticulturalism in Salman Rushdie's the satanic verses**

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award of D.I.P.E.S II in Bilingual studies

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## **DEDICATION**

To my parents, Mr and Mrs Kamdem, who encouraged me throughout

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## ABSTRACT

The study, entitled “Revisiting the Postcolonial Ethos: Postmulticulturalism in Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses*”, investigates ways in which Rushdie revisits the postcolonial ethos by celebrating the state of the hybrid in postcolonial societies. It also examines how Rushdie’s novel can be used as a source text, in secondary schools, to teach Prose Appreciation so as to introduce students to Hybridity and Postmulticulturalism. The work is based on the assumption that the re-definition of the Self in Rushdie’s novel brings about the creation of a new space which is neither the Self nor the Other; a space which is independent and free from all pre-established social and political norms, principles and ethics. The theories used to analyse the work are the postcolonial and the postmodern theories. The postcolonial theory has enabled the study to show the postcolonial ethos Rushdie establishes in the novel. Meanwhile postmodernism has enabled the study to show how Rushdie shifts from the norms established by the theory by deconstructing them and creating a new identity and a new space. The study has shown that the re-definition of the self by characters in *The Satanic Verses* is beneficial to the postcolonial subject as it frees him/her from the chains of grand narratives and ideologies. The new identity that is gotten from this new self-definition makes the postcolonial subject balanced as he/she mends his/her fragmented self. Rushdie recommends the creation of hybrids in the society and hybrid nations within which these hybrids can feel a sense of belonging.

## RÉSUMÉ

La présente étude, intitulée « Revisiting the Postcolonial Ethos: Postmulticulturalism in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* », explore la manière dont Rushdie revisite la philosophie postcoloniale en célébrant l'état hybride dans les sociétés postcoloniales. Notre travail est fondé sur l'hypothèse selon laquelle la redéfinition du Moi dans le roman de Rushdie contribue à la création d'un nouvel espace qui n'est pas le Moi par opposition à l'Autre ; un espace qui est indépendant et exempt de normes, de l'éthique et de principes sociopolitiques préétablis. Les théories postcoloniales et postmodernes ont servi de base à l'analyse de notre travail. D'une part, la théorie postcoloniale a permis à l'étude de mettre en lumière la philosophie postcoloniale développée par Rushdie dans le roman. D'autre part, la théorie postmoderne a permis à l'étude de montrer comment Rushdie fait rupture avec les normes établies par cette théorie en les déconstruisant et en créant une nouvelle identité et un nouvel espace. L'étude révèle que la redéfinition de l'auto-identité par les personnages de l'ouvrage *Les Verset sataniques* est bénéfique pour le sujet postcolonial dans la mesure où elle lui permet de briser le joug des principaux traités et idéologies. La nouvelle identité qui résulte de cette nouvelle définition de Moi rend le sujet postcolonial équilibré puisqu'elle lui permet de retrouver son Moi fragmenté. Rushdie recommande la création d'hybrides dans la société et les nations hybrides dans lesquelles ces hybrides peuvent nourrir un sentiment d'appartenance.

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## INTRODUCTION

Debates and issues developed in postcolonial discourse focus on the effects of imperialism on formerly colonised countries and, most especially, on colonial ideas about the colonised developed in colonial discourse. In his book, *Orientalism*, Edward Said establishes the fact that the representations made in colonial discourse of the colonised aim at portraying the colonised as inferior to the coloniser in all possible aspects. The colonised is therefore seen as the Orient, while the coloniser is the Occident. According to him, these representations, which are somehow considered as “truths,” maintain the colonised in an inferior position since the contrasting images produced in colonial discourse, about the colonised, help to define the coloniser in superior position. He therefore defines orientalism as “a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between "the Orient" and (most of the time) “the Occident” (20).

This definition of Orientalism splits the world into two unequal parts, two binary poles whereby one is superior and the other is inferior. In *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*, JanMohmed maintains the same idea developed by Said. According to him, the literary text is an area of cultural control through which the coloniser struggles to maintain his power and supremacy over the colonised as he says “the literary text is as a site of cultural control and is as a highly effective instrumentality for the determination of the ‘native’ by fixing him/her under the sign of the Other” (8). According to him, by recognising how these binary polarities operate, it is possible to re-read texts with colonial discourse and such representations in order to debunk these ideas of the Orient by the Occident.

In the same vein, Gayatri Spivak (in her article “Can the Subaltern Speak?”) rhetorically asks if the subaltern, the colonised, will one day have the voice to speak. She establishes the fact that the debates that exist today about the East come from the fact that there is a desire to conserve the East as the Subject. She opines that, in the bid to establish the Self (which is Europe), colonial discourse tends to consider the East as the Other or as its shadow since it cannot be considered as equal to Europe. It is this colonialist concept of the colonized that prompted and encouraged imperialism. One of its most salient effects is hybridity which is caused by the mixture of the colonial culture with the culture of the colonised. This hybrid state has always been considered as one of the negative effects of imperialism since the hybrids are not accepted in either of the polarities. Postcolonial writers therefore struggle to debunk these colonial assertions of the colonised and present the state of



the hybrid as one of the worst consequences of colonisation. These writers equally sympathise with the postcolonial subject's condition as he/she does not feel a sense of belonging to any of the spaces.

However, Salman Rushdie does not follow these established norms in the postcolonial discourse. According to him, the existence of the hybrid brings about newness in the world and newness in each culture since this mixture brings about a new identity altogether. He rather celebrates hybridity because he sees it as a means through which an independent, autonomous space and identity is created. This, therefore, creates a new space which is neither the centre nor the margin, free from established norms, principles and laws. It is this specificity of the above writer that justifies the pursuit of this research undertaking. This creation of a new space prompts us to ask the following questions:

- Which existing postcolonial ethos does Salman Rushdie represent in *The Satanic Verses*?
- How does Rushdie revisit the postcolonial ethos in this work?
- What is the consequence of this shift from traditional forms of postcolonial representations and how beneficial is it to the postcolonial subject?
- How can an extract of *The Satanic Verses* be used to teach prose appreciation in a high school class?

This work is based on the hypothetical contention that the re-definition of the self in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* brings about the creation of a new space which is neither the Self nor the Other; a space which is independent and free from all established social and political norms, principles and ethics. This gives birth to a new identity which is distinct and autonomous from the existing ones.

The study is focused on Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. The choice of the novel was prompted by the fact that, in it, the author revisits conventionally established notions in the postcolonial discourse. Unlike other postcolonial writers and critics, Rushdie uses controversial postcolonial realities like hybridity to debunk the existing binary polarities established in the ongoing postcolonial debate. The chosen text therefore befits the concern of this study.

This dissertation is important in the academia in that it discusses the different ways in which Rushdie redefines the self in his book thereby creating a new space which conforms to

one of those represented in the postcolonial theory. Also, the examination of issues such as hybridity, religion, binary polarities, and magical realism in Rushdie's work will contribute to the postcolonial debate. Moreover, this study is not only important to the academic world. It examines the ways in which people in postcolonial countries are caught up between two worlds and cultures. Such entanglements are an integral part of our daily lives in our present globalised world whereby we gain access to other cultures through modern technologies such as the internet. This makes the present society more and more hybridised as many people copy from other cultures. The difficulty to belong is therefore a contemporary problem. Finally, the work discusses how an extract from this text can be used in teaching prose appreciation in a high school class.

At this point, it is important to define some terms that are central to the understanding of the study. The terms which will be defined are "postcolonial ethos" and "postmulticulturalism." Henry Shwardz and Sangeeta Ray define "postcolonial" in *A Companion to Postcolonial studies* as "the historic struggle against European colonialism and the emergence of new political and cultural actors on the world stage during the second half of the twentieth century" (1). It can be inferred that the term "postcolonial" is in effect a struggle against colonial dominance whereby the colonised struggle to reconstruct their identity and move away from colonial dominance thereby creating new political actors who can serve as their voice to the colonial word or discourse. But the problem with this definition is that it describes "postcolonial" as a historical struggle which echoes the longstanding controversy that has surrounded the meaning of the prefix "post". It is, however, clear that the struggle is still ongoing; the vestiges of colonialism are still evident in previously colonised countries. It therefore cannot be seen as a historical struggle but as an ongoing struggle against colonial dominance.

In *The Empire Write Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature*, Bill Ashcroft, Hellen Tiffin and Gereth Griffiths use 'Postcolonial' "to cover all cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present day (2)." They justify this definition by observing the effects of colonialism on previously colonised countries. It is worth noting that 'postcolonial' does not limit itself to the period during and after colonialism but comprises the eras before, during and after colonialism. These epochs do not only help to trace the imperial period, but also make it possible to describe the way the colonised countries

were before they were colonised and what they have become today.

As far as the word “ethos” is concerned, it is a Greek word meaning "character;" it refers to the characteristics used to describe the guiding beliefs or ideals that characterise a community, nation, or ideology. Originally, the word means "accustomed place" or "custom, habit." Besides, the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary: International Student's Edition* defines ethos as “the moral ideas and attitudes that belong to a particular group or society.” In other words, it is the distinguishing characteristics or ideals and attitudes belonging to a particular society. From these two definitions, ‘ethos’ denotes specific distinct qualities of the ideologies of a group or a society. Aristotle, in his work *The Art of Rhetoric*, defines ethos as the distinguishing “character” of a person. This “character” describes the person’s strong personality and ability to persuade and convince his public. This also extends to the speaker’s moral character and history. The idea of public perception implied in this definition is relevant to this study which aims at investigating the revision of generally accepted schemas in postcolonial discourse in Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses*.

In his article « Le Concept d’Ethos », Bernard Fusulier uses the concept of ethos to describe the learning and internalisation of norms, ideals, ethical principles which allows one to adopt a particular relationship with the world and the society by attributing to the latter a number of issues abiding with the concepts of ‘good’ and ‘just’. The learning and internalizing of these principles are in a bid to socialize (*Recherches sociologiques et anthropologiques*, 6). This implies the presence of well structured societies with established ideals and principles. Fusulier’s idea of ethos is very pertinent as it connotes the presence of pre-established norms which are to be studied in order to properly socialise within a society or a community.

Added to the other strands of meaning culled from the first three definitions, ethos will therefore be defined--in this work--as the distinguishing characteristics or tenets of a theory as conventionally accepted. It alludes to all the things that are specific to or help in the development of a theory. This means that each theory has a set of established norms and principles which have been developed by critics. Ethos refers to such established norms and principles of the postcolonial theory which is one of the conceptual frameworks of this work. When the terms “postcolonial” and “ethos” are combined, they yield the term “postcolonial ethos” which refers to the established norms and principles that characterise the postcolonial

theory. This theory in turn focuses on the experiences of formally colonised societies and the effects of colonialism on them

Meanwhile, postmulticulturalism is generally considered to be a new concept in critical works. Very few critics use it. This term is a reaction to multiculturalism. Dorota Gozdecka et al, in “From Multiculturalism to Post-multiculturalism: Trends and Paradoxes,” define multiculturalism as the acknowledgement of diversity as they note that post-multiculturalism is characterized by “freedom for the subjects” rather than by the subjects. “As a result, some subjects are seen as those who must be ‘liberated’ from constraints they are ‘unable’ to free themselves from” (*Journal of Sociology*, 59). As they put it, “post-multicultural identity talk” relies heavily both on the conservative critique of social fragmentation of cultural groups and the progressive critique of ‘essentialisation.’ This supposes a presentation of the effects of some cultures over other cultures. This description limits itself to the open critique of the effects of imperialism and colonial invasion on other cultures.

However, Harry Elam, in his article “The Postmulticultural: A Tale of Mothers and Sons,” gives a more critical explanation of post-multiculturalism as he notes that “... postmulticultural is the potential meaning of new self-definitions and coalitions, the space to claim a new ethnic possibility” (*Crucible of Cultures*, 1). This new self-definition can only come about as a result of the acceptance of one’s nature and history. It entails that for a redefinition to take place, the postcolonial subject must acknowledge who he is in order to forge himself a new identity. According to the same critic:

The post-multicultural then offers space for new explorations of cultural and ethnic hybridity, for the interrogation of racial meanings, and for the re-thinking of the politics of cultural identity. (3)

This underlines the ideas that postmulticulturalism does not only acknowledge the existence of diversity in culture, but points out the effects of this diversity on cultures as well as on individuals; this diversity brings about newness as a mixture within these cultures gives birth to a hybrid. The pertinence of this definition is shown through the idea of re-definition of the self; a re-definition which can be a way out for the hybrid and a new way towards freedom. Rushdie clearly presents this in his novel as he demonstrates that the projection of new personal hybridity can lead to the creation of a new space, free from norms and conventions or national identity. These two concepts are the main concerns of this work as the study sets

out to show how Rushdie parts from the discourse in the postcolonial ethos and introduces postmulticulturalism in his work as a new way of seeing postcolonial societies. By deconstructing the postcolonial claims of the hybrid, Rushdie points out the importance and necessity for new self definitions and the need for a new space in postcolonial societies.

The literary theories that will be used in this study are the postcolonial and postmodern theories. The postcolonial theory is one of the most used theories in literary studies today. The word “postcolonial,” as earlier said, has harboured a lot of controversies in its definition. This is because there is no clean and clear definition of the term. Henry Shwardz agrees with this as he says that it is difficult or almost impossible to provide a straight forward definition of the term “postcolonial” because of the different realities and experiences of the colonised. Some of the proponents of this theory are Edward Said, Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Henry Schwartz, Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin, Gareth Griffiths and Maggie Ann Bowers.

The 1870s witnessed the beginning of imperialism as the European powers rushed to acquire overseas territories. By so doing, they imposed their language, culture and civilization on the territories they colonized since the latter’s culture and civilization was seen as inferior to that of the European powers. This created a master-servant relationship which seriously damaged the identity of the colonized as, in most cases, their histories and civilizations were written by their masters for the purpose of colonisation

The purpose, of the postcolonial theory is therefore to examine the effects of colonialism and the colonial ideas about the colonised, in colonial discourse, in a bid to undo them. In *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, Shwardz clearly defines it as “the radical philosophy that interrogates both the past history and ongoing legacies of European colonialism in order to undo them” (4). In effect, it could be seen as a healing process through which the colonised express the effects of colonialism and they attempt to reconstruct their identity. It also involves the discussion of various kinds of experiences by colonised people such as migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place and also of influential master discourse or colonial discourse (2).

The specificity of this theory is that it examines the colonial mind and strategies put in place to rule the colonised. Ashcroft, Tiffin and Griffiths point out that

Colonialism could only exist at all by postulating that there existed a binary opposition into which the world was divided. The gradual establishment of an empire depended upon a stable hierarchical relationship in which the colonized existed as the other of the colonizing culture. Thus, the idea of the savage could occur only if there was a concept of the civilized to oppose it.” (*Post- Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, 32)

This implies that, for colonialism to have its *raison d'être*, the colonial masters needed to establish this binary opposition so as to assert themselves as the masters over the colonised. This leads us to Edward Said's idea of "Orientalism." In his book, *Orientalism*, Said demonstrates how (through colonial discourse) the colonial powers defined themselves from the representations they made of the colonised. His idea of orientalism forms the core of the postcolonial theory as it struggles to show how the colonisers divide the world into two unequal parts where the coloniser is seen as superior to the colonised. Said says orientalism can be described as the idea of dealing with the Orient by "making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient"(20). This therefore brings out the idea of the West's need for dominion over the colonised as, through their representation of the Orient, they forge the need to be master over it so as to "civilise" them.

Another tenet of the postcolonial theory relevant to this work is Magical realism. In *Magic(al) Realism*, Maggie Ann Bower says that "Magical Realism relies upon the presentation of real, imagined or magical elements as if they were real" (21). In other words, it is the presentation of supernatural elements within real life situations such that these supernatural elements are perceived and accepted as real and normal. In a narrative, magical realism juxtaposes two worlds or two notions so as to present the physical and psychological state of one of the worlds presented. This tenet is important in our analysis because Rushdie uses it to present the two binary poles present in the text.

In general terms, the postcolonial theory is a body of writing that reacts to the discourse of colonialism. It works through the process of writing back (through both critical works and fictional works), re-writing and re-reading. This re-writing or re-reading aims at debunking pre-established colonial ideas about the colonised, his language, culture, landscape and civilisation in a bid to restore the history, identity, validity and even the voice of those who were formally colonise.

One of the main effects of colonialism, which the postcolonial theory establishes, is the profanation of the “pure” through the invasion of the colonial master. This has led to hybridity as the culture of the colonised is no longer pure but stained with that of the colonisers. Homi Bhabha establishes this in his book, *Location of Culture*, as he posits that cultural identity always emerges in an ambivalent space within which there can be no claim of a “pure” culture. This therefore highlights the focus of the postcolonial theory as it presents such effects of colonialism, such as hybridity.

The postcolonial theory is apt for the analysis of Rushdie’s work in this study because, through it, it is possible to explore the already established poles made through colonial discourse. It also enables the study to examine the postcolonial society and its subjects. The theory sets a base through which one can study the identity issues that pertain to most postcolonial societies most of whose subjects are hybrids. Finally, this theory presents the stable construction of colonialist idea about the colonised.

The postmodern theory, which is our second theory in this work, emerged as a distinct theory in the 1970s and the early part of the 1980s. Some proponents of this theory are Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Douglas Kellner, Steven Connor, and Peter Anderson. This theory came up as a reaction to modernism which was more traditional than representative of the age. In *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodernism*, Connor clearly states that the

Postmodernist theory responded to the sense that important changes had taken place in politics, economics, and social life, changes that could broadly be characterized by the two words *delegitimation* and *dedifferentiation*. (3)

Delegitimation in that authority and legitimacy are no longer so powerfully concentrated in the centres. There is no longer the idea of the authority of the centre over the margin. Dedifferentiation in that the polarities established before no longer exist. There is no differentiation made between regions or between the centre and the margin. This means there is distrust in and the rejection of traditional notions, especially vis-à-vis the representations made of the world and of other cultures. Butler clearly notes that the postmodernist doctrine had most of its sources from philosophical, political, and sociological thought, which disseminated itself into the artistic avant-garde (particularly in the visual arts) and into departments of the humanities in universities in Europe and the United States as ‘theory’.

This theory therefore advocates a break free from previously established rules or history for, as Butler puts it, these histories or representations are done or put in place for political, economic or social purposes.

The consequent representations are often polished to suit the above purposes. This creates a kind of distrust as the authentic, the legitimate or the unalterable no longer exist. Postmodernists are indeed sceptical of grand narratives, universally established paradigms and absolutes. Established representations and presumably known historical facts are questioned by postmodernists. Put simply, postmodernism is a break-free from such conventions and subjective language as it seeks to see the world the way it is without relying on previously established concepts and or epistemologies. It is therefore the philosophical proposal that reality is ultimately inaccessible by human investigation; that knowledge is a social construction; truth-claims are political power plays, and that the meaning of words is to be determined by readers and not authors. To the postmodernist, reality is what individuals or social groups make it to be.

Deconstruction is one of the postmodern trends through which undecidability of meaning or reality is established. Coined by Derrida, deconstruction seeks to show how the concept of logocentrism operates. “Logos” here refers to the “truth” as established by others in discourse. The general idea he sets forth in deconstruction is that there is no preconceived truth that precedes existence. Moreover, there is no “truth” or “reality” which somehow stands outside or behind language: truth is a relation of linguistic terms, and reality is a construct, ultimately religious, social, political, and economic; but always of language, of various linguistic registers. Even the human self, in this view, has no pre-given essence but is a linguistic construct or narrative. Thus, insisting on viewing language as a system of relation and difference challenges the notion of identity. Identity, whether of the human self or of objects in the world, is no longer viewed as having a stable, fixed or pre-given essence; but is seen as fluid and dependent, just like linguistic terms, on a variety of contexts (*A History of Literary Theories*, 652).

The resulting pluralism is also evoked by Jean Baudrillard in his work *Simulacra and Simulation*. This critic agrees with Derrida’s idea of truth being a human construct. He refers to this truth as simulation. He defines the verb to simulate as “to feign to have what one does not have” (4). And he points out that, in the act of simulating, the person who simulates provides proof of what he or she claims to have. Thus, grand narratives simulate the truth



they do not really possess and these truths can be felt through the establishment of the main polarities that is the centre and the margin. The many “truths” that result from the simulations of individual and groups account for the main characteristics of postmodernism. These are ambiguity, the rejection of ultimate faith on science, anti-positivist and anti-verificationist stance, individuality, truth as a matter of perspective; the blurring of the old distinctions or binarisms, globalization and multiculturalism among others. These characteristics could be summarised in the need to free oneself from established norms as earlier said.

Like the postcolonial theory, the choice of the postmodern theory is justified by the fact that the theory applies to the identity crisis and condition of the postcolonial subject. Postmodernism makes it possible for this study to revisit preconceived ideas made about the postcolonial subject. The indeterminacy it advocates blends with the fictional representations of magical realism to account for Rushdie’s new space. Chapters Two and Three shed light on these aspects of the work under study.

Ahmed Salman Rushdie was born on June 19, 1947 in Bombay (India) in a wealthy Muslim family. His father, Anis Ahmed Rushdie, was a Cambridge-educated businessman and his mother, Negin, was a teacher. His family spoke Urdu, but he learned English at an early age in school and was encouraged to speak it at home as well. At the age of fourteen, he was sent to study in England where he attended the Rugby School and later read history at Kings College, Cambridge University.

After graduating in 1968, he moved to Pakistan and briefly worked in television advertising before moving back to England permanently to focus on his writing career. He wrote his first novel, *Grimus* in 1975, followed by *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* that were published in 1983. His novel, *The Satanic Verses*-- published five years later -- faced a lot of controversy because Muslims considered it to be an attack on Islam. His literary representation of religion was brought under strong scrutiny after the publication of this novel.

To date, Rushdie has published eleven novels and a collection of short stories. Except for *The Satanic Verses*, his books have been very well received by the public, both in the East and the West. *Midnight's Children* was awarded the Booker Prize in 1980, the 1993 Booker of Bookers, and the 2008 Best of Bookers Awards. Hence he was named the best of all the past Booker Prize-winning novels.

Rushdie's works bear the imprints of his past experiences. The alienation he endured (partly as an Indian in England as well as his family's plight as Muslims in India at the time when the country was at war in Pakistan) is reflected in his writings. As a migrant and a postcolonial subject, he expresses the difficulties and obstacles one can face as both. The relevance of these writings has caused many critics to variously react to his works, especially *The Satanic Verses*. Many of these critics focus solely on his critic of Islam and the controversial nature of his novel. But then, others see him as a migrant author who celebrates hybridity and has a different vision of the world which he expresses in his novel. A few works of some prominent critics of his works will presently be reviewed as literature related to this study.

According to Soren Franc, in *Migration and Literature*, Salman Rushdie epitomises the migrant writer par excellence. This is because he reinvents the concept of human identity and the world in his novel, thus celebrating the idea of hybridity. This critic remarks that

Rushdie may epitomize the migrant writer par excellence with all its potential for reinventing the world and the subject of human identity, but the Rushdie affair also places him in a position in which he seems to personify the flip side of globalization—that is, the clash of civilizations, the increasing gap between cultures, and the proliferation of fundamentalism. (132)

Infact, Rushdie does not see the question of identity as the state of being rooted or rootless but as the ability to plant oneself in any culture and in any area one can call home (143). He argues that *The Satanic Verses* is a story that presents a painful split of personal identity as each of the main characters (Saladin Saladin and Gibreel Gibreel) struggle between two cultures, two selves that are within them.

Franc, therefore shows that Rushdie sees this attempt at reconstructing a “pure” identity from a hybrid state-- an identity which will either resemble that of the centre or of the margin-- as a futile attempt as it might only lead to the dilemma of living within these two cultures. Blending both cultures could help the person to implant himself or herself in any culture and in any area. “Home” or a “pure identity” will hence not be very significant to the person concerned because he or she can feel at home in any other area. It is the new space that proceeds from this blend that this work seeks to examine. The study investigates ways in which Rushdie departs from the conventional ethos.

In *Magical Realism in West African Fiction: Seeing with a Third Eye*, Brenda Cooper argues along the same line with Frank. She maintains that authors who use Magical Realism in their texts are those with a hybrid nature. According to her, Magical Realism is a mixture of the pre and postcolonial knowledge that grows out of transition, change, borders and ambiguity. In fact, this critic contends that the core of Magical Realism is rooted in the fact that its authors are people who have moved away from their country and from national liberation to embrace hybridity. These authors share a declaration of cultural identity; “a hybridity claimed to offer certain advantages in negotiating the collisions of language, race and art” (20). They are therefore hybrids who celebrate their state and that of other hybrids. They perceive this state as one that eases integration in a globalised world.

Cooper’s conclusion is that *The Satanic Verses* is a celebration of hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs, as she echoes the author’s own words (Ibid). The novel presents a mixture of two cultures that blend to create something new. The newly created culture is one within which there is no struggle between the centre and the margin or between the masters and the oppressed. That is why Cooper describes *The Satanic Verses* as a transgressive act of cultural translation within which the life of Mohammed is hybridized in the process of being transposed in popular Bombay film. This observation presents Rushdie’s novel as a highly hybridised book which celebrates hybrid states as well as the migrant author.

Cristina-Emanuela Dascălu re-iterates this idea of duality in Rushdie’s novel. In her essay, “*The Satanic Verses* and the Postcolonial Question of the Location of Exile or the Battle between Assimilation and Othering,” Dascălu alludes to *The Satanic Verses* as a novel which attempts to explain the difficult and almost impossible search for completeness in identity and the struggle between exile and otherness (7). From her point of view, the exile’s condition is contradictory and hybrid between the forces of assimilation and otherness. He is midway between a constant search of acceptance by his host country or community and the feeling of nostalgia for home. The critic vividly captures the exile’s predicaments when she opines that “the impossible position of the exile is represented by conflicting claims: an attempt at identity with the host country against a process of Othering by Western discourse, the mother tongue against the host language, and nostalgic remembering against forgetting.” (Ibid).

Cooper and Dascălu's opinion underline the concern of this study as they both agree on the fact that *The Satanic Verses* is the celebration of the hybrid in societies where hybridity is not very much accepted. They underline the fact that the postcolonial subject becomes more and more a hybrid subject in each society and there is the permanent need to be accepted in each of these societies. This duality that they make mention of underlines the concerns of this research, as in creating a new space, Rushdie also creates a new identity for the postcolonial subject.

Jessica Brown also echoes the concern of this dissertation when, in her essay "East-West Salman Rushdie and Hybridity", she refers to the work under study as one which studies two characters' need to reconcile two cultures or identities. She repeats Rushdie's observation about the novel being "the very experience of uprooting, disjuncture and metamorphosis" (43). In other words, it is about the migrant's condition. In effect, as in his works, Rushdie problematizes issues such as "home," "nation," and "culture" in *The Satanic Verses*. As this critic puts it, the writer celebrates the idea of a blend of two cultures which brings forth a new kind of identity, one which does not belong to any of the established poles.

The common thing among these authors whose works have been reviewed is that they all establish Rushdie as a pro hybrid; they establish his celebration and advocacy of hybridity which is openly expressed in his novels, especially in *The Satanic Verses*. Their ideas proceed from the fact that Rushdie does not only epitomise the migrant author but also thinks that, as a hybrid, a migrant has the ability to implant himself wherever he or she wishes due to his dual nature. These authors focus on the fact that, in accepting these "in-betweens," the hybrids could live freely. But Rushdie thinks that acceptance is not enough; this blend of cultures should create a newness of identity and the need for freedom which the hybrid cannot get in any of the worlds. This work, therefore, distinguishes itself from the literature review because it sets out to show that Rushdie establishes a new space, a third space, within which the hybrids can live in *The Satanic Verses*.

The study is made up of an introduction, four chapters and a conclusion. The introduction consists of the background to the study, the research problem, the aim of the study, the research questions and the hypothesis, the significance and scope of the work, the definition of key terms, the theoretical framework, the review of related literature and the structure of the work. Chapter One is titled "The Dilemma of the Postcolonial Subject". It examines the postcolonial ethos present in the text. That is, the chapter emphasises the

different ways in which the author presents the effects of colonialism on the Indian society and the binary polarities established. Entitled “Re-defining the Postcolonial Self,” Chapter Two shows how Rushdie deconstructs binary polarities by breaking free from established norms of the postcolonial theory. Chapter Three, which has as title “Hybridity and Postmulticulturalism: Creation of a New Space,” examines the effects of the re-definition of the self. The fourth chapter focuses on how an extract of *The Satanic Verses* could be used in high school to teach prose appreciation and it is captioned “Prose Appreciation and Postmulticulturalism: An Excerpt from *The Satanic Verses*.” The conclusion re-iterates what the study sought to do and the critical approaches to literature used. It summarises the findings made and suggests other possible areas of research.

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE DILEMMA OF THE POSTCOLONIAL SUBJECT

Postcolonial societies are plagued with the after effects of colonialism and representations made by the colonial powers about them. The effects of colonialism are like a scar which is present in every postcolonial society. And these postcolonial societies struggle to reject both colonial dominion and the colonial idea about them. This chapter is going to present the postcolonial society and the postcolonial subject presented in *The Satanic Verses*. In order to do this, the study examines the representations made by the Orient about postcolonial societies and the tools they use to maintain the Centre/Margin polarities between them. This Chapter first of all looks at appropriation and the reclamation of identity by the colonised. Next, it examines hybridity, the most felt consequence of colonialism.

For a very long time now, colonial discourse and ideas have defined the colonised through the various representations. One of such lenses is Orientalism. As earlier indicated, this is the act of dealing with the Orient: making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, teaching it, settling it and ruling over it. As Said puts it

The Orient is not simply an originating place of European languages and Culture; it is also an indispensable European image of the Other, which has made it possible for Europe to define itself. Furthermore, as a construct of European ideological discourse, Orientalism has made it possible for the West to dominate, colonise, and restructure the Orient.  
(533)

This means that Orientalism is not only out to present the differences that exist between the colonised and the coloniser, but it is a means through which the coloniser can assert himself as the master, the Self over the colonised. The longstanding debate, in the postcolonial theory, therefore partly dwells on the various instruments used by the coloniser to spread these colonialist ideas or conceptions of the colonised. One of the tools used to present these orientalist representations is education. Formal schooling is a product of colonialism. Thus, through the school system, the colonial master is able to get the colonised to accept his/her inferiority unconsciously through the representations made of them. Oba .F Nwanosike, presents the colonial agenda to be accomplished through formal schooling in his article “Colonialism and Education” as he posits that

The colonizers did not introduce education in Africa, they rather introduced a new set of formal educational institution [...] but one which sought to instil a sense of difference towards all that was European and Capitalist [...] The colonizing government realized that they gain strength not necessarily through physical control but through mental control. This mental control is implemented through a central intellectual location--the school system. (628)

The colonial master saw education as a subtle means through which they can present their culture and also maintain the differences that they established between the centre and the margin. Using the school to brainwash the colonised turned out to be a more effective way of subjugating them. The mental acceptance of the coloniser's superiority ensured that the colonised accepts his/her subaltern position. Nwanosike goes further to say that the colonial system of education

was designed to impose upon Africans, the white man's mythical, racial superiority and African inferiority. Whatever Africans were taught about themselves was designed to enable them to internalize their inferiority and to recognize the white man as their saviour. Colonial schooling was education for subordination, exploitation, the creation of mental confusion and the development of underdevelopment. (629)

This implies that the purpose of colonial education was to let the colonised see, through the lens of the coloniser, his/her own inferiority. This is true with every country subjected to colonial rule. The effect of this colonial education is the mental control the coloniser has over the colonised politically, economically and socially; the colonised unconsciously accepts the superiority of the coloniser in all these aspects and lets himself to be ruled by the coloniser. Through what became known as the "imaginative command," the colonial master maintained dominion over colonial subjects.

Formal schooling is, as a colonialist weapon, clearly represented in *The Satanic Verses* in the character of Saladin. From birth, Saladin has received two types of education: that of the Indians at home and that of the colonial master at school. He is so caught up with the ideas and images he has about England that he names it his "Ellowen Deowen". He easily identifies himself with the English. He ceaselessly visualises England and tends to criticise everything that is from his homeland. This preference of England over his own culture is due to the fact that, as Nwanosike puts it, colonial education annihilates

people's belief in their names, language, environment, heritage of struggle, unity, capacities and ultimately in themselves (629).

This problem of annihilation eventually pushes the colonised to acknowledge the coloniser as his master. The open admiration for England is further evident in the text when Saladin gets ready to leave India for England to study further. His mother then tells him not to behave like the English but to remain an Indian because the English do not behave as Indians nor do they have the same values as them. But, to this, he says "It is inconceivable, Ammi, what you say. England is a great civilization, what are you talking, bunk" (*The Satanic Verses*, 40). This statement proves that the colonial discourse imbedded in formal education and even in English books helps to maintain the idea of colonial superiority. Education and literary texts are areas of cultural control through which the colonial master easily controls the colonised through the representations made of the coloniser and the colonised. According to the latter, this aims at educating, or civilising the colonised. It is for this reason that characters such as Saladin unconsciously believe in the superiority of the coloniser.

Moreover, apart from education, colonial representations of the colonised which are made openly have a serious effect on them. This is clearly shown in the novel when Saladin and Gibreel finally go to London. Saladin gradually metamorphoses into a goat-like creature and he is arrested and beaten as an illegal immigrant. And when the policemen find out that he has the British nationality, they still beat him then try to look for excuses to make in case he sues them for such behaviours. Saladin wakes up in the hospital to find that he is among other immigrants who are like him, partly human and partly animals. The other patients who are also in the same ward with him tell him that they have become hideous looking creatures due to the ideas the British have about them. Rushdie records their reaction in these words

The point is ... some of us aren't going to stand for it. We're going to bust out of here before they turn us into anything worse. Every night feel a different piece of me beginning to change [...] they describe us ... "That's all. They have the power of description, and we succumb to the pictures they construct. (178)

This therefore corroborates Said's idea in *Orientalism* that the colonisers make statements about the Orient and they authorise views about it. These statements only help to



show how inferior the Orient is when compared to the Occident. Rushdie also underlines the fact that these representations have a negative effect on the colonised. He metaphorically uses these transformations to indicate the misrepresentations the colonised is subjected to. In the novel, the immigrants are half animals or devils and half human. The creatures they change into are either very frightful or wild creatures. The nature of these creatures is the materialisation of the British representation of these immigrants. They (the British) see the immigrants as wild people or savages as opposed to British gentility. Hence, through these misrepresentations, the colonial master establishes the binary polarities of the Self/Other.

This, therefore, is one of the main issues which postcolonialism struggles to debunk. The main aim of the postcolonial theory is to show that the colonial representations about the colonised are not founded. And the effects of these representations are felt psychologically by the colonised as they see themselves as hideous creatures that have no identity and that are inferior to the colonisers. Unconsciously or consciously, the colonised might hence despise their origin and agree with the coloniser that the latter is superior. This, in effect, is the plight of the colonised.

The centre/margin polarity is deeply felt when Saladin loses his job as a voice actor. When he is logged at the Shandaar Cafe, due to his hideous nature, he calls his producer to let him know that he did not die during the plane hijack and crash. His producer, Hal Valance, tells him that he is happy to hear that he is still alive but he lets him know that he has been replaced and that there are no chances he can get his job back. When Saladin tries to find out why, his producer tells him that “audience surveys show [...] that ethnics don't watch ethnic shows. They don't want ‘em, Saladin. They want fucking *\_Dynasty\_*, like everyone else. Your profile's wrong, if you follow: with you in the show it's just too damn racial” (277). In other words, Saladin is replaced because he is not White, he is not British. The producer tells him he does not have the right profile to let him know that he is not accepted because he is an Asian. This rejection of the colonised proceeds from orientalist ideas the coloniser has about the colonised. And this clearly presents the opposing poles they constitute and the rift that exists between these poles.

But then, these representations do not totally go unnoticed or do not leave some characters indifferent. Some of them see and point out these representations made by the coloniser in the text. When Saladin talks of his job to Zeenat Vankil, she laughs hard at him. Saladin works as a voice imitator in movies. Most of the time, he is not on stage but

behind the scene. He is quite good at imitating these voices such that the audience is unable to identify the person talking. Saladin acknowledges the fact that he can imitate more than one voice in a single show without the audience noticing that it is one and the same person speaking. But most of this is done back stage. So when Zeenat Vankil laughs at him, she tells him that

They pay you to imitate them, as long as they don't have to look at you. Your voice becomes famous but they hide your face. Got any ideas why Such a fool, you, the big star whose face is the wrong colour for their colour T Vs, who has to travel to wogland with some two-bit company, playing the babu part on top of it, just to get into a play. (65)

She reads in-between the lines and points out the coloniser's intention. She clearly points out to Saladin that the coloniser may appreciate him but he will always consider him as an inferior person, someone who is not civilised enough like them. He will always be behind the curtains because he does not belong to their sphere. Zeenat Vankil's attitude of going beyond the said to the unsaid can be compared to Chinua Achebe's words, quoted by Mpalvie Msiska in the introduction of *Things Fall Apart*

I read lots of English books...I did not see myself as an African to begin with. I took sides with the white man against the savages...But a time came when I realised...I was not on Marlow's boat streaming up the Congo in *Heart of Darkness*. I was one of those strange beings jumping up and down on the river bank, making horrid faces ... That is when I realised that stories are not innocent.

(ii)

If stories are not innocent then actions too are not innocent because these actions are heavy with colonial intent. The coloniser can accept the fact that the colonised may have certain qualities but these qualities will never be equal to theirs. And to stress this fact, they place the colonised behind the curtains. This is exactly the point Vankil makes about Saladin's job. She does not consider his position behind the curtains to be coincidental. This shows that the coloniser struggles to maintain the opposition between both worlds. Zeenat Vankil tells Saladin that Whites will never accept him as part of them in coded language because they always strive to show what makes them different from the Indians or, better still, how superior they are to Indians. And this is exactly what happens when Saladin later loses his job.

Saladin's experience inevitably leads us to the idea of reclamation of identity as the postcolonial subjects struggle to reclaim their identity by valorising their own culture. It is for this reason that, in the novel, it is said that Zeenat Vankil's written works concern mostly Indian identity as she tries to promote the Indian culture and fashion (55). She is one of the characters who is very proud of her Indian identity and knows what makes her an Indian. Due to this, she makes Saladin her "project"; as she aims at getting him to love his Indian identity. She states in connection to this that «the reclamation of ... Mister, we're going to get you back» (56). She is bent on reclaiming him back as an Indian.

In a single sentence she highlights her pride for her nation and culture and thereby firmly underlines her identity. This is seen when she says "I was so proud of Bhupen tonight, how many countries could you go into some bar and start up a debate like that? The passion, the seriousness, the respect. You keep your civilization, Toadji; I like this one plenty fine" (63). She is not ashamed of her country or of her culture but she is rather proud of both and talks of her country with a lot of pride. This underlines the postcolonial debate whereby the postcolonial subjects struggle to reclaim their identity and to be proud of who they are. In the formal sense, her utterance can be seen as an act of patriotism. But implicitly, she is asserting and valorising her identity as an Indian. This indirectly highlights the aim of the postcolonial society; there is need to reclaim their identity and present themselves as a people who have a culture that should be respected. As such, this quest for identity is generally obvious in most postcolonial societies where the colonised/formally colonised struggle to regain their identity.

One of the tools used by the colonised in the reclamation of identity is appropriation. Bill Ascroft, Helen Tiffin and Gareth Griffiths define the term appropriation as

A term used to describe the ways in which post-colonial societies take over those aspects of the imperial culture— language, forms of writing, film, theatre, even modes of thought and argument such as rationalism, logic and analysis— that may be of use to them in articulating their own social and cultural identities. [It] focuses instead on an exploration of the ways in which the dominated or colonized culture can use the tools of the dominant discourse to resist its political or cultural control. (15)

In other words appropriation refers to the act of using colonial tools in order to present the identity of the colonised and reject colonial ideas about the colonised. There is the need to present oneself and one's culture so as to reaffirm one's identity. It is for this reason that

Zeenat Vakil writes. She is a critic and, through her writings, she is able to portray some aspects of the Indian culture. The text also shows that the Indian society and culture are presented in film productions which are based on Indian faith and culture. These films also help to show the world what India is (as a nation and a civilisation) and who an Indian is. For example, Gibreel accepts to play the roles of Indian gods in some of his movies. He plays the role of Ganesh, Ganpati Baba, and also Hanuman (25-26). Through this, there is appropriation because the postcolonial subject takes over the control of those aspects which were under imperial rule. The film industry was used under imperial rule to present the colonial superiority over the colonised. Now, the colonised appropriates it in order to present his/her culture, identity and to debunk colonial misrepresentations.

Appropriation is not only evident in the act of using the film industry or literary production in the novel. It is also effected through the use of language. Language was a colonial tool through which the coloniser struggled to maintain their dominance over the colonised. But this same colonial language is used by the colonised who adapts it to fit his/her purpose which is projecting the culture of the colonised. In such cases, the language used is not the pure form of the colonial language. Throughout the text, we see that the English spoken by English non-native speakers bear some traces of their culture. Some Indian words and expressions, which cannot be expressed in English, are incorporated in the text. This is also evident through the author's use of punctuation in the text as he tends to use underscores instead of dashes. In effect, it is a means used by which the colonised present themselves and their culture.

From the analysis above, it is clear that Rushdie shows the various tools or strategies used by the colonial master to perpetuate colonial ideas about the Orient. He shows the impact that these representations have on the postcolonial subject causing him/her to unconsciously acknowledge the superiority of the coloniser. These misrepresentations then incite the colonised to resist the coloniser. This results into the longstanding postcolonial debate that comprises colonialist discourse and counter-discourse.

However, the hybrid is inevitably born of this struggle between the Centre and the Margin. As earlier mentioned, the most used tool by the colonial master to maintain mental control over the colonised is colonial education. Nwanosike opines that

The implementation of a new education system leaves those who are colonized with lack of identity and a limited sense of their past. The indigenous history and

customs once practiced and observed slowly slipped away. The colonized became hybrids of two vastly different cultural systems. Colonial education creates a blurring that makes it difficult to differentiate between the new enforced ideas of the colonizers and formerly accepted native practices. (*Proceedings of the 2011 International conference on Teaching and Learning and Changing*, 629)

In other words, the permanent flirt between the education of the coloniser and that of the colonised gives birth to a hybrid. Such a hybrid is destabilised in society because he/she is torn between two world views and ways of life. He/she becomes an ambivalent subject. This, in effect, is the most negative effect of colonialism. According to this critic, therefore, the consequence of the implementation of colonial education is negative as it brings about the existence of the hybrid. The hybrid is hereby seen as someone who is irreversibly lost, with no hope of finding himself because he/she can neither become the coloniser nor return to his/her original uncorrupted state. Nwanosike notes that colonialism never meant well for the colonised states. To him, “it has only one hand– it was a one armed bandit. The negative impact of colonialism was so powerful and so pervasive that it turned the lives of all victims upside down and inside out” (*Proceedings of the 2011 International conference on Teaching and Learning and Changing* 626). This impact, in the postcolonial debate, is felt through hybridity.

The concept of hybridity was first developed by Homi Bhabha in his book, *Location of Culture*. In this book, Bhabha uses the word “hybridity” to describe the construction of culture and identity within conditions of colonial antagonism and inequity (30). Hybridity is the process by which the colonial governing authority undertakes to translate the identity of the colonised (the Other) within a singular universal framework, but then fails to produce something familiar but new. According to him, the hybrid is an incomplete form of the coloniser (40). That is in an attempt to assimilate the colonised, the process of conversion does not go through so the colonised becomes a hybrid. Hence, contact with the coloniser causes a kind of blend such that there is no more the idea of a “pure” culture nor a pure subject.

Every culture that thus comes in contact with colonialism is affected by the colonial culture. As Paul Meredith puts it in *Hybridity in the Third Space: Rethinking Bicultural Politics in Aotearoa/New Zealand*, “In colonial discourse, hybridity is a term of abuse for those who are products of miscegenation, mixed-breeds. It is imbued in nineteenth-century eugenicist and scientific racist thought” (2). Miscegenation refers to sexual relations between

racess or intermarriage between races. The products of these relations are generally hybrids or mulattoes which are referred to as “mixed breeds” because they come as a result of the mixture of two cultures or races.

The consequence of this is that the hybrids are not accepted as being part of any of the polarities. This is because they are considered to be impure forms of both cultures. They are neither the coloniser nor the colonised. In postcolonial studies, hybridity has been considered as one of the worst effects of colonialism as the hybrids belong nowhere. They are seen as in-betweens.

In *A Dictionary of Cultural and Critical Theory*, the term “hybridity” is defined as

Anything of mixed origin, of unlike parts in literary and Cultural studies. It refers to the idea of occupying in-between spaces; that is, of being of many, composite, or syncretic entities, new formations, Creole or intermixed peoples, mestizaje, dingo. (339)

In other words, hybridity is a blend of cultures such that the hybrid— a product of this blend— occupies an in-between space. Part of his culture is from elsewhere while the other part is from his culture of origin. In most cases, the hybrid (in addition to his culture) has that of the colonised which he generally acquires through formal education. This puts him in the most uncomfortable situation as he/she is not completely accepted by either of these polarities. This plight of the hybrid is clearly presented in *The Satanic Verses* where Saladin is not completely accepted as being part of any of the polarities. Though an Indian, he has received an English education and has even gone to England to pursue his studies. Following this, he begins to reason and see the world almost like the British but he is not completely accepted by the British because he is not English. His experience at the boarding school in England gives away his predicament:

One day soon after he started at the school he came down to breakfast to find a kipper on his plate. He sat there staring at it, not knowing where to begin. Then he cut into it, and got a mouthful of tiny bones. And after extracting them all, another mouthful, more bones. His fellow-pupils watched him suffer in silence; not one of them said, here, let me show you, you eat it in this way. It took him ninety minutes to eat the fish and he was not permitted to rise from the table until it was done. By that time he was shaking, and if he had been able to cry he would have done so. Then the thought occurred to him that he had been taught an

important lesson. England was a peculiar-tasting smoked fish full of spikes and bones, and nobody would ever tell him how to eat it. (*The Satanic Verses*, 46)

This extract shows that Saladin is not accepted in his British school because he is not completely English. Even if he has had an English education, his skin and his place of origin disqualify him from being British. It therefore becomes obvious to him that he will have to work very hard to prove himself and his capacities in order to be accepted in this society. It is for this reason that he compares England to his smoked fish. As much it takes hard work to successfully eat the fish, so will he have to toil hard to make it out there. He knows that he is not accepted as a British because none of the on-lookers in this scene offers him help and his classmates “giggled at his voice and excluded him from their secrets” (*The Satanic Verses*, 45).

This scene echoes Rushdie’s own experience in school. He too studied in England at the Rugby School. His time at this school was marked by alienation as his fellow students tormented him because he was Indian. He clearly depicts this in his novel through Saladin’s experiences so as to show the plight of the hybrid; he has to struggle so as to be accepted by the other culture. Both Saladin and Rushdie are products of the British education and, in a sense, they have gained some of the British culture through their education. But it is not enough for them to be accepted as British.

Meanwhile, he is not also accepted in India. The fact that he has also integrated some aspects of British culture makes him a stranger to his people. He is not understood and he too does not understand most of what is done in India. The first person to notice his Englishness is his mother who points out his various complains about their eating habits and every other thing in the house. His mother gently teases him about this but his father outrightly expresses his disappointment in these words:

“Tell your son,” Changez boomed at Nasreen, “that if he went abroad to learn contempt for his own kind, then his own kind can feel nothing but scorn for him. What is he? A fauntleroy, a grand panjandrum? Is this my fate: to lose a son and find a freak?” (*The Satanic Verses*, 48)

A fauntleroy is someone who strongly exhibits the tendencies of a blatant homosexual, or actually is a homosexual. Often times used, the term is to describe purportedly straight men, during a display of Homosexuality. The term was named after *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, a book written in 1885 that resulted in openly gay fashion trends. And a panjandrum is a pompous

and pretentious person. Changez uses these two terms to allude to what his son has seemingly become exactly. These two terms imply that for Changez his son has lost his masculinity because of the British education he has acquired. And the young man's complaints are just words of a pompous person who does not have love for his people but who prefers imperial control. This is a clear indication that his double identity is not accepted, neither is the fact that he tries to bring in some Englishness into Indian culture welcomed by his father. According to Saladin's father, the former has to use his education in favour of his own kind and not to question his Indian culture.

From here, one can observe that the society (in one way or the other) asks every individual to make a choice of where he/she belongs. Wherever you are or whatever cultures you find yourself in you have to make a choice and choose the culture you belong to; the idea of in-betweenness is not conceivable. Saladin's predicament show that there is need to belong. Paul Meredith clearly posits that "in postcolonial discourse, the notion that any culture or identity is pure or essential is disputable... all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity" (2). This means that the notion of a pure culture is gradually fading and is giving place to a hybridised culture in the world of today. Unfortunately, the hybrid born of this mixed breeding is not really accepted by any of the polarities.

In fact, the fading of this pure culture is felt by Saladin when he has finally learned the names of the different flowers in his father's garden. Rushdie notes in connection to this that

They were walking on the lawn in the evening, watching the sun dive into the sea, wandering in the shade of those great spreading trees, some snaky some bearded, which Salahuddin ...had begun to be able to name, jackfruit, banyan, jacaranda, flame of the forest, plane. Small chhooi-mooi touch-me-not plants grew at the foot of the tree of his own life ...Saladin had been seized by the melancholy notion that the garden had been a better place before he knew its names, that something had been lost which he would never be able to regain. (*The Satanic Verses*, 47)

What he has actually lost is the purity of his people's culture. The fact that it is through another culture that he is able to unveil the secret of this garden by naming each of the flowers takes away the purity of the Indian culture. This shows that he can perceive the world around him, not only through the lens of the Indian culture, but also through the British culture that he acquired.



Moreover, his rejection is felt when he tells his father that he wants to be an actor and his father says

Might as well be a confounded gigolo. It's my belief some devil has got into you and turned your wits. You who have been given so much: do you not feel you owe anything to anyone? To your country? To the memory of your dear mother? To your own mind? Will you spend your life jiggling and preening under bright lights, kissing blonde women under the gaze of strangers who have paid to watch your shame? You are no son of mine, but a *\_ghoul\_*, a *\_hoosh\_*, a demon up from hell.  
(*The Satanic Verses*, 50)

The fact that Saladin has chosen a career that emanates from the culture of the coloniser irritates his father because his father sees it as a rejection of the Indian culture. The comparison Changez makes of his son's ambitions to someone possessed by the Devil is a clear indication that his father considers the other side of him (that makes him British) as the Devil, as the part that should be cut off and thrown. In other words, this elderly Indian does not hold the British culture in high esteem. To him, education is just a means by which Saladin should get wisdom for his people. It is evident that the hybrid is not accepted and is even regarded as an outcast within these polarities. In certain cases he (the hybrid) is seen as a traitor who has abandoned his own culture in favour of another.

The need to make a choice is seen when Zeenat Vankil urges Saladin to come back to India. She tells him that "Salad baba, whatever you call yourself, for Pete's sake *\_come home\_* (66)." The request she makes is in effect a way of telling him to come back to his homeland, to choose his homeland because he inevitably belongs to India. This definitely shows that the society, in one way or the other, wants the hybrid to choose where they belong. Such a choice is the first step towards solving the hybrid's dilemma.

The need for the hybrid to make a choice inevitably implies agency and most hybrids are in constant search of an identity. They are constantly in search of something that will make them belong to a culture. They cannot cut off any of the cultures but they are desperate to belong to one of the cultures because society imposes that on them. From the above, it can therefore be stated that Rushdie presents the case of the hybrid in a postcolonial society who is victimised because of his dual nature.

However, the postcolonial theory posits that the existence of the binary polarities is justified due to the representations made by the coloniser about the colonised and the need for

the former to rule the latter in order to educate and assimilate him/her. It should be noted that, in as much as the idea of centre/margin is applied within the broad colonial context of the coloniser/colonised, it can be applied within one context of these polarities such that we can have a centre within the centre and a margin within the margin. These polarities are felt through religious belief and faith In *The Satanic Verse*. In the Indian history, the first contact between Indians and Muslims was through the arrival of Muslim traders in India. Later on, the Muslim states invaded India and occupied it. Indians were forced to embrace the Muslim faith and to follow Muslim laws.

What is of interest to this work is the fact that these Muslims considered Islam to be a supreme religion, the one designed by God. They believe in one, almighty God, called Allah. Meanwhile, the Hindus believe in the existence of one God but believed that this God could be worshipped in his different forms. So they acknowledge the existence of several gods to whom they render their worship. As such, there exist gods such as Hanuman and Ganesh and others, in the Indian religious faith. The Muslims portray their faith as the centre; it is the ultimate faith which bears the truth about God and the way to heaven. They consider the Hindu religion as being idolatrous and are bent on establishing Islam as the main religion. The Indians, nevertheless, continue to practice their own religion because their faith is what makes their identity. To promote this faith, they have resorted to TV shows for others to know about it.

Another breed of hybrid is born of these polarities but this hybrid is different from the previous one in that hybridity here is founded on religious differences within the same culture. This hybrid possesses knowledge about both the Islamic faith and the Hindu faith. An example of such a hybrid features in *The Satanic Verses* in the character of Gibreel. In the novel, Gibreel is of a Muslim family and his mother always compares him to an angel. Later on, when he becomes a movie star, he incarnates Indian gods. In each of these films, he acts as a god with different appearances and different behaviours (*The Satanic Verses*, 17-18).

Incarnating a person or a god does not only mean an imitation but means that the person who imitates does a good study of the entity to be incarnated so as to properly do the character impersonation. He incarnates Hindu gods on screen but in real life, he is a Muslim who has learned the Muslim religion from his mother. This creates serious disorder in his mind as he does not really know to which religious denomination he belongs. It is for this reason that, at one point, he asks what the opposite of faith. According to him, the opposite is

doubt and not disbelief (*The Satanic Verse*, 92). This doubt is ignited by his exposure to two belief systems as a hybrid. He has knowledge of the Hindu religion and the Muslim religion. Hence he is in an in-between position just like Saladin.

Moreover, another set of postcolonial subjects presented as the margins in the novel are the women. In most of Gibreel's dreams concerning the founding of Islam, women are not given privileged roles and the Prophet even acknowledges that women cannot be part of the Divinities. When Mahoud commits the crime of acknowledging that the three goddesses—Lat, Uzza and Manat—are equal to Allah, he comes back to correct his mistake saying that there is no possibility that goddesses share the grace and greatness of a god. So, Allah can only stand as being superior to the goddesses (*The Satanic Verses*, 132). Also, when Mahoud leaves Jahila and moves into the desert (to Yathrib, where the women are not docile as those in Jahila), he lays down rules which subject the woman to the man (*The Satanic Verses*, 385). This is because, in this patriarchal society, being a patriarchal one, sees the woman is seen as being inferior to the man. She therefore has to do everything the man asks her to do. These rules are not only intended to subject the women of Yathrib, but to also maintain the women who came from Jahila as subjects. This highlights the fact that the postcolonial woman is marginalised in postcolonial discourse.

This chapter set out to examine how Rushdie uses the existing postcolonial ethos in *The Satanic Verses* to portray the ills of colonialism of which hybridity is considered as being one of the worst. It has analysed Orientalist ideas of the colonisers and the tools used by the colonial masters to maintain control over the colonised. It has also analysed the various ways in which the colonised debunk the colonialist representations of the coloniser. And, finally, the chapter has examined the impact of colonialism on postcolonial societies and, more specifically, on the postcolonial subject.

The chapter has shown that the colonialist agenda to subjugate the colonised is done through a number of means among which is the colonial educational system. The school system consequently obliterates the colonised's culture and values. It has also proven that the representations made about the colonised by the colonial masters has led to a split whereby the coloniser regards himself as the Self and his space is the Centre. He equally sees the colonised as the Other who lives in the margin. These representations and the consequent binary polarities have inevitably led to the birth of the hybrid who is not accepted by any of the polarities. It has also led to the effort made by the colonised to regain their identity

through the reclamation of identity and the regaining of agency as they struggle to assert their identity. Saladin and Gibreel have been portrayed as two embodiments of hybridity in the text as the former is caught up between two ethnic identities and, the latter, between two religious identities. Chapter Two looks at how the author revisits this postcolonial ethos and re-defines the postcolonial subject.

## CHAPTER TWO

### RE-DEFINING THE POSTCOLONIAL SELF

As earlier mentioned, the postcolonial theory presents the various ways through which colonial discourse has defined the colonised through colonialist representations. Chapter One has shed light on how the coloniser, through representations made in colonial discourse, present themselves as the centre and the bearers of truth while the colonised are the margins. Postcolonial discourse then attempts to debunk these representations of the colonised in colonial discourse. And in the process of debunking these assertions, postcolonial discourse somehow restores the colonised to the centre. The resulting discursive analysis does not present the colonised as the hybrids whom they are. This chapter deconstructs these claims in postcolonial discourse. It analyses the fragmentation typical of the novel as an indication of the hybrid's ambivalent state. Lastly, the chapter highlights the author's opinion of hybridity.

The most peculiar aspect of Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* is the fact that Rushdie does not only show how colonial discourse ostracises the colonised by considering them as uncivilised and inferior to them. In his work, the writer also shows how the colonised, in the act of re-defining themselves and of rejecting colonialist ideas about them, create another set of discourse within which another group of persons are marginalised. This therefore creates other centres and margins within the margin. In effect, Rushdie shows how logocentric ideas are constructed in colonial discourse and in postcolonial discourse. The consequent logocentrism presents the coloniser as the centre and the colonised as the margin. The margin, however, redefines him/herself by rejecting colonialist claims made about the colonised. In the process of thus redefining themselves, the colonised reject another set of postcolonial subjects known as the hybrids. This creates another binary opposition within the Margin and this is established within discourse.

M.A.R Habib, in *A History of Modern Literary Criticism: From Plato to Present*, defines logocentrism as "any system of thought which is founded on the stability and authority of the Logos, the divine Word" (650). In other words, all systems of thought and principles are derived from a thought or a word or an idea put forth by someone or a group of people. As Habib puts it, "in its simplest meaning, it can signify "statement," "saying," "discourse," or science" (ibid). In effect, Logos here refers to the word, a theory, or an ideology. Habib mentions the fact that, in a further sense, logos "is truth itself, it has a

rational content of thought corresponding to the ultimate reality of the universe.” And this ultimate reality of the universe is an established truth which is, later, seen and accepted as the truth.

Logocentrism is therefore present in grand narratives in both colonial discourse and postcolonial discourse as, in these writings, the logos is used to establish and maintain the centre. Rushdie questions these grand narratives which have been respectively established by the coloniser and the colonised as being unquestionable truths and norms. It should be noted that Rushdie’s presentation of logocentrism in grand narratives is not a means of corroborating the claims of postcolonial discourse. Rather, it is to show that most discourses develop some logocentric ideas due to the fact that these discourses seek to be superior to other discourses in one way or the other.

In his novel, Rushdie shows how discourse is constructed such that it simulates the truth. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin define discourse as

A strongly bounded area of social knowledge, a system of statements within which the world can be known. The key feature of this is that the world is not simply ‘there’ to be talked about, rather, it is through discourse itself that the world is brought into being. It is also in such a discourse that speakers and hearers, writers and readers come to an understanding about themselves, their relationship to each other and their place in the world (in other words, the construction of subjectivity). (*Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts Second Edition*, 62-63)

This definition sheds light on the fact that discourse is a system which has been constructed with strong rules such that anything out of the system is considered as untrue or a violation to the system. In this definition, emphasis is laid on the fact that the world is not simply there to be talked about in a rational way but that the ideas and concepts developed in a discourse are those that make the world or define the world. Thus, discourses bear elements of logocentrism as they claim to know and own the truth.

Added to this, Christopher Butler, in *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction*, defines and comments on discourse as follows

A ‘discourse’ means a historically evolved set of interlocking and mutually supporting statements, which are used to define and describe a subject matter [...]The language game of the discourse expresses and enacts the authority of

those who are empowered to use it within a social group, which includes hospitals, law courts, boards of examiners, and professors [...] It can also be used to subordinate or exclude or marginalize those who are outside it – witches, mesmerists, faith healers, homosexuals, Communist sympathizers, anarchist protesters. (43-44)

In other words, discourse is a set of statements which define an ideology or a belief of a set of people. And, in general, its theses or ideologies are not to be challenged or put to questioning. They are constructed in such a way that people or the society easily accept them. As Butler puts it, discourse can be used to subordinate a group of people. Within this discourse, there is the claim of ownership of the truth. Discourses, in general, therefore serve the purpose of subordination.

In *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie shows how (in various ways and through various means) people create and establish a discourse which they impose on others to accept. The aforementioned discourse constructions by individuals or groups can also be identified in postcolonial discourse. Constructed by the postcolonial subject, postcolonial discourse refutes all the colonial representations made about the colonised. But in the redefinition of the postcolonial self, the postcolonial discourse creates a binary pole whereby the colonised are considered the centre and the hybrids are the margin. As noted before, the existence of the hybrid has always been considered as one of the worst effects of colonialism. The hybrid is considered as an ambivalent being who lacks identity. As said, the hybrid is not accepted by any of the cultures— neither his/her culture of origin nor the coloniser's. Vijay Mishra quotes Jalal Al-e Ahmad's description of the hybrid in "Postcolonial Differend: Diasporic Narratives of Salman Rushdie." He states that

There is no room here for any kind of hybridity [...] The West stricken man has no personality. He is a creature lacking in originality. He, his house, and his speech are colourless, representative of everything and everybody. Not "cosmopolitan." Never! Rather he is a nowhere man, not at home anywhere. He is an amalgam of individuals without personality and personality without specificity. Since he has no self-reliance, he puts on an act. Although he is a master of politesse and charm, he never trusts those to whom he speaks [...] the West-stricken man has neither personality nor speciality. Only fear. Fear of tomorrow. Fear of dismissal. Fear of anonymity and oblivion. Fear that he will be discovered for what he is, a blockhead. (*Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Salman Rushdie*, 84-85)

This quotation shows the unpleasant state of the hybrid in postcolonial societies. He is rejected in the postcolonial context; is seen as someone with no identity, no home no specific culture. The hybrid's lack of specific culture is seen as the lack of a specific identity. That is why the hybrid is considered a colourless and impure person. In these conditions, he/she is forced to choose where to belong. This is because the duality he/she incarnates is not accepted by society. He/she is seen as evil because of his/her dual nature and, just like the Satanic verses in the novel, the hybrid is seen as an evil individual. This is clearly echoed in the text through the stance of Gibreel. It is said that he never wanted to be English and is considered as a hero by society. This is because he seeks to maintain a pure identity as society demands. He consequently inspires Good. Meanwhile Saladin, who has always aspired to be English, is left in the background and considered to be Evil because he is of mixed breeds (*The Satanic Verses*, 448).

*The Macmillan Dictionary for Advanced Learners* defines culture as “a set of ideas, beliefs, and ways of behaving of a particular group of people or society.” (338) It is therefore culture that makes one's identity and an individual is fully integrated in a society if he is from that society and has the culture of that society. He/she is therefore seen as a “pure” being with a pure culture. An individual with a pure culture is seen as one with a complete identity. This is unlike the hybrid who is an impure being because he has more than one culture. This justifies Kenneth Allan's observation that “The postmodern self is fragmented and decentred with a kind of emotional flatness or depthlessness” (*Quarterly Journal of Ideology*, 1). This explains the fragmented nature of both Saladin and Gibreel. Saladin struggles to be accepted as a British even though he is Indian and Gibreel has a split identity as the businessmen and the Prophet in his dreams. As hybrids, they are thus fragmented, painfully split from within. They are both in the constant search for a place they can call “home.” Their rootlessness stems from the problems of identity they both have: Loss of faith (Gibreel Farishta) and the rejection of one's nationality/ethnicity (Saladin Chamcha).

This fragmentation is obvious throughout the novel, not only through the main characters as they struggle to assert themselves and be accepted, but also through the writing techniques the author uses. The plot of the story is not organized in a chronological sequence. There is a constant shift from the past to the present, from reality to dreams. And, within the real life situations in the novel, there is the use of Magical realism as the author struggles to present the reality of both characters. Gibreel is always seen with a golden glow



around his head and this gives him the aspect of an Angel (148, 471). In the Christian faith, the golden glow is said to be part only of people who are saints or heavenly creatures such as angels. This is due to the fact that Gibreel does not deny his ethnicity; he accepts it and is proud of it. He is therefore seen as Good. Opposed to him is Saladin who develops into a goat-like image. In biblical tradition, the goat symbolises the damned whom God casts to his left where there is hell fire. His mutation into this hideous creature results from his rejection of his culture and the rejection from the people surrounding him. The constant shift from reality to dreams and from reality to magical reality in the novel portrays the internal conflict of the characters and their fragmented states.

Moreover, the author makes use of contrast as two settings are contrasted in the novel. Rushdie presents most of his characters in pairs such that these characters are mostly in contrast with other characters. The main characters, Gibreel and Saladin are contrasted in the novel. Gibreel represents good and is the opposite of Saladin who represents evil. This contrast is not only felt in the characters' way of thinking, but also in the effect of their principles reflected on them. Gibreel is comfortable with his Indian identity and therefore rejects all ideas of hybridity. That is why he is angelic, he has a ring over his head which marks his angelic nature. Meanwhile, in addition to his Indian identity, Saladin desperately wants to be English and thereby acquires an English identity making him a hybrid. But he is rejected by these two societies and considered an evil character. It is due to this that he metamorphoses into a hideous creature, into the devil. Barbora Hoferková, in his dissertation "Post-colonial Views of Identity and History in the Works of Salman Rushdie," notes that "In *The Satanic Verses*, mutating into a devil or an angel has nothing to do with being good or bad" (24). In effect, it has nothing to do with being good or evil but it has more to do with the search of identity and the need to belong by these characters.

Also, the author contrasts the settings in the novel. The mythological settings, found in Gibreel's dreams, are contrasted with the real life settings. Jahila and Tulipur represent the empirical period whereby rules are laid and people adhere to these rules. In these settings, there is a strong belief in the existence of God and rules on how to do everything in life. Meanwhile, in the real life setting which is London, we are presented with a modern world where the existence of a God is constantly put into questions. The question of faith in the modern world is seen as a business issue. Gibreel is a religious film star and the people's

faith (in these religions) depends entirely on how good Gibreel represents these divinities. (12-13) To this, Hoferková notes in his dissertation that

If we compare the characters and events from the mythological and modern time, we can say that the most striking differences are that in the modern times nothing is sacred anymore, miracles no longer happen and if they happen, most people are not willing to admit it. Also the media and advertising play very important roles in modern life. (29)

Sure enough, the main elements brought to light (and highlighted by Hoferková) are that, in modern times, the concept of a God is replaced with the Media. The Media is the centre of everything and what is said by the Media is taken for truth just as, in the mythological setting, what is said by the Prophet (under the label of message from God) is received as the gospel truth. Thus, Rushdie inevitably presents the nature or the state of the postmodern man who is decentered with a kind of emotional flatness or depthlessness. There is an emotional flatness in the postmodern character who relies entirely on the Media and whatever it gives to him as information. This plays a great role in the postmodern man's quest for agency as he develops the need to belong.

However, Alice Ratcliffe— in her article “Exploring the ‘Third Space’ in Postcolonial Trinidadian Literature: Presentations of Hybridity and Assimilation in Merle Hodge’s *Crick Crack, Monkey* and Willi Chen’s ‘Trotters—’” makes the following comments about identity

Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact [...] we should think, instead, of identity as a ‘production’, which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. (1)

This means that belonging to one culture does not make one's identity complete but only helps an individual to build his own identity. Stated otherwise, identity is in a constant state of flux in every individual. This implies that the postcolonial's claim of a superior identity that is homogeneous is baseless. And if all identities are perpetually being constructed, then the hybrid who integrates foreign culture (heterogeneity) occupies the superior position in the binary opposition postcolonial subject/hybrid. This might explain the writer's preference for the hybrid.

He says in his novel that “Angels and devils -- who needed them? "Why demons, when man himself is a demon?" (...) "And why angels, when man is angelic too?" (*The Satanic Verse*, 428). It is this duality in man that makes him a perfect and balanced being. If he is only an angel or solely a demon he will not be complete as these contradictory facets complete each other. Hence, the hybrid is much more balanced than an individual with a “pure” culture. Having incorporated elements of both cultures, the hybrid can better appreciate these cultures and can also better implant him/herself in both cultures.

The author proceeds to show how discourse is formed in the religious domain and how an individual lays the foundation for a worldwide faith. He therefore presents this through Gibreel’s dreams. He has a series of dreams in which he dreams about the founding of the Islamic faith and the conception of the Qur’an. These dreams show how the discourse around Islam is constructed and imposed on others. Just like the deconstructionist, Rushdie demonstrates the fact that these grand narratives impose a kind of truth on people. But as Habib puts it

There is no “truth” or “reality” which somehow stands outside or behind language: truth is a relation of linguistic terms, and reality is a construct, ultimately religious, social, political, and economic, but always of language, of various linguistic registers. (652)

Thus the truths that are established in grand narratives are just constructs. Grand narratives, or even theories, as well as religious faiths are a construct of reality by various people. Just as Baudrillard says, grand narratives only simulate the truth; this is because these grand narratives firmly establish their construction of reality on others. It is for this reason that Rushdie moves right back to how the Qur’an was written. He presents the establishment of the Qur’an as a gradual construct of an individual who somehow imposes his opinion on others. On the other hand, he shows how the Islamic faith and ideology is in fact a discourse which simulates the truth and bears logocentric ideas.

In Gibreel’s dreams, we come across the character (Mahoud) who is in effect the founder of Islam. These dreams are set in an imaginary land known as Jahila in the desert. Jahila is a city in the desert built out of sand such that the least drop of water might destroy it. It is in this city that Mahoud founds his religion as the narrator says “In this city, the businessman-turned-prophet, Mahoud, is founding one of the world's great religions” (*The Satanic Verses*, 98). One of the elements the author lets us know about is the fact that

Mahoud was first of all a business man. And he is now seen as a prophet because he is trying to convert the people of Jahila to his newly found religion. As a prophet, he founds his reasoning on the presumed revelations inspired by an Archangel sent to him by God. But the fact that the narrator tells us this about Mahoud as well as mentions the prophet's first occupation (a businessman) already predisposes the reader to understand that all of Mahoud's attempts at getting followers is a business strategy. This already sets the ball rolling. It becomes evident that the reader is taking part in the gradual construction of a discourse: Mahoud's discourse on the existence of only One God.

Mahoud lets the people know that most of his revelations about God come from the Archangel Gibreel. This Archangel is Gibreel who, during these dreams, plays the role of the Arch Angel. In effect, Mahoud simulates a truth which he does not actually possess. His followers are constrained to accept whatever he brings to them as an established truth since he claims it is the gospel truth inspired by a supernatural being. And when Mahoud needs some clarifications, he goes up the mountain to talk to the Archangel. But then another puzzling element the narrator brings up is the fact that Gibreel (who is the Archangel) does not know what he is supposed to say. But he is aware of the fact that he is at the same time the businessman (Mahoud) and the Archangel (Gibreel).

He's not just playing the archangel but also him, the businessman, the Messenger, Mahoud, coming up the mountain when he comes. Nifty cutting is required to pull off this double role, the two of them can never be seen in the same shot, each must speak to empty air, to the imagined incarnation of the other. (113)

The fact that the narrator points out that these roles assumed by the Prophet Mahoud suggests that most of his teachings about faith and Allah are his personal constructions. Yet, he has established them as truth, logos. As a matter of fact Gibreel, the archangel, is like some sort of a conscience or the intellect of the Prophet. So it can be deduced that the Prophet only goes to the mountain to reflect and to think of a new business strategy he can put in place to gain followers. But, for his faith to be accepted, he claims that it has been inspired by God through the archangel. He knows it is only by doing this that his ideology on the existence of a single God can be accepted. His strategy therefore presents the gradual construct of a logos by the Prophet which is accepted by all those who follow him.

Another artifice of Mahoud is evident when the Grandee in Jahila offers him a seat in the village Council and promises him that his religion will be accepted and respected in the village if and only if he acknowledges the existence of the three other goddesses Lat, Manat and Uzza. When the latter talks about it to his disciples, they all agree that it is a trap from the Grandee to destabilise their faith. But Mahoud insists on going to the Mountain to talk about it with the archangel. Yet, once on the mountain, he faces a crisis as he tries to decide on what to do by himself. Rushdie narrates his confusion in these words:

Is it possible that they \_are\_ angels? Lat, Manat, Uzza ... can I call them angelic? Gibreel, have you got sisters? Are these the daughters of God? And he castigates himself, O my vanity, I am an arrogant man, is this weakness, is it just a dream of power? Must I betray myself for a seat on the council? Is this sensible and wise or is it hollow and self-loving? I don't even know if the Grandee is sincere. Does he know? Perhaps not even he. I am weak and he's strong, the offer gives him many ways of ruining me. But I, too, have much to gain. The souls of the city, of the world, surely they are worth three angels? Is Allah so unbending that he will not embrace three more to save the human race? -- I don't know anything.-- Should God be proud or humble, majestic or simple, yielding or un-? \_What kind of idea is he? (*The Satanic Verses*, 116-117)

This passage only reinforces the ideas already mentioned. Mahoud is only looking for strategies to win more converts to his ideology, to his religion. And it is evident that he does not even know one tenth of the truth about God as he claims to, since he too has a lot of questions about God. His ignorance and uncertainty are displayed when he goes and reads out the verses to the crowd that include Lat, Manat and Uzza as goddesses equal to God and runs back to the mountain afterwards to presumably question the archangel and even fight with him. He then later on returns to say that he was indeed inspired by the Devil because, there is only One God. In fact, Gibreel's reflection only helps to point out the fact that Mahoud only simulates the truth. The narrator says

After they had wrestled for hours or even weeks Mahound was pinned down beneath the angel, it's what he wanted, it was his will filling me up and giving me the strength to hold him down, because archangels can't lose such fights, it wouldn't be right, it's only devils who get beaten in such circs, so the moment I got on top he started weeping for joy and then he did his old trick, forcing my mouth open and making the voice, the Voice, pour out of me once again, made it pour all over him, like sick. (*The Satanic Verses*, 130)

This extract clearly shows that there is already a set of ideas which have been established. Mahoud only seeks ways in which to reinforce these ideas. He fights with himself and with, his conscience to convince himself of what he is about to do. He also puts a strategy in place for his discourse to be accepted. The idea of the Devil and negative forces is introduced in this passage. This brings about the dichotomy of God/Devil, Good/Evil. This dichotomy easily sets in place the binary poles in his ideology whereby everything that does not conform to his faith comes from the Devil. As such, God, Good, Heaven is the centre to which every human being should adhere and the Devil, Evil, Satan and Hell are the margin which should be rejected. Those who reject Mahoud's ideology belong to the Devil. In effect, Mahoud runs around saying

"It was the Devil," he says aloud to the empty air, making it true by giving it voice. "The last time, it was Shaitan." This is what he has heard in his listening, that he has been tricked, that the Devil came to him in the guise of the archangel, so that the verses he memorized, the ones he recited in the poetry tent, were not the real thing but its diabolic opposite, not godly, but satanic. (130)

If the devil disguises into an angel of light to communicate with Mahoud because of the Grandee's request, then it is only logical that he should label the latter as the Devil. Mahoud's scheme serves as a strategy to gain more followers and to also establish his ideology and religion as the centre while the other religions are the margin.

The assertion of the existence of the Devil easily brings him more faithful. It is said in the novel that "the numbers of the faithfuls multiply, like a crop that miraculously flourishes as conditions of soil and climate grow worse and worse" (*The Satanic Verses*, 133). By establishing the existence of a Devil, Mahoud is implying that those who are not with him are with the Devil. His Water-Carrier's words and Mahoud's reply and behaviour confirm this in the novel. Khalid (The Water-Carrier) apologises to Mahoud for having doubted his intelligence. He says that he now understands the subtlety of Mahoud's plan as this plan was meant to give the impression that he (Mahoud) had accepted the deal with the Grandee, whereas, Mahoud was just trying to prove the existence of the Devil. And with bitter cynicism, Mahoud answers that it was indeed a wonderful plan, bringing them the devil so as to confront them to the "deeper truth" (*The Satanic Verses*, 133).

This therefore proves that grand narratives, ideologies and principles are discourses which have been constructed in history by an individual or a set of individuals. And each of these ideologies simulates the truth which they do not have. More importantly, these grand narratives or discourses set into place binary polarities whereby the discourses define themselves by making representations about the other ideologies they reject. For Mahoud's ideology (of the existence of a single God) to stand, he needs to present the opposite of this God which is the Devil. And so the only means for his idea of a monotheist religion to exist and be accepted is to introduce this binary opposition. It is for this reason that he cynically confirms Khalid's point of view because it fosters his aim which is becoming a Prophet and spreading his religion. This again looks more like a business strategy than a conversion.

Moreover, in another dream of Gibreel's, we are introduced to Ayesha in a village known as Tilipur. Here, she is considered an insane girl because of her refusal to get married to any kind of man (especially those who do not have a rooted faith in Islam) and also because of her strange attitudes of eating butterflies. But later on, when she becomes clothed with butterflies and her hair becomes white, she convinces her village that she has visions of the Archangel Gibreel who gives her instructions for them (*The Satanic Verses*, 236, 247). She thereby convinces the whole of her village to go on this pilgrimage on the basis of a vision and her relationship with the Archangel. But again, just like with Mahoud, Gibreel acknowledges the fact that he is not responsible for any of the visions and is not even in control of what happens

The dreamer, dreaming, wants (but is unable) to protest: I never laid a finger on her, what do you think this is, some kind of wet dream or what? Damn me if I know from where that girl was getting her information/inspiration. Not from this quarter, that's for sure. [...] So now I have a dream-wife, the dreamer becomes conscious enough to think. What the hell to do with her? --  
But it isn't up to him. (237, 238)

Just as he does the case of Gibreel's, Rushdie demonstrates that Ayesha's ideas or inspirations probably come from within her. But to make them go through, she too claims she is inspired by the archangel. The angel himself is not aware of any of these revelations. Her ideas do not only make the whole village to follow her and believe in her, but also establishes a dichotomy— a binary polarity between believers and blasphemers. When Osman (the clown) protests and tries to question her visions and logic at one point, the crowd sees him as a blasphemer. Rushdie notes that many villagers angrily surround him and Sarpanch

Muhammad Din orders him to be quiet. He reminds him of the fact that he has not been long in their faith or in their village. He adds that Osman should shut up and learn their ways (*The Satanic Verses*, 248).

Rushdie presents different stories with different characters in each of Gibreel's dreams. But then, these dreams are based on one idea: the founding of the Islamic faith. It is therefore clear that Rushdie's use of dreams in his novel is very significant. Through these dreams, he presents another reality within which an ideology is forged; one which still affects the present society. Thus, the dream world here represents the simulacrum, a space within which strong principles and ideologies are laid. These dreams are later on used by the author to contrast the modern world as most of the dreams are set in the classical world, mythological world.

The pertinence of the title of the novel, *The Satanic Verses*, derives from the fact that anything which is written against an ideology or a principle is against "good" and is labelled "Satanic." This reductionist view brings in the dichotomy "good/bad", "God/Satan", "Angel/Demon". An instance is evident in Gibreel's dreams in the novel. An example, already mentioned is when Mahoud cites the devil as his source of inspiration when he is swayed from his faith by Grandee's proposal (*The Satanic Verses*, 130). Another instance is the distorted verses Salman adds in the Sacred Book when acting as the Prophet's scribe. Not only is Salman punished, but the verses he adds are equally referred to as "satanic verses" (*The Satanic Verses*).

But then, from a deconstructionist point of view "The Satanic Verses" can also be an expression of the writer's view that the source of Mahoud's verses (that stand for the Qur'an) is not Godly as claimed. His choice to use dreams— which are simulacra of reality— as the channel through which Gibreel gets his revelation is an indication of this. Added to this, are the Prophet's multiple personalities and his personal doubts. This explanation is also reflected in the real life setting of the story whereby Saladin transforms into a devil (a goat-like creature) because he embraces another culture thereby making him a hybrid. He thereby moves away from the established norms which encourages the existence of a "pure" identity. Meanwhile, Gibreel develops into an angel because he firmly presents himself as an Indian and refuses to receive the British culture. This, again, establishes the dichotomy Angel/Devil as Gibreel is the Angel and Saladin, is the devil. Saladin and Gibreel are both two sides of the same coin. But Rushdie makes a statement in his novel about this as he says



But, and again but: this sounds, does it not, dangerously like an intentionalist fallacy? --Such distinctions, resting as they must on an idea of the self as being (ideally) homogeneous, non-hybrid, "pure", -- an utterly fantastic notion! (448)

This statement sums up the core concern of *The Satanic Verses*. The author introduces the problem of identity here and the place of the hybrid in the society. He makes his stance clear when he says that such distinctions between the Good person and the Evil one, about the "pure" and the hybrid stem from "an utterly fantastic notion." This notion is nothing other than an ideology established as logos which this work earlier discussed. He literarily questions these ideologies which favour some postcolonial subjects and disfavour others. The author's questioning is felt through the voice of some characters such as Salman, the Persian, when he tells Baal about the ambiguities found in The Prophet's (Mahoud's) attitude. Salman tells Baal that when Gibreel appears to the Prophet, he finds himself spouting some many rules that these rules begin to get on the nerves of the faithful. He specifies that rules are made about everything: which direction a man should take when he farts, how much to eat, how deeply they should sleep, the sexual positions they should use and others. It is the uncountable number of unfounded rules that make Salman to lose his faith in the Prophet. He begins to understand the real intentions of the Prophet as he understands that Mahoud was once a businessman so his laying down of many rules is just a business strategy to maintain his faithfuls at the same level (*The Satanic Verses*, 383).

It is interesting that it is through a character named Salman like himself, Salman the Persian, that Rushdie expresses these criticisms. It can be inferred that this character expresses the author's own questioning of the Qur'an and its founding. He shows how, Islam as a religion, has been developed into a strong discourse which has been placed above other discourses. Rushdie shows how discourse construction (in general) always comprises the establishment of strong indisputable rules which are not arguable as in the case of Mahoud above. According to Butler, in such cases, power and knowledge are the fundamental elements found in every discourse as the desire to show the superiority of one discourse over another is alternative way of gaining power over another discourse. And to do this, there is the need of knowledge to build a very strong and firm discourse (46). Vijay Mishra comments on Rushdie's point of view in the same source mentioned before. He echoes what the novelist says about Islam and discourse established around this religion and its founder:

The key to Rushdie's argument is to be found in his carefully written sentences. Rushdie writes: They have turned Muhammad into a perfect being, his life into a perfect life, his revelation into the unambiguous, clear event it originally was not. Powerful taboos have been erected. One may not discuss Muhammad as if he were human, with human virtues and weaknesses. One may not discuss the growth of Islam as a historical phenomenon, as an ideology born out of its time. (89)

It is clear from these words that, for Rushdie, reality cannot be contained in a sacred text or a discourse which is being imposed on others. The idea of "truth" and "reality" can be seen from different angles and should be confined to specific angles which have already been chosen. In every discourse therefore there is the presence of binary opposition such that we end up with several centres and margins. This could be within the centre and within the margin.

In postcolonial discourse there is also this binary opposition where we find a centre and a margin within postcolonial subjects. On this basis, *The Satanic Verses* can be read as a novel wherein people from all over express their doubts about the various established discourses or laws. Once more, Mishra quotes Fuentes as saying that

The novel is the form of modernity, in which a multiplicity of languages and voices can expose the folly of a world view that locks itself into meaning. Such a world view where "reality is dogmatically defined" ... For them, the source of all meaning is a closed sacred text that allows for no disagreement. (*Bloom's Modern Critical Views: Salman Rushdie*, 90)

This does not only describe the Islamic faith but discourses in general. Fuentes thus asserts that Rushdie is remarking that the very concept of the world is defined in rigid discourses. The novelist is underlining the fact that there is no absolute truth in discourse. It is only a construct based on a series of representations of an idea or concept.

As earlier mentioned in Chapter One, Rushdie presents a third postcolonial subject (which is the woman) who is considered the margin. In the previous chapter, it was shown how women in the postcolonial society are considered to be inferior to men and therefore the rules, principles and ideologies (which are presented and established in Gibreel's dreams) developed are in a bid to maintain the women in that inferior position. But then, Rushdie presents these women in the postmodern society which is present in the real life narrative of the text. These women refuse to be marginalised and take their lives in their hands. Zeeny

Vankil, for example, is a woman who is more interested in the politics of her country than in a marital home. It is for this reason that she is a critic in the novel. She criticises imperial control and also India's slow progress. Moreover, she lightly tells Saladin that she does not need to get married and does not see the importance of doing so (*The Satanic Verses*, 63). The author thus shows that women break free from the established norms according to which the woman's place is in a home and her duty is to submit.

Pamela, Saladin's wife, likewise poses an independent woman who is not under the chains of patriarchy. This is seen when she keeps on in her relationship with his friend (Jumpy) although she knows that her husband knows about it. She even occupies the main part of the house while Saladin occupies the den. Pamela reacts like this when she hears that Saladin is dead. She feels free to do anything she wants because there is no Saladin anymore to stop her from doing so. And so even when Saladin comes, back she refuses to let this freedom go. She instead occupies the main part of the house with Jumpy (*The Satanic Verses*, 192). This reversal of situation and position in the home is typical of the postmodern period. Rushdie shows here that there is no adherence to rules, as Pamela does not submit herself to her husband. Instead, she is bent on living the life she wants to live by drinking and maintaining her sexual relationship with Jumpy. This postmodernity is felt in the space occupied by the two characters in the house. Following the norms established in the classical period the woman is supposed to occupy this inferior position in the house while the man occupies the superior position. It is for this reason that Mahoud (in Gibreel's dreams) keeps giving rules concerning the woman's behaviour towards men and her submission to men. But in the postmodern world, this order is reversed as Pamela occupies the superior position in the house.

This chapter set out to deconstruct the claims of postcolonial discourse about the hybrid and his/her place in society. It also aimed at revisiting the Islamic claims of "truth," "goodness," as well as the Muslim doctrines and definition of who God is. The chapter has examined how discourse is built and how logocentrism is established in discourse. In connection to this, it has shown how discourse about the hybrid is built. Compared to the "pure" postcolonial subject, the hybrid is said to be an incomplete being because he has more than one culture. The chapter has deconstructed this postcolonial idea of the hybrid and the finding of the chapter is that, the postcolonial discourse about the hybrid is established around a logos. It is these logocentric ideas in the postcolonial theory that establish the "pure"

postcolonial subject as being superior to the hybrid. Also, the chapter has proven that the same logocentric assumptions establish Islam as the true religion and the woman as inferior. It revisits these assumptions.

In connection to this, the chapter has overturned absolutist Islamic claims about God and “truth.” It has shed light on the fact that the author uses dreams to show how Islamic claims are built on the dichotomy God/Devil. As such, he uses Salman (as his mouth piece) to deconstruct Islamic claims. Also, the chapter shows that the woman in the postmodern society refuses to remain in her subject position. She rather breaks free from it and lives her life the way she wants to. The chapter’s conclusion is that Rushdie seems to say that the hybrid is a much more balanced being because, he/she integrates his/her culture and the coloniser’s culture. The writer thus reverses the order in the binary pole of postcolonial discourse. In the chapter that follows, the chapter focuses on the new space that results from Rushdie’s re-vision of postcolonialist representation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### HYBRIDITY AND POSTMULTICULTURALISM: CREATION OF A NEW SPACE

In the previous chapter, postcolonial claim about the hybrid were deconstructed and it was shown that the hybrid is a more stable individual than the “pure” postcolonial subject. By elevating the hybrid to a superior and privileged position, Rushdie breaks the very core of the definitions of cultural identity as he creates a new kind of identity as well as a new space. In this chapter, the study brings out the consequences of the author’s celebration of the hybrid and the new space he creates. As such, the chapter analyses the postmodern conception of identity that bears on postmulticulturalism. The implied revisionary approach to identity and reality results into a new world that the chapter highlights. Finally, the chapter reveals how the creation of a new identity and a new space by Rushdie is beneficial to the postcolonial subject.

At the very beginning of the novel the narrator says “how does newness come into the world? How is it born? Of what fusions, translations, conjoinings is it made? How does it survive, extreme and dangerous as it is?” (*The Satanic Verses*, 8). The answer to this question is within the question itself. Newness can really only come about through fusions and conjoinings. In other words, newness can only come about through the existence of hybridity in the colonialist context. The existence of the hybrid therefore brings in newness in the world as he represents a fusion of two cultures thereby creating a new identity altogether. It can be argued that the rest of the novel attempts to find an answer to this question. In *Imaginary Homelands*, Rushdie himself says that

Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools. But however ambiguous and shifting this ground may be, it is not an infertile territory for a writer to occupy. (15)

It is neither an infertile territory for a writer nor for the individual because having two cultures blended in someone helps him/her to have better insight into these cultures. Rushdie’s comment does not only apply to the hybrid writers (of which he is part) but to all hybrids. As a writer, straddling two cultures helps him to create stories. But as a postcolonial subject, this position helps him to better understand other cultures. This quotation introduces the aspect of plurality as Rushdie presents the nature of the hybrid as a multiple agent.

Rushdie portrays the hybrid as an individual with multiple agency as he has a bit of every culture in him. Saladin, for example, has the capacity to imitate many voices and of impersonating characters from different cultures. This is due to the fact that he has a bit of these cultures in him. His co-actress Mimi, and he impersonate so well the voices of different people from different places in the word that the audience is unable to know exactly if the acting is done by one person or different characters (*The Satanic Verses*, 35, 52, 64). Another character who has this trait in the novel is Gibreel. He is able to incarnate different gods and divinities in the Hindu religion. His impersonation of these different gods makes him a hybrid and, as such, a multiple agency (26-27). In effect, Rushdie presents the true nature of the hybrid as he gets access to other cultures due to his cosmopolitanism.

Robert P. Marzec says this concerning Rushdie's celebration of identity in *An Ecological and Postcolonial Study of Literature: From Daniel Defoe to Salman Rushdie*

What the novel then tenders is a more egalitarian "world of jumbled genealogies" that enforces in the end no superior point of order, but places "metamorphosis and flux" against an aggrandizing essentialism. We are left then, in Singh's investigation, with a liberalist celebration of hybridity as the new, non-mastering national narrative. (156-157)

A world of jumbled genealogies here refers to a world with blended cultures where the concept of a "pure" culture and identity is obsolete. It is for this reason that, throughout the novel, we come across the same sentence either at the beginning of each part or at the end: "To be born again, [...] first you have to die" (2). Death here does not mean death of the old ways or of one culture but it is the death of an obsolete ideology of a "pure" culture and the birth of a heterogeneous culture or society in which hybridity is celebrated.

However, it is worth noting that Rushdie does not celebrate a rootless hybrid like some authors seem to say. He rather celebrates a hybrid who has his roots in his homeland, then opens up to other cultures. This is because one can understand another culture only from his/hers. In the novel, when Saladin returns to his home, he settles things with his wife (Pamela) and takes part of the house as his living space. In the den— where he spends most of his time— he watches television. During one of these programs, he watches how a tree has been created out of two trees but he is rather impressed by the following

The tree itself made him sit up and take notice. There it palpably was, a chimera with roots, firmly planted in and rowing vigorously out of a piece

of English earth: a tree, he thought, capable of taking the metaphoric place of the one his father had chopped down in a distant garden in another, incompatible world. If such a tree were possible, then so was he; he, too, could cohere, send down roots, survive. Amid all the televisual images of hybrid tragedies [...] he was given this one gift. It was enough. He switched off the set. (*The Satanic Verses*, 426)

The tree, in this passage, has its roots firmly planted in the soil of its homeland and then its branches spread afield. This is a perfect image of a hybrid, of the identity of the hybrid. Here, Rushdie tries to lay emphasis on the fact that the hybrid is not a rootless fellow and should not be rootless. He/she should rather spring from his/her own culture and open up to other cultures. That is why Saladin sees the possible means of getting reconciled to his fragmented self. It is only by planting himself firmly in his roots and opening up to the world that he will be a balanced being. He knows fully well that there is no possibility for him to get rid of any one of the cultures. It will only tear him up and further fragment his identity. So the only solution for him is to firmly plant his roots in India so as to accept the Englishness he has intergrated. The writer clearly expresses these views through Zeeny Vakil's words. The latter tells Saladin that "If you're serious about shaking off your foreignness, Salad baba, then don't fall into some kind of rootless limbo instead. Okay? We're all here. We're right in front of you" (562).

This is because being rootless means one does not have even a single culture. This should not be the case of the hybrid. He/she should acquire cultural identity from birth and then later acquire another identity from some other culture. Therefore, the hybrid should not a rootless being. As such, for Saladin's hybrid identity to be complete, he first of all needs to accept his old self, the old Indian piece he has always rejected. He needs to accept it as part of himself, and to love and accept it as something that defines his identity. The renewed love he feels for his dying father in the novel when he returns home can symbolise the love for his old self as the narrator says "to fall in love with one's father after the long angry decades was a serene and beautiful feeling; a renewing, life-giving thing ... *\_Home\_* receded from the prodigal son" (537, 547).

Indeed Saladin is not only falling in love with his dying father. He is also falling in love with his old self. He feels like he has found a missing piece of his life. So, when he goes home to reconcile with his dying father he is indeed going back to reconcile his old self

also— the Indian that is in him. The narrator refers to this merge of his multiple selves in the extract below:

Although he kept it quiet, however, Saladin felt hourly closer to many old, rejected selves, many alternative Saladins -- or rather Salahuddins -- which had split off from himself as he made his various life choices, but which had apparently continued to exist, perhaps in the parallel universes of quantum theory. (*The Satanic Verses*, 547)

It is only when he succeeds to unite the English and the Indian that is in him that he feels full again. It is for this reason that the old Indian self that resurfaces in him is not a strange new being but one which was deeply buried in him. This is the sort of hybrid Rushdie advocates in his novel. The new kind of identity he (Salman Rushdie) presents and advocates is a hybrid identity.

Jessica Brown, in her article, “East/West: Salman Rushdie and Hybridity,” makes the following comment about the hybrid nature of both Saladin and Gibreel

Rushdie uses the experiences of Gibreel and Saladin to show that this —in-between position, though difficult, is ultimately a positive one through which newness can enter global culture [...] Throughout the novel, the characters are forced to accept that their identity is no longer singular [...] An inability to embrace this newness or a refusal to adapt to a new life in the West could, according to Rushdie, ultimately destroy the migrant. (*Honors Program Projects*, 42-43)

It might not only destroy the migrant but also the postcolonial subject as more and more cultures come together, giving place to the existence of the hybrid. And so, if there is an insistence on maintaining the idea of a pure culture, it might be disastrous for the postcolonial subject who becomes a hybridised subject in the modern world. The postmodern condition is therefore characterised by the existence of hybrids. It is, in effect, the hybrids who bring newness in the world as their identities are of a hybrid nature. Brown further adds that

By telling the story of a single migrant, Rushdie is able to simultaneously expound on the larger, communal concepts of home and identity, [...] the true heart of the novel lies in individuals who must confront their inner dichotomy between East and West. Rushdie uses the characters of Saladin and Gibreel as symbols to explore this issue of personal hybridity. (Ibid)



From Brown's words, we bring out two things: the fact that Rushdie redefines the concepts of "home" and "identity" through two characters, (Saladin and Gibreel Frishta). He shows that the postcolonial subject can be much more balanced if he accepts the fact that he is gradually becoming a hybridised being. The concept of "home," therefore does not mean a place that has its set of ideologies which are superior to another's "home." Rather, it will mean any place where the postcolonial subject can feel at home.

The problem the postcolonial subject faces in the postmodern world is that of identity as he is fragmented from within. In "The Postmodern Self: A Theoretical Consideration," Kenneth Allan says that "the postmodern self is fragmented and decentred with a kind of emotional flatness or depthlessness" (*Quarterly Journal of Ideology*, 1). This means that the postmodern man no longer finds satisfaction in his own identity. The emotional flatness is due to the disillusionment felt by the postmodern man in the face of grand narratives. The solution suggested by Rushdie is the creation of a new self identity through the fusion of culture to bring about the hybrid identity. It is for this reason that Brown says that "Saladin's journey towards accepting his hybrid cultural identity illuminates the hope and beauty of a life —in-between" (49). Brown sees the prospects of a life in-between as beautiful because it helps to mend the fragmented identity of the postmodern man.

Rushdie himself says in *Imaginary Homelands* that

*The Satanic Verses* celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs. It rejoices in mongrelization and fears the absolutism of the Pure. Mélange, hotch-potch, a bit of this and a bit of that is how newness enters the world. (394)

It is indeed the celebration of the impure because the "pure" represents an ideology, an obsolete ideology. It therefore represents an old system of thought. Man should be able to evolve and this evolution for him is through the birth of mongrel selves, hybrid beings who are not rootless per say but are open to other cultures. This brings about this mixture of cultures. As earlier quoted from the Bible, new wine cannot be put into old wineskin. This is because the new is strong and good. In wine, there is a mixture of several elements or ingredients to get good wine. Therefore, if this blend of ingredients produces something new and good, then, a blend of cultures too can be a good thing for the postcolonial subject. Through this blend, something good can also be born. But this newness can only come if the

old dies. The writer says so in the novel through the narrator "If the old refused to die, the new could not be born" (*The Satanic Verses*, 573). Hence, the old has to die for the new to surface. The idea of a pure culture should therefore be abandoned in order to embrace a new culture which is a hybrid culture.

Rushdie's attempt to establish hybridity as the solution to modern man's fragmented self is an attempt to reconcile the good and evil in man. The fact that the postcolonial subject and theory always strive to undo colonial representation about them by presenting themselves and their culture as good is another way of denying the idea that there is also a negative side to their culture. In other words, they are denying the fact that there is also the devil in them. As earlier mentioned, Rushdie says in the novel that "Why demons, when man himself is a demon?" "And why angels, when man is angelic too?" (428).

In other words, Rushdie says that discourse (in general) and cultural identities (in particular) are forged in such a way that they tend to present only the good that is found in them. Meanwhile, they present other cultures as the "demon". The fact that the unaccepted is demonised is only a means of increasing the binary polarities. Whereas, Rushdie tries to show that there is both the good and the evil in each culture. But by accepting and welcoming the blend of cultures within the postcolonial subject, the postcolonial subject becomes whole and at peace with himself. This is why Saladin is able to reconcile all the old pieces of his self which he had abandoned and which fragmented his identity. In getting reconciled with his Indian identity, he accepts his hybrid nature and begins to see the world otherwise (*The Satanic Verses*, 560). Meanwhile, Gibreel ends up committing suicide because he does not accept the possibility that he has two cultures. Brown says in the same article earlier mentioned that

Gibreel is unable to accept his own spiritual ambiguity and thus commits suicide; Saladin finds a way to maintain both his Indian roots and his English influence [...] [his] return to India allows him to finally reconcile both his past and his present. This cultural multiplicity is, as Rushdie argues, a positive thing. (48)

Gibreel's refusal to accept the possibility of a new space and a new identity (different from the "pure" identity he is so proud of) limits him. He is not able to accept the possibility of newness. Rushdie consequently suggests a new identity and a new space through Saladin.

The novelist automatically creates a new space within which this new identity can be lived. The new identity cannot be placed back in an old space with old ideologies. This conforms to the metaphor of new wine in old wineskin earlier mentioned (Mark 2:22). As new wine should be put into new wineskin, so should a new identity be set in a new society that has new ways of looking at the world. So, in celebrating a mongrel self, Rushdie creates a new space where a hybrid identity is celebrated and aspired to.

According to Frederick Luis Aldama, Rushdie creates a fourth space within which his characters are free to live a free, hybrid life. In his book, *Postethnic Narrative Criticism Magico Realism in Oscar “Zeta Acosta, Ana Castillo, Julie Dash, Hanif, Kureishi and Salman Rushdie*, he says that the fourth space is opposed to the first and third spaces wherein the first space is occupied by the coloniser and the third by the colonised. Ashcroft, Tiffins and Griffiths observed in, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, that

The term ‘First World’ was used [during the Cold War] to designate the dominant economic powers of the West [...] The term (Third World) was, however, also used as a general metaphor for any underdeveloped society or social condition anywhere: ‘Third World conditions’, Third World educational standards’, etc. (213)

As earlier said, “First World” designates the colonial powers, the stronger nations while the “Third World” designate the weaker nations, the colonised. This introduces and maintains the binary polarity that exists between these two worlds and establishes the notions of centre/margin. Aldama comments that in this hierarchy, the European characters inhabit a first space coded as civilized and racially pure. Meanwhile the non-Western characters inhabit a third space coded as primitive and racially impure. (Ibid) This does not only maintain the orientalist ideas against the colonised but still creates these binaries. Ashcroft, Tiffins and Griffiths identify the Fourth World as one that is more impoverished and marginalised than the Third World. Unlike these three critics, the Fourth world or the fourth space (for Aldama) is one which is created by Rushdie in order to escape from the binary polarities which exist between the First and the Third worlds. It is a space which seeks to destroy these meta-narratives about the coloniser and the colonised in order to establish a hybridised culture and people.

This critic remarks, in the source earlier mentioned, that Rushdie’s fourth space is such a fourth-part space, but told from the point of view of postcolonial characters and

narrators who inhabit a diasporic territory (108). Indeed it is a space different from the previous ones (the First and the Third) because it is occupied by hybrid characters who bear traces of both the First and the Third spaces. To avoid a situation where this Fourth Space will create another binary, it is preferable to talk of Rushdie's creation of a new space wherein hybridity will be celebrated rather than pure cultures. It is for this reason that Aldama adds that

Salman Rushdie would invent story worlds that destabilize and re-conquer such narrative cartographies. In Rushdie's novels *Midnight's Children*, *Shame*, *The Satanic Verses*, and *The Moor's Last Sigh*, magic realism is used as a storytelling form to re-conquer and complicate the primitivised third space. Rushdie uses magic realism to critique narratives that reproduce a racialised Us/Them binary opposition where each concept defines the other by a reifying contrast; he uses magic realism to invent a fourth space wherein his cultural and racial hybrid protagonists and characters exist in an enlarged contact zone where first spaces and third spaces coexist. (108)

As such, Rushdie's aim in his text is to break down the walls of meta-narratives which continuously create binary polarities that continue to destabilise the colonised. Contrary to Aldama's remarks, the novelist's aim is not for these spaces to co-exist. He intends for them to fuse and be as one. This is because coexistence may not entail acceptance and coexistence may still lead to the creation of binaries. In the novel, when Saladin mutes into a goatlike creature, he calls his producer to tell him that he is alive and needs to be put back into business. But Valance, his producer, refuses to tell him that the British do not want him because he is Black. He rather says that they want dynasty to be respected as Whites should do things for Whites and the other races for their races (*The Satanic Verses*, 277).

From this passage, we note that the British are aware of the existence of other cultures and races such as the Indians and the Africans and co-exist with these cultures in the same country. But then, they do not accept these cultures and appreciate their specificities. They still consider these cultures as being inferior to their. Thus, co-existence does not always imply acceptance and harmony. In a sense, Rushdie foresees the fact that the existence of a pure may no longer be a current issue because more and more societies get to intermingle. This means the blend of cultures and civilisations and such a blend can be effective only if there is a fusion of the two spaces which were previously developed in meta-narratives. This fusion can only come about through acceptance of the other. That is why, in the novel,

Saladin feels new again after he has accepted his old self, the old pieces which were missing. Saladin says that, as time passes, he feels closer to old “Salahhudins” from whom he had parted a long time ago when his ambition was to become British (*The Satanic Verses*, 547). His acceptance of his old self connotes his acceptance of Britain and India as part of him. This blend of the British and Indian culture brings in the postmulticultural aspect of the novel.

As Dorota Gozdecka and Magdalena Kmak puts it Post-multiculturalism is an ideology according to which cultures and ethnic groups are united into one society, often regarded as a merger of melting pot (*Journal of Sociology*, 25). It is towards the melting pot of postmulticulturalism that Rushdie is drifting to. He foresees a world where cultures are united in every society thereby bringing forth the existence of the hybrid. These hybrids can only live in a new space born of cultural fusion. As earlier mentioned in the Introduction of this work, Elam defines Post-multiculturalism as the potential meaning of “new self-definitions and coalitions, the space to claim a new ethnic possibility.” By doing this, the postmulticultural offers space for new explorations of cultural and ethnic hybridity. It also offers the interrogation of racial meanings, as well as the re-thinking of the politics of cultural identity (*The Crucible of Cultures*, 1- 3).

The existence of new self-definitions can only take place if there is the acceptance of the hybrid identity. This also entails the necessity for the creation of a new space. It can be concluded that it is from the perspective of the Postmulticultural idea of new self-identities that Rushdie creates a new space where there are more and more hybrids and where the idea of a pure culture will be abandoned. This new space is rid of all pre-established rules that compel the postcolonial subject to choose the camp to which he/her belongs. Zeeny Vankil attempts to explain the *raison d’être* of grand narratives by noting that

Society was orchestrated by \_grand narratives\_: history, economics, and ethics. In India, the development of a corrupt and closed state apparatus had "excluded the masses of the people from the ethical project." As a result, they sought ethical satisfactions in the oldest of the grand narratives, that is, religious faith. "But these narratives are being manipulated by the theocracy and various political elements in an entirely retrogressive way." (*The Satanic Verses*, 562)

Two ideas emerge from this extract. The first thing Zeeny mentions is the fact that society is entirely built on grand narratives. The second is that these grand narratives are manipulated by those who put them in place in order to maintain a kind of stable ruling system. The closed state apparatus is due to the presence of these grand narratives which do not permit a society to be open to the world. They instead foster its being closed to the world and increase the binary oppositions that exist within the world. It is for this reason that the narrator in the novel says that

The rules of Creation are pretty clear: you set things up, you make them thus and so, and then you let them roll. Where's the pleasure if you're always intervening to give hints, change the rules, fix the fights? (*The Satanic Verses*, 429)

Indeed, there is no pleasure in changing rules because these rules somehow maintain the society in an immobile position of respecting rules established by a group of people and they do not progress. Society needs to be free of such rules and only respect the natural ones found in nature. The postcolonial subject, especially the hybrid, is the most affected person because— in trying to fix the fight between the colonial and the postcolonial discourse— he/she is most marginalised. He/she is not considered when the rules are being reinvented. Instead, these rules rather force him/her to make a choice between the two available identities. The possibility for new self-definitions and coalitions that are part of postmulticulturalism solves this problem.

Consequently, the new space and identity Rushdie creates in his novel are very beneficial to the postcolonial subject. It helps him/her to reaffirm his/her status as a free individual with his own values. Being part of these two cultures will help him/her to better appreciate the culture of origin and to be open to the world. Such possibility of openness counters the usual situation wherein postcolonial subjects are closed up in their own world and are only interested in undoing the representations made about them. As such, having this new identity will help them look at the world from a different angle.

Moreover, Rushdie praises the hybrid because (according to him) the hybrid's identity is an autonomous self which defines an individual. The hybrid might be an in-between postcolonial subject but, the state of being in-between does not reduce his/her worth. Rather, it is a strength he/she can adapt to any situation. The hybrid can thus be defined as someone whose identity is made up of more than one culture. This definition is different from other

definitions which describe the hybrid as a lost individual because no culture is specific to him/her. Rushdie therefore creates a postcolonial subject who is autonomous in his own identity. This can be seen in Saladin who, when he finally reconciles his old Indian self with his Englishness, starts building a firm and an autonomous identity of himself. Zeeny Vanhkil appreciates the authenticity of his real self when he does so by stating that “Now you can stop acting at last.” (*The Satanic Verses*, 559).

The new identity that Rushdie proposes for the postcolonial subject opens up new horizons and modifies the postcolonial debates which define the coloniser as the devil and the colonised as the mistreated angel. The novelist suggests that neither colonialist discourse nor the postcolonialist discourse (that respective stand for the devil and the angel) are to be avoided. Such a view can give a new orientation to the postcolonial debate. Besides, the creation of this new space helps the postcolonial subject to recreate and redefine his/her own space so as to evolve. When Saladin receives his inheritance and Gibreel shoots himself in his father’s study Saladin decides to destroy the home of his childhood. He does not do so because he wants to forget his childhood or to get rid of his inheritance. Rather it can be said that he wants to build something new with the old (*The Satanic Verses*, 573). As the narrator puts it in the novel “a history is not so easily shaken off; he was also living, after all, in the \_present moment of the past\_, and his old life was about to surge around him once again, to complete its final act” (*The Satanic Verses*, 560). It is clear that a history is not so easily wiped out. It is part and parcel of each individual but there is the possibility for each to build something new out of the old. It is for this reason that the new space created by Rushdie is essential for the postcolonial subject because he can regenerate himself into a much stronger self.

The purpose of this chapter set out to examine how the blend of cultures forms a new and hybrid identity which the author celebrates. It has also looked at how the author creates a new space for this new identity hence in advocacy of postmulticulturalism. Finally, the chapter has highlighted the benefits of these new identity and space to the postcolonial subject. The chapter has shown that the existence of the hybrid is what brings about newness into the world. Unlike the claims of the postcolonial theory according to which the hybrid is considered rootless and lost, the Chapter has argued that having a hybrid identity is advantageous. It enables the hybrid to be rooted in his/her culture and, at the same time, makes it possible for him/her to be open to other cultures. It has also shown that the existence

of this new identity necessitates the creation of a new space within which this new identity can effectively live. The postcolonial subject benefits from these as he/she re-defines and reconstructs his/her identity in a new space. Chapter Four argues that Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* is relevant to our presently globalised world, especially to the teens and young adults of our high schools. The chapter looks at how an extract of the novel can be used to teach Prose Appreciation



## CHAPTER FOUR

### PROSE APPRECIATION AND POSTMULTICULTURALISM: AN EXCERPT FROM THE SATANIC VERSES

The quest for identity and the need to belong is a current issue throughout the world and throughout cultures. More and more people get into contact with other cultures and therefore lose their “pure” identity as they unconsciously (or consciously) become hybrids. The existence of the hybrid and hybridity itself is a common issue in most postcolonial societies (if not all of them). This is relevant in our Cameroonian society as more and more Cameroonians get into contact with other cultures physically or through modern technologies and become hybrids. In the postmodern world today, the idea of a “pure” culture and identity is gradually fading away to give place to hybridity. This is clearly highlighted in *The Satanic Verses*. Therefore, using extracts from *The Satanic Verses* to teach Prose Appreciation to students of Lower and Upper sixth is recommended since the novel is a transcultural text. Thus, this chapter undertakes a brief study of the place of prose appreciation in literature teaching and its objectives. Next, the chapter shows how an extract of *The Satanic Verses* is recommended for Prose Appreciation and how it can be used to teach this literary competence in a high school class.

In the Cameroonian curricula activities for Literature teaching, the main objectives of teaching Literature in English in secondary schools is for students to study how language is used in a given context and also to open them to other cultures and the realities of the world. Also, another objective is to develop students’ ability to select and interpret relevant material judiciously and to express ideas in coherent and clear English. Furthermore, Literature enables students to explore literary texts for the definition of the human condition and to get them to better understand their own existence and values in relation to society. Students are exposed to language used in these texts and to how language structures have been used to create meaning and aesthetic beauty in a work of arts. To end, the need to develop a reading habit (interest in reading) in students is one of the main objectives in Literature teaching (*Literature in English Programme of Study for Anglophone Secondary Schools in Cameroon*, 6).

In the higher classes (that is, Upper and Lower Sixth), in addition to the other objectives mentioned above, there is the development of critical thinking. As far as this is

concerned, students are given or are taught how to appreciate a text or a literary work. In Singapore, The Ministry of Education states that in higher classes, what is central to literature as a subject is

The critical analysis of how language is purposefully and creatively used in texts in order to create meaning and explore issues or themes. Through the literary skills of reading and responding critically and personally to literary texts, students actively construct meaning and in the process make connections between the texts, their lives and the world. (*Literature in English Teaching Syllabus 2013 Lower and Upper Secondary*, 1)

This therefore implies that, in higher classes, emphasis is laid on developing a critical mind in students which they can use to appreciate a piece of work and make connections between the works they have read and their lives. Students are given the necessary tools to appreciate a work of arts at this level and they appreciate this work against the backdrop of their lives and day-to-day activities. To this, the Ministry of Education in Singapore adds that the study of literary texts both sharpens and broadens students' minds such that it develops critical thinking skills, cultivates questioning minds, explores personal and social issues, and interrogates as well as manages ambiguities and multiple perspectives. This is so because Literature builds, in students, socio-cultural sensitivity and awareness as well as a global outlook in students by offering opportunities for them to explore a wide range of literary texts written in different contexts and from various parts of the world, connecting them to other ages and cultures (*Literature in English Teaching Syllabus 2013 Lower and Upper Secondary*, 2-3). Thus, through literature, students are exposed to other cultures and other systems of thought which helps to broaden their minds and their scope.

H. L. B Moody comments that Literature does not concentrate on a particular area of knowledge as other subjects (such as Chemistry, Physics, etc) do. Literature is concerned with all aspects of man and the universe in their entirety. Every work of literature is about something and/or many things (*The Teaching of Literature*, 7). This, therefore, adds to the point already raised above as to the quest of exposing students to other cultures through the reading of literary texts. Indeed, through these texts students learn more about the world and also about the universe. They learn more from reading a text than if they were taught each element of life at every moment. To this, the choice of the texts (from the three genres) is scrupulously done following some established criteria by the Ministry of Secondary Education in Cameroon. In *Literature in English Programme of Study for Anglophone*

*Secondary Schools in Cameroon*, the following criteria are respected for the choice of a text to be treated on program. One of the principles is that the stories should be rich enough to allow for sufficient depth of literary analysis and exploration. Moreover, the text should relate to students' own cultural experience. Furthermore, texts from other cultures should be imaginative, appealing and should have some link with students' own lives. Also, the texts should be pitched at a level just above the average reading standard of the class level. These criteria are used when choosing the poetry, prose or drama texts students will study during the year.

In the Advanced Level, students are introduced to appreciation in poetry and in prose. During these exercise, students are given unseen poems or extracts of stories (or novels) of which they are expected to undertake a critical reading. Appreciating a piece of work is therefore a critical analysis of an unseen text, be it a poem or a prose passage. In the GCE syllabus in Cameroon, this exercise is done to give students the tools they need to analyse a text. Tameh Valentine Nfon, in *Literature: The Teacher's Handbook*, says that "prose appreciation is not an end in itself, but a means to an end, and teachers should always have that end in mind" (49). This means that the exercises done during prose appreciation are done in a bid to help students develop an autonomous critical-thinking ability when they come across other texts (be it in class or at home). Teachers should definitely have this end in their minds because critical thinking will help students to understand and better approach longer texts on program.

In "Analysis of Unseen Texts;" Charles R Cooper says that examinations involving unseen texts can be a daunting prospect and, to be successful, learners need to change focus from a memory-driven test to one involving the creative application of skills and knowledge developed in the course of studying other texts (*English Literature: Introduction to Close Reading and Approaching Unseen Texts*, 1). The exercise, therefore, is to help students apply their knowledge to some other text which they have not studied or mastered to see if they (the students) have developed some critical skills. Hence, it is essential for them to use texts which they have not studied in class because they will not give memorised answers when analysing texts, but they will give their own critique of the text and link it to the day-to-day life activities.

So, in prose appreciation, the expected out come from the learner is that he/she should be able to be creative enough when appreciating a text. He/she should also be able to

isolate specific information from the text which he uses in his/her analysis. The language aspect is not neglected as students are frequently asked to explain words or sentences used in the passage and are also required to analyse the aesthetic structure of some sentences. Consequently, any extract can be used for this exercise in so far as the extract or the story (in addition to the principles for choosing texts above) has moral values and reflects contemporary issues in society. Tameh Valentine affirms that most GCE examination questions centre around four elements which are meaning, language and style, tone and narrative point of view (*Literature: the Teacher's handbook*, 41). Focus is on these four elements because they answer the questions “What” and “How” of the passage. In answering these questions, students are saying what the passage is about and how the author has transmitted that message.

These criteria mention the fact that texts should relate to the students' culture but, most often than not, the texts chosen do not reflect the learners' culture just because teachers assume that the learners have a “pure” African culture. Meanwhile, most of the learners present in classrooms are hybridised individuals due to their contact with other cultures through modern technologies and the media. They unconsciously copy from other cultures from various parts of the world through the internet, the television and social networks. Thus, when choosing an unseen text for students to study, this criterion is of great importance because part of the appreciation of a piece of work comes from the students' personalities.

Most often than not, teachers choose texts which talk about one culture; they can be African, European, or American but still, these texts talk about one culture thereby presenting the idea of a “pure” identity. Students, in most cases, mechanically analyse the texts without involving themselves in it or making connections between the text and their own lives. Meanwhile, as Charles R. Cooper puts it, “appreciation, is based on understanding and can be independent of valuing” (*Measuring Growth in Appreciation of Literature*, 6). Students understand a piece of work which reflects their reality, one with which they can identify.

What is of interest to us here is the choice of extracts used to teach prose appreciation. Single cultural texts do not reflect the identity of the learners so it is preferable to use transcultural texts or passages. Using an extract from *The Satanic Verses* to carry out this exercise is therefore recommended. This is because Rushdie treats issues related to agency. Moreover, in *English Literature: Introduction to Close Reading and Approaching Unseen Texts*, it is said that “At the Advanced Level, the unseen text is an unprepared passage on a

topic area previously studied” (4). This means that students must have studied a given thematic concern in other works of arts. And so the unseen text should also bear traces (in one way or the other) of these thematic concerns.

*The Satanic Verses* is adequate in this case because the themes raised in it are the same raised in *A Question of Power* by Bessie Heads. *A Question of Power* is one of the novels studied in the high school. In this novel, students are introduced to the idea of hybridity although the hybridity concerned is of a biological nature. Elizabeth, the heroine of the novel, is born of a white mother and a black father who was a stable boy. Consequently, she is rejected by the others in that community because she is neither completely Black nor completely White. This makes her to suffer from madness as she is in constant search of an identity, she wants to belong. This same theme is recurs in *The Satanic Verses* as the two main characters (Saladin and Gibreel) are hybrids. But, in Rushdie’s the novel, another type of hybridity is introduced that is cultural hybridity. Like Elizabeth, Saladin and Gibreel are in the constant search of identity and feel the need to belong. An extract from this text will help the students to better understand the concept of the hybrid and they will identify better with Rushdie’s novel because most of them are cultural hybrids. Saladin is a hybrid mostly because he has acquired English education and has lived in England; students can identify themselves with him as they too get into contact with foreign education in school and with foreign culture through technology and the media. With such a text, students can easily bring out the “what” and the “how” as it reflects their own lives.

Besides *A Question of Power*, most of the texts on program talk about a single culture and/or a single identity. Most of the poems treated in *Poems of Black Africa*, for example, talk about the black identity, black issues and the need for African to reclaim their identity. This is same with the other texts on program which are concerned with single cultural issues. But the difference with *The Satanic Verses* is that, though it is written about an Indian and mentions Indian culture, the issues raised in the novel make it a transcultural text which appeals to all postcolonial subjects and even to the postmodern man. Thus, using an extract from this novel to teach prose appreciation will really make the difference and help the students to be more critical in their analysis.

Moreover, some minor characters also have problems of identity. Hind Suffyan (an Indian woman who left India for England because she was not happy living in her home town) complains about her daughters’ denial to learn the pure Indian ways. She says that they

have been intoxicated by the English culture. She complains about the way they talk, the way they dress and how much they do not appreciate India (*The Satanic Verses*, 288). The girls, later, on confirm this to Saladin as they tell him that, to them, Bangladesh is just history. They do not know much about it and so they do not know why they should be attached to something or an idea which is cherished by their parents and not by them (Ibid). From this, we realise that the reality presented by the novelist as far as the girls' attitudes are concerned is typical of that of young Cameroonians nowadays. Many young Cameroonians refuse to learn their mother tongue and instead copy from other cultures. Using an extract like this one helps students to identify themselves in the texts and to bring out the morality from the passage since the passage reflects their own lives. In effect, as we earlier highlighted in Chapter Three, the novelist's aim is not to create a rootless individual but a diverse and postmulticultural individual. As such, an extract of this novel can be used to educate students on the need to learn and be rooted in their culture before opening up to other cultures.

Furthermore, the language used in *The Satanic Verses* is a hybridised language which reflects the identity of the hybrid postcolonial subject. In class, students are exposed to three kinds of languages when studying Literature: British English, Shakespearean English and African English. British English is read in Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* and *A Man of all Seasons*; Shakespearean English is found in *Anthony and Cleopatra* and Africanised English in *No Way to Die* and *The Trials of Brother Jero*. But none of these texts present a hybridised language. It should be noted that most of the language in African texts are appropriated so as to present the African realities. But then, Rushdie's text is quite different from these texts because the language he uses in the text is a hybridised language.

This is also apparent in his narrative strategy. For example, in the novel, Rushdie makes use of cinematic language in some of his narrative point of view. At other times, he uses this cinematic descriptions to describe the positions of characters and their feelings as well. An example is seen when Gibreel starts dreaming that he is the Arch Angel. He says that he was watching the different events taking place in Jahila like a was surprised when one of the actors (Mahoud) points a finger at him saying that he is going to ask the Arch Angel for answers (*The Satanic Verses*, 113-114). Introducing this kind of language to students as well as unconventional narrative strategies initiates students to new ways of narration typical of the postmodern author. Also, it helps the students understand how the hybridised language functions. This brings about something new in the Literature classroom which is different from what they have the habit of reading.

From the above points, raised it is evident that integrating the postmulticulturalism in prose appreciation can render the exercise much more relevant to students than it is. The essence of this exercise is to demystify the understanding of literary works. But it is equally necessary for students to study a text which best reflects their identity. Thus, *The Satanic Verses* is recommended for such an exercise because it is a transcultural text. At this point, the study presents a lesson plan for a prose appreciation lesson with an extract drawn from *The Satanic Verses*.

**SAMPLE LESSON PLAN ON THE TEACHING OF PROSE APPRECIATION USING AN EXCERPT FROM *THE SATANIC VERSE***

**School:** Government Bilingual High School Yaounde

**Class:** Upper Sixth Arts

**Student teacher:** Meulikouo Kamdem Christine Emmanuelle

**Course title:** Literature in English

**Lesson title:** Prose Appreciation

**Previous knowledge:** Students have already had a theoretical lesson on how to appreciate an unseen prose passage.

**Number of students:** 90

**Teaching aids:** Pictures, the text

**Didactic material:** *Measuring Growth in Appreciation of Literature, The Satanic Verses.*

**Duration:** 50 minutes

**Lesson objectives:** by the end of this lesson students should be able to

- State and discuss the subject matter of the passage.
- Identify and bring out the stylistic devices used by the author in building the subject matter of the text
- Relate the text to their lives by isolating relevant information from the text to justify their points of view



Stages	Content	Teacher's activity	Student's activity	Rationale	Timing
<b>Introduction</b>	<p><b>Picture study</b></p> <p>Image of individuals with two or more colours on their faces. Then another picture of a mulatto.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What can you see on picture A?</li> <li>• What do the colours on his face represent?</li> <li>• What can you see on picture B?</li> <li>• How different is the person on picture A from the person in picture B?</li> <li>• Is it possible to have a mixed person from the point of view of culture? How? How does this affect the person and his/her environment?</li> </ul>	<p>Teacher presents the pictures to the students and asks students questions related to the pictures.</p> <p>Puts students' answers in summary sentences on the board.</p>	<p>Students answer the teacher's questions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Anticipated answers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On picture A there is an individual whose face has two colours: one side is white and the other is black.</li> <li>• The colours on his face probably mean that he is born of white and black parents.</li> <li>• There is a Métis on picture B.</li> <li>• The difference between the two pictures is that the Métis is born of white and black parents but the colours are not distinguishable on his skin.</li> <li>• It is possible to have individuals who are mixed from the point of view of culture. This is due to the fact that the person must have been immersed in two cultures.</li> </ul>	<p>This exercise helps as warm up and also prepare the students' minds to the text they will read.</p>	<b>5 minutes</b>

<b>Presentation</b>	<p><b>Read the passage (handed to you) and discuss these questions with your partner.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say what the passage is about and summarise it in a sentence.</li> <li>• State the relationship between the characters in the text. How are our opinions of these characters shaped?</li> <li>• Pick out any two devices in the text and discuss their effectiveness in the development of the subject matter.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher gives the students the passage to be read.</li> <li>• Instructs them on what to do at the end of their reading.</li> <li>• Then he/she puts the questions on the board.</li> <li>• Moves round and verifies that students are doing the work.</li> <li>• Provides assistance to students when needed.</li> <li>• Coordinates the discussion late with students about their pair work.</li> </ul>	<p>Students read the passage, discuss the questions with their partners and give feedback of their discussion to the class.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The passage is about a son brainwashed by his European education.</li> <li>• Saladin is Changez and Nasreen's son. Changez's reaction to his son's remarks and his tone when talking to his wife makes us to think that Saladin is a bad son who has left himself be brainwashed with his European education.</li> <li>• There is irony at the end of the story in Saladin's reply as he ironically throws the fault back to his father. There is the use of vivid description as the author's gives specific details concerning the setting, the atmosphere and the thoughts of characters</li> </ul>	<p>This exercise is to help students understand the passage and peer learning is very helpful as students learn better from their peers.</p>	<b>20 minutes</b>
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<b>Practice</b>	<p><b>Work out the meaning of the following phrases, in groups, from the context of the passage.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “Look his son in the eye”</li> <li>2. “Changez had planted with his own hands”</li> <li>3. “The day of the coming of the son.”</li> <li>4. “To lose a son and find a freak?”</li> </ol> <p>How is an understanding of these phrases crucial to the understanding of the passage?</p> <p>How does the narrator’s tone differ from that of his characters?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The teacher puts the questions on the board.</li> <li>• Groups the students in groups of four, depending on their sitting positions.</li> <li>• Moves round and verifies that students do the exercise.</li> <li>• Does correction with the students by comparing the answers of each group.</li> </ul>	<p>Sit in groups and do the exercise given by the teacher; discuss their answers with the class.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Anticipated answers</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at him frankly</li> <li>2. Changez had planted it himself</li> <li>3. The day of his son’s birth</li> <li>4. To lose a son and have an irresponsible fellow.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This phrases give us an insight to Changez’s feelings vis-à-vis his son’s change of attitude and feeling towards his homeland. In a sense, he is deeply disappointed with his son’s attitude.</li> <li>• The narrator simply describes the event, the atmosphere, the setting and the thoughts of the various characters. But the characters speak for themselves and express their minds which is different from the narrator’s tone.</li> </ul>	<p>The aim of this exercise is for students to study how language is used in a given context and how the author manipulates this language.</p>	<b>10 minutes</b>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p>In groups of four discuss and answer these questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ How does the subject matter reflect present day youths and society? Justify your answer using examples from the text.</li> <li>❖ In about 200 words say how you think this story ends by applying it to your own experience and present day society.</li> </ul>	<p>Puts the questions on the board and asks students to maintain their groups</p> <p>Moves round to verify that students do the work.</p>	<p>Do the exercise in their various groups and discuss their answers with the teacher at the end.</p>	<p>This exercise is to evaluate the lesson objectives and see if they have been attained.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>15 minutes</b></p>
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## CONCLUSION

This research undertaking aimed at examining the different ways in which Salman Rushdie celebrates the state of the hybrid by revising the postcolonial ethos in *The Satanic Verses*. Unlike in the postcolonial ethos according to which the hybrid is considered as an incomplete being, Rushdie presents the hybrid as being better than an individual because of his/her impregnation into more than one culture. By so doing, the author stresses the need to break free from some established rules so that the postcolonial subject will be a free being and will be free to re-define his/her own identity. The presentation of such characters and the story itself is a projection of Rushdie's own life and experience as a hybrid. The author presents characters who straddle two cultures and therefore are fragmented because of their desire to belong to any of these cultures. But then, they are always rejected by these cultures because they are considered as being incomplete by each.

This study has confirmed the hypothesis that the redefinition of the Self, in *The Satanic Verses* is essential to the postcolonial subject as it brings about the creation of a new space which is owned neither by the Self nor the Other. This results in the creation of a new identity which is distinct and autonomous from the existing ones. In effect, the redefinition of the self comes as a result of the need to break free from conventions. By so doing, the new space created is beneficial to the postcolonial subject as he/she feels a sense of belonging in this space. The author presents characters who, in various ways, re-define themselves and finally mend their fragmented selves. This self re-definition is as a result of the need for the postcolonial subject to live freely and to depart from rules and principles which do not permit him to assert his identity. Thus, characters in the text are conscious of the fact that- for this new identity to be born- the old one needs to die first so that the new one can live.

The universality of the novel is revealed here through the fact that Rushdie deals with issues concerning identity which are relevant to the present postmodern world and, more specifically, to every postcolonial society. Each individual is in a constant search of the re-definition of his/her own identity so as to feel complete. Thus, Rushdie uses the novel to celebrate the nature of the hybrid and the need for hybridised nations to be born. To show the author's unique stance vis-à-vis the hybrid, the work has used the postcolonial and the postmodern theories to analyse Rushdie's novel. The postcolonial theory has enabled the study to highlight the postcolonial ethos Rushdie represents in his novel. Meanwhile, the postmodern theory has enabled the study to show how Rushdie shifts from these established

postcolonial ethos and the consequence of the shift. The creation of a new space and identity is the result of his re-vision of the postcolonial ethos.

The work comprises an introduction to the study, four chapters and a conclusion. The General introduction consists of a brief introduction to the study, the research problem and questions that the work has striven to answer, the hypothesis, the scope and significance of the study, the definition of key terms, the critical approaches used for the analysis of this work, a brief author's biography, the review of related literature and the structure of the work. The literature reviewed has revealed the fact that critics have focused on Rushdie's celebration of duality. It is also concerned with this author's interest in the hybrid's difficult and almost impossible search for completeness in identity as he/she struggles. This study distinguishes itself from the bulk of existing literature on Rushdie's novel in that it attempts to show that Rushdie does not only acknowledge the existence of the hybrid but emphasises the importance of the creation of a new space within which the hybrid can live. He establishes a new space in his work.

Chapter One, entitled "The Dilemma of the Postcolonial Subject," focuses on the postcolonial society and the postcolonial subject presented in *The Satanic Verse*. The chapter has identified the consequences of colonialism and colonial representations on the postcolonial subject. This is seen through the fact that colonial discourse makes poor representations about the colonised thereby creating binary poles where the coloniser is the Centre and the colonised, the Margin. As such, Saladin is a victim of this colonial representation as he is brainwashed to think ill of his homeland. The postcolonial societies therefore struggle to reclaim their identity and debunk colonial representations about them. And one of the ways in which they do this is through appropriation as the postcolonial society appropriates the colonial master's language through which they are able to present their own culture. Also, the chapter has highlighted the fact that (within postcolonial societies) there is also the existence of binary poles within the margin, there is a centre and a margin. Hence, the author presents religious narratives within which this binary polarity is established through their discourse. The chapter also identifies the woman as one of the postcolonial subjects who is considered the margin in postcolonial societies in her relationship with the man.

Entitled "Re-defining the Postcolonial self," Chapter Two has shown how the concept of a "pure" identity for the postcolonial subject is an obsolete idea created in discourse to maintain the postcolonial subject in a fixed position. This chapter has shown that the

postcolonial subject needs to re-define himself/herself and break free from conventional values laid in the postcolonial theory and in most postcolonial societies. Rushdie presents the hybrid as a more balanced person as he/she is immersed in his/her culture and is open to other cultures. In effect, the hybrid is a much more balanced being compared to the “pure” postcolonial subject who has only his culture and therefore is limited when it comes to other cultures. By so doing, the author reverses the order of the binary pole in postcolonial studies whereby the hybrid is the margin and the “pure” postcolonial subject is the centre. This order is also reversed as Rushdie presents the new kind of woman who is not submissive to the man but who asserts herself as a woman and redefines her identity. Also, the chapter has shown how discourse is created in grand narratives such that binary polarities are created. One of these narratives is the religious narrative. Discourse is used to establish polarity between Islam and Hinduism whereby the former is superior to the latter.

Chapter Three has as title “Hybridity and Postmulticulturalism: Creation of a New Space” It has focused on the effects of this new self-definition as a new identity and a new space are created. The hybrid identity is shown as being better than the single identity presented in the postcolonial theory. This is because the hybrid is rooted in his/her culture and is open to other cultures. He/she can easily understand and integrate these cultures. This inevitably leads to the creation of a new space which is beneficial to the hybrid as it permits him/her to open up to other cultures. This space is one free of the biases, prejudices and discriminations typical of the conventional centre and margin.

The last chapter—titled “Prose Appreciation and Postmulticulturalism: An Excerpt from *The Satanic Verses*—” is concerned with how an extract from the book can be used in teaching prose appreciation to high school students thereby introducing them to postmulticulturalism which is a current issue. This chapter argues that the novel being a transcultural text, it is an ideal source from which extracts can be gotten because it reflects the identity of the students and of the present generation. This is because we no longer have students with “pure” identities in our classroom but instead have students with hybridised identities. Their hybrid nature is due to their exposure to the external world through modern technologies and the media. Thus, by using extracts from this novel, students will be able to identify with the current societal issues raised in the extracts.

The significance and contribution of this study cannot be over-emphasised. The work has highlighted the hybridised identity of postmodern man and his need to belong. It has

given us an insight to the conflicts to which the hybrid is prey, due to his dual nature and his inability to choose to belong only to one culture. It has revealed the need for the postcolonial subject to re-define his identity and has advocated for the creation of a new space within which this identity can be lived. From a literary point of view, the research undertaking has examined how Rushdie revisits the postcolonial ethos thereby bringing in the work's postmulticultural aspect. The need for self-definition and belonging is central to the postcolonial subject and to all societies in general. In view of the great stylistic and thematic endowment of *The Satanic Verses*, it is possible to undertake a study on the journey to the self and personality reconstruction in this book.



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## APPENDIX

### APPENDIX ONE

#### Prose Appreciation Extract

Five years later he was back home after leaving school, waiting until the English university term began, and his transmutation into a Vilayeti was well advanced. "See how well he complains," Nasreen teased him in front of his father. "About everything he has such big-big criticisms, the fans are fixed too loosely to the roof and will fall to slice our heads off in our sleep, he says, and the food is too fattening, why we don't cook some things without frying, he wants to know, the top-floor balconies are unsafe and the paint is peeled, why can't we take pride in our surroundings, isn't it, and the garden is overgrown, we are just jungle people, he thinks so, and look how coarse our movies are, now he doesn't enjoy, and so much disease you can't even drink water from the tap, my god, he really got an education, husband, our little Sallu, England—returned, and talking so fine and all."

They were walking on the lawn in the evening, watching the sun dive into the sea, wandering in the shade of those great spreading trees, some snaky some bearded, which Salahuddin (who now called himself Saladin after the fashion of the English school, but would remain Saladinwala for a while yet, until a theatrical agent shortened his name for commercial reasons) had begun to be able to name, jackfruit, banyan, jacaranda, flame of the forest, plane. Small chhooi-mooi touch-me-not plants grew at the foot of the tree of his own life, the walnut-tree that Changez had planted with his own hands on the day of the coming of the son. Father and son at the birth-tree were both awkward, unable to respond properly to Nasreen's gentle fun. Saladin had been seized by the melancholy notion that the garden had been a better place before he knew its names, that something had been lost which he would never be able to regain. And Changez Saladinwala found that he could no longer look his son in the eye, because the bitterness he saw came close to freezing his heart.

When he spoke, turning roughly away from the eighteen-year-old walnut in which, at times during their long separations, he had imagined his only son's soul to reside, the words came out incorrectly and made him sound like the rigid, cold figure he had hoped he would never become, and feared he could not avoid. "Tell your son," Changez boomed at Nasreen, "that if he went abroad to learn contempt for his own kind, then his own kind can feel nothing but scorn for him. What is he? A faunteroy, a grand panjandrum? Is this my fate: to lose a

son and find a freak?" "Whatever I am, father dear," Saladin told the older man, "I owe it all to you.

(Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verse*, 2008)

### Hybrid Images for the Lesson Plan

#### APPENDIX TWO

#### Images 1: Hybrid Pictures



#### Image 2: A Mulatto

