

**Ajay K Chaubey et al.**

Salman Rushdie. An Anthology of Critical  
Essays in New Millennium

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# **Salman Rushdie**

**An Anthology of Critical Essays in New Millennium**

**Edited with an Introduction by**

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Ajay K Chaubey

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## INTRODUCTION

### **The Novels of Salman Rushdie: A Postcolonial Reading**

Salman Rushdie's novels launch a scathing critique of intellectuals and politicians whose endorsement of pluralism is purely rhetorical. ...Rushdie shows that people who claim to promote unity are actually complicit in creating ethnic strife... Rushdie wants a productive, inclusive cosmopolitanism...can have serious unintended consequences. (Trousdale 91)

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. (Frank 132)

The winner of the Booker Prize (1981), the Booker of Bookers (1993) and the Best of the Bookers (2008) and, of late, the PEN Pinter (2014), the name that has dominated the literary world since establishing himself as a leading exemplum of postcolonial, postmodern and diaspora writings, is the renegade, Sir Ahmed Salman Rushdie. Famous for multifarious writing, he himself is a multifaceted personality, often emerges as an unpredictable figure with an unfathomable depth of creativity and criticism. Being an iconoclast, Rushdie never chooses the trodden road: he rather plunges headstrong into the unexplored territories of literature, not yet attempted. For the Booker, he never ran the race rather he reached the zenith of the success by bagging the same for *Midnight's Children* in 1981. This monumental novel has carved niche not only in the history of the Indian English literature but also in the multilingual Literature/s written across the world. Rushdie played a ground-breaking role in new beginnings — the blending of history with fiction and magic realism. With him begins the era of new writings, new experiments giving him a new identity — the postmodern figure and a progenitor of new generation - the “midnight's children”. Not only his works but he himself also is a postmodern product - a blend of a god for literary aestheticians and a Satan for religious aestheticians. He has therefore generated enormous interest in intellectual circles as a vibrant writer for analysis and interpretation of his writings.

He is a recipient of the ‘Booker’ from the judges of literary art, ‘hooker’ from political commercials and ‘Fatwa’ from the self-declared custodians of Islam, of Allah. He is a fighter combating with his two selves—the inner and the outer, and also at the same time with the external world for his *The Satanic Verses*. His literary dictatorship entangles him into controversies, and arrows of words penetrating his heart and mind compelling him for introspection. However, Rushdie defends himself at an appearance at 92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y, expressing

his views on copyright while answering a question whether he had considered copyright law barriers (impediments) to free speech:

No but that's because I write for a living, (laughs) and have no other source of income, and I naively believe that stuff that I create belongs to me, and that if you want it you might have to give me some cash. [...] My view is I do this for a living. The thing wouldn't exist if I didn't make it and so it belongs to me and don't steal it. You know. It's my stuff.<sup>1</sup>

He advocates the application of higher criticism, pioneered during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In a guest opinion piece printed in *The Washington Post* and "The Times" in mid-August 2005, Rushdie called for a reform in Islam:

What is needed is a move beyond tradition, nothing less than a reform movement to bring the core concepts of Islam into the modern age. A Muslim Reformation to combat not only the jihadist ideologues but also the dusty, stifling seminaries of the traditionalists, throwing open windows to let in much-needed fresh air . . . It is high time, for starters, that Muslims were able to study the revelation of their religion as an event inside history, not supernaturally above it, . . . Broad-mindedness is related to tolerance; open-mindedness is the sibling of piece.<sup>2</sup>

Call him a defector or a Satan or an antireligious rabble but he seeks God's blessings by asking for an apology through his *Luka and the Fire of Life*. The apology is not for having been blasphemous but for having shaken the faith of Muslims before preparing a suitable environment for developing humanist and rational thinking in them that could save them from being blind traditionalist and religious fundamentalists. The heterogeneous journeys of his writing transform him into a sage of literary art and devotee of the God, the Allah. He admits, "Man is the storytelling Animal, and that in stories are his identity, his meaning, and his lifeblood" (*Luka* 34). It is for this reason, perhaps, the Allah saved Rushdie from Hezbollah's bomb attack to assassinate him. Moreover, despite all controversial condemnations, he was knighted for his services to literature in the Queen's Birthday Honours on 16<sup>th</sup> of June, 2007. He remarked, "I am thrilled and humbled to receive this great honour, and I am very grateful that my work has been recognized in this way."<sup>3</sup> Rushdie's emergence with his creative bulk has dazzled and amazed for being unconventional rather than becoming conundrum for both, the contemporary authors and the readers. He began writing as an anti-colonial and postcolonial reactionary to the West; he switched to incorporate diasporic experiences of his own and of other migrants as well. He, thus, pioneered himself in Diaspora writing and world literatures which are over-ripe fruits of

postcolonialism. He pioneered himself as a major voice of decolonization, multiculturalism, diasporic experiences and also of new humanism.

His works embody the stamp of concurrent Indian conventions and Indo-Anglian interests which lead him to interface with the worldwide readership, especially to the Western audience. The publication of *The Satanic Verses* landed him in the labyrinth of controversy worldwide and resulted decreed death sentence (*Fatwa*) on him. It epitomizes the postcolonialists' flimsy and constant battle to balance the demands of conflicting cultures. Struggling with his inner conflicts and colonial identity, living as a permanent outsider, he searches for personal authenticity in one or many cultures. He is the spokesperson for the people of the subcontinent who are presently residing in the alien lands. Staying within the domains of the mainstream ideologues such as Britain and the US, he mimics and comments on all Western ideologies and proves himself to be a representative of the East. Religious and cultural diversity of both India and Britain offers Rushdie a wealth of the experience of unnumbered issues and themes that consistently refract throughout his oeuvre. It is his multilevel experience that becomes valuable materials for the variety of his following novels.

Every novel of Salman Rushdie deals with the thoughts of national and International theses keeping in mind his primary focus on his India and its subcontinents i.e. Pakistan and Bangladesh. The very opening pages of his novels evoke the themes of migration, exile, diasporic consciousness, nationalism, multiculturalism, dualism etc. His writings have become the focus of a certain kind of struggle for cultural identity in Britain and other Western states.

*Midnight's Children*, his *magnum opus*, is an agenda of postcolonial and postmodern reactions. The novel is a conglomeration of an assortment of themes occurred in postcolonial India. It is a fantasized version of the historical reality of India that spans from the Jallianwala Massacre of 1919 to the period of Emergency imposed by Indira Gandhi in 1977. Rushdie's new venture of blending history with fiction and fiction with history employing the technique of magic realism and supernatural elements make the novel characteristically more different than what many other authors had already attempted. *Midnight's Children* is superficially the biography of Saleem Sinai and potentially autobiography of Salman Rushdie but allegorically the history of India. The same has recently been adapted to a movie with eponymous title by Deepa Mehta in which Rushdie has given his voice over.

Employing the narrative techniques of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Günter Grass, Rushdie amalgamates facts with fiction so artistically that sometimes it becomes a Herculean task to differentiate between truth (history) and fiction (literary invention). *Midnight's Children*,

thus, has become a trend-setter since its publication in 1981. As Rajeshwar Mittapalli and Pier Paulo Piciucco put it:

The imaginative re-working of Indian history in a culturally hybrid environment, the innovative use of literary techniques...together with a supreme command of the English language and a genius for story telling modeled on the hoary Indian narrative traditions and cultural practices, had established *Midnight's Children* as a trend setter and classic for all times. (Preface)

The novel deals with displacement and rootlessness which are the main factors of identity crisis. Almost all the major characters whether it is Saleem Sinai or Shiva or Padma or Parvati suffer from this psychological disease of alienation and identity crisis. Sinai is a true portrait of Rushdie for he himself is the victim of same ailment. The hero Saleem, like his creator, wanders from place to place, from Bombay to Karachi and from Karachi to Bangladesh finally comes back to Bombay. Rushdie himself returns to India again by the time, not to the geographical India but to the "India of the mind" (Rushdie, 1991). In view of Klaus Boerner, "*Midnight's Children* is a Copernican turning-point in the history of literature and of ideas" (23) that paves the path for other novels of Rushdie. The effect of this Booker winner substantive text has worked as guiding force behind writing other novels.

Thus, the next novel *Shame* was found to be a shorter version of its predecessor *Midnight's Children* dealing with the history of Pakistan- an "insufficiently imagined country, with a blend of diasporic discourse than of fiction. Overtly it is a novel about political turmoil of Pakistan presenting the themes, issues and conflicts of the then conditions but covertly it deals with many major and minor political and social issues. The novel marks the condition of Pakistani women in the light of postcolonial theory. The condition of diasporic women is worse; they are doubly marginalized, and are the victims of patriarchal dominance.

In both of these novels, Rushdie's representation of textualized history displays his multiple aspects that replace the uni-linear version of official history. Rushdie's history is the version of his memory rather than the officially written one. He never describes the past but remakes the past to suit his present purpose using memory as his tool. *Midnight's Children* and *Shame* are to some extent, the history of India and Pakistan respectively. But his novels move beyond the bounds of history for the purpose of finding universal significance of historical forces that are operating at a particular phase of time. He manipulates the truth to fictionalize it and thus, makes the real unreal and vice versa.

The third novel of Rushdie, *The Moor's Last Sigh* is more a postmodern than a postcolonial one. The protagonist and narrator Moor inherits the blend of races and creeds of India. His mother Aurora has the blood of Portuguese invaders as well as Catholicism in her veins whereas his father is one of the last Jews of Cochin and a descendant of Boabdil, the last Moorish ruler of Spain. The entire family mimics the chaotic diversity of South India. Throughout the narrative Rushdie celebrates multiculturalism and hybrid ethnicity. This novel presents a family that splits on the views of nationalism and anti-nationalism and the division of the family symbolizes the divisions in the country in the name of pro-Empire and freedom loving people.

*The Moor's Last Sigh* is also an attack on the parochial Hinduism led by Shiv Sena in Maharashtra. The people of Shiv Sena have led India towards its unwanted destination, towards a religious country instead of a secularist one. India is known for its unity in diversity-- its multi-ethnicity, its multi-religions and its multi-culturalism. But the fundamentalist Hindus and Muslims have led it astray. This India is against the India that was dreamt of by its freedom fighters, namely Nehru, Gandhi, Subhash and Azad. Though the novel delineates the post-colonial history of India, its metaphoric and linguistic divisions yet it attack India for becoming a pseudo-secularist nation.

The publication of *The Satanic Verses*, in which Rushdie treats Quran as a literary text, open for individual perceptions dared to attempt higher criticism but its aftermath created turmoil in his mind. However, Hindu Fundamentalists banned *The Moor's Last Sigh* also in some parts of India due to its attack on Shiv Sena's supremacy, Late Bal Thackeray. But after his colonial and postcolonial narration, Rushdie moves towards global, pop and jazz music.

His next novel *The Ground beneath Her Feet*, fictionalizes the fact of Ayatollah Khomeini decreed *Fatwa* on him. Rushdie begins the novel with the death of the female protagonist Vina Apsara on the fourteenth of February 1989, the very date of *Fatwa*. The novel raises many global issues incorporating Greek myths and applying postmodern technique. *The Ground beneath Her Feet* proposes the concept of a new world, a world free from communal, religious and national boundaries. In *The Ground beneath Her Feet* all the pains of Diasporas such as alienation, trauma and longing for homeland have faded out for representative migrants Ormus and Rai's love Teenage Vina Apsara, of this novel are valueless because music is beyond restraint. Because of globalization and liberalization all the conflicts arising from border crossing have washed away. Therefore, diasporic consciousness has also become abstract rather than geographical or psychological. Hybridity and multiculturalism fused in the characters point out

Rushdie's view towards a future in which the world, demolishing all boundaries, will be united to face any threat. However, Rushdie's personality differs from his theory. He himself is unable to step across the frontiers and it seems that he is still lingering within his parochial world from which he is destined not to come out.

The collision between the reactions of Islamic countries against him and his instinct for critiquing the religious fundamentalism produced a writhing fury within him. The novel *Fury* is a concrete and material form of his own abstract fury. It is "his first 3-D, full volume American novel, finger snapping, wildly mind-boggling, often slyly funny, red-blooded and red toothed"<sup>4</sup> (*Miami Herald*). Malik Solanka, the hero of the novel, is a new version of Buddha who leaves his home for New York without informing anyone. Rushdie once again appears in the disguise of Solanka. Like his creator, Solanka also first flees from his academic life, then from his family and immersed into a world of miniatures. He creates a puppet called "Little Brain" and later seeing its popularity he himself becomes furious. The novel accurately deals with the darkest side of human nature.

The novel *Shalimar the Clown* is his return to the Indian sub-continent that he left in *The Ground beneath Her Feet* and *Fury*. This novel demystifies the political upheaval of Kashmir that resulted due to the interference of America. The novelist delineates the story of post-colonial Kashmir and explains the reasons why the paradise became hell, how the Hindu-Muslim unity came under suspicion, why and how the citizens of paradise started becoming terrorists and what role India and Pakistan played in creating the chaos and commotion. Through the story of Shalimar and Boonyi, Rushdie displays the Hindu-Muslim harmony that existed before independence. The central theme of the novel is the making of a terrorist as terror becomes a global phenomenon and a cause of concern worldwide. The effort to look into the mind and get under the skin of a terrorist becomes an artistic challenge that the novelist has dealt competently in *Shalimar the Clown*.

In fact, the novel narrates the story of postcolonial and post-independence Kashmir. Since Rushdie is a political novelist, *Shalimar the Clown* is a blending of realism and magic realism. Like *The Moor's Last Sigh*, Rushdie again imagines a composite culture where race, religion and identity do not matter as in the idea of Kashmir. The novelist shows in how gradually the composite culture is destroyed by both military and militancy. Before 1947, there was no point of dispute between Hindu and Muslim. They used to celebrate each other's festivals. But the independence of India and Pakistan transformed this paradise into a battle field where ignorant armies and citizens are being killed by their own citizens.

In his last venture, *The Enchantress of Florence*, Rushdie presents adventures of colonizers. The novel is set in medieval India, at the time of the Mughal Emperor Akbar, the Great, at the time when colonizers began to arrive and establish their trade which is customary with Salman Rushdie who never adheres to a single theme in his fictions. So is the case with *The Enchantress of Florence*. Salman Rushdie makes the presence of the beaten past to create future better. The novel is set in the sixteenth century India. It delineates the colonial situations and conditions in which Magor dell Amore is the representative of white colonialists, who lands on the shore of India and makes his way to Sikri to the court of Akbar and succeeds in befooling the wisest king. The female protagonist of the fiction Qara Koz seems to represent the counter discourse to the colonialism. The colonial enterprise was a product of western androcentric imperialist desire. Qara Koz, on the other hand is a woman of Asian blood who manages to bring the whole of Florence, the epitome of western civilization of that period under her influence. She represents the subversion of the colonial enterprise. The novel has a helical structure and intertwines two stories going in diverse directions that present a beautiful picture of how Mogor comes to India and becomes closer to Emperor than his nine jewels. In the same way Qara Koz goes, from central Asia to Europe and becomes the heartthrob of Europeans. But in the end Mogor is exposed as liar and has to leave India. Mogor is a symbolic representation of the British colonizers and Koz is symbolic of Indian beauty and innocence.

Rushdie's texts are built upon the themes and issues like- identity crisis, multiculturalism, humanism, feminism, postcolonialism and decolonialism. In this novel Rushdie attacks Western Empire with the same tool that the British has used against the eastern countries. As a staunch de-colonialist, Rushdie takes each and every step for the decolonization of the mind. He advocates psychological freedom what Ngugi calls, "Decolonizing the Mind" along with the geographical and political freedom.

*Joseph Anton: A Memoir* (2012), the latest production is an autobiography, written in third person narrative, of this "Britney Spears of literature", (13) says Meenakshi Bharat. Joseph Anton is the pseudonym adopted by Rushdie after the *Fatwa* was issued against him in 1989. Joseph is Joseph Conrad and Anton is Anton Chekhov of real life. The plight of Rushdie post-Fatwa and his persistent attempt at making writing successful have been portrayed very excellently in this work.

Mimicry of Language is one of the tools of decolonization. The west, through Macaulay's Minute, started teaching English to acculturate the Asian mind to British patterns while Rushdie and his generation started conditioning the same language to suit Asians and to

respond to the Empire. For this, he mixes the words of Hindi, Urdu and other regional languages in English and englishizes them without any reference or notes. He, in his first major novel *Midnight's Children*, exhibits the complexities and quandaries that the project of Indianising the resources of English language entails. In each of his novels, he amalgamates words from several origins and tries to make them perfect. To quote Thiara: "Rushdie's novels... emphasize India's exuberant multiplicity and multi-vocality" (2009: 172). Thus, he becomes the leader of postcolonial authors who have taken the oath to "provincialize" English, and is determined to subvert the master's tool in order to make it their own.

Apart from fictionalizing the truth of India Rushdie has a number of critical writings in the form of articles and papers and two critical treatises namely *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991* (1991) and *Step Across This Line: Collected Non-Fiction 1992-2002*; two collections of story books *Harun and the Sea of Stories* and *Luka and the Fire of Life* and an autobiography, *Joseph Anton: A Memoir*. Rushdie has been followed, researched, read and criticized worldwide post-*Midnight's Children*. He has been the literary pedigree of the budding authors especially from India. "He is very virtuoso and full of ideas", says Cyrus Mistry in Jaipur Literature Festival in 2014. Thus, a critical "virtuoso" is imperative in the new millennium!

### **Critical Essays in the Volume**

Salman Rushdie, one of the pioneering voices of the "new Diaspora", progenitor of series of controversies, what we call "Rushdie affair" in postmodern literary politics, has been superseding and has intrepid influence in literary sphere. He has written history in fiction and fiction in history by presenting the "national allegory" of the nation right from 1947 till date. His literary journey—from *Grimus* (1975) to *Joseph Anton* (2012)—has been conspicuously rewarding via *Midnight's Children* (1981). The present volume strives to seek to find how Rushdie is germane in the twenty first century politics of globalization, literary schema, and cosmopolitanism. The book has been divided into two broad heads—the first section intrinsically deals with the most popular book of Rushdie, *Midnight's Children* while the second section contains Rushdie's latter fictions which have been researched and presented in the light of intertextuality, hybridity, diaspora and, of late, autobiography.

The younger and the unheard voices, budding scholars from India and abroad, candidly put forth their views on Rushdie's various works in the present volume in the following ways:

Suhaina Bi, in her paper, 'Presentation of a Wounded Civilization: A Cosmopolitan Perspective of *Midnight's Children*', critically analyses cosmopolitanism with that of diaspora



and postcolonialism. She presents ‘Cosmopolitanism as an ethos that is deduced from Enlightenment theories and values. It advocates a mode of humane thinking about the relationship between human beings without taking into consideration the geographical boundaries and a moral concern for different communities’ and further holds the view that ‘in his real life, Rushdie is struggling for his liberal ideals and freedom of expression and through his novels; he has raised his voice not only for a cosmopolitan but also for the whole humanity. Rushdie retells the tragedy of the minority, which usually occurs at the time of socio-political chaos in most of the nations’.

The essay entitled ‘The Dichotomous Nature of Decolonisation of India in Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*’ by Sutanuka Ghosh Roy aims to look at history in a new way. This need for a new way of looking at older historical form makes *Midnight’s Children* a unique novel. The paper further explores ‘how Rushdie discovers an alternative to the typical historical traditions of historical truth as merely recorded facts. He fuses memory and the process of recalling memories. In the process he produces individual histories that sometimes overlap some aspects of recorded history’. The paper is concluded with an observation that ‘his (Rushdie’s) novels differ from the other Raj novels written by various authors, in so far as his vision of an Indian internationalism and multiculturalism embraces the politics of pluralism, whereas the Raj novels are more particular in the exploration of a British India. Rushdie has shown us the dichotomous nature of India’s decolonisation, even in the use of language he has dislocated the English and let others into it’.

Ram Bhavan Yadav’s critique of *Midnight’s Children* has been put in different way in his research paper ‘Interfacing Myth vs. History: A Postcolonial Study of Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*’. Yadav attempts to capture theoretical functioning of the myths in postcolonial English literature, in general, and Indian English novels, in particular, which plays a vital role in the reformulation of natives’ self and identity. In this context, his attempt is to read and examine Rushdie’s said novel that blends myths with history by using postcolonial theoretical approaches. Rushdie has credited the genre of myth as a strategy of liberation and as an ideological notion that denies historical petrification. “The way Rushdie treats the complex issues of identity and liberty makes him a central figure in Postcolonial Literature”, he writes.

*Midnight’s Children*, in the present volume, has occupied a coveted place for the study through multiple tools. But none other than T. Sasikanth Reddy’s article entitled ‘Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*: A Kaleidoscopic View’ surveys that Rushdie’s novels are complex, multi-layered with episodic causality, bearing strong influence of post-modernist

novels as well as principles of the Indian art forms. His exalted diction, elevated word usage and felicitous word phrases leave strong impinge on the readers. The novel *Midnight's Children* does not have a continuous forward narration rather it is complex and interrelated, based on structure repetitions and episodic casualties, which is in fact one of the strong points of the novel, as it is the perfect hitching of the content to the form. The paper ends with the conclusion that 'Rushdie presents history through the metaphor of chutnification, which gives way to his narrative. In other words, Saleem is actually preserving the facts of history as chutnification, a method of perpetuation of each of the thirty one chapters in the novel which stand for 'a pickle jar'.

The first section, *Midnight's Children: Fiction, History and the Nation*, ends with Asis De's paper entitled 'In Time of Narrating the Nation: Rushdie's Transcendence of National History in *Midnight's Children*'. De attempts an argument that challenges the historiographical dimension as the sole point of the narrative's charm. Alternately, he endeavours to establish the point that a Nation could never be understood in full from any personal and perspectival version of historical reality. De clearly opines that 'a writer is usually affected by the historical milieu in which s/he lives and the periods of an earlier time with which s/he associates his/her identity.'

The second section entitled "Diasporic Identity, Intertextuality, Treatment of History and Autobiography" is inaugurated with Vikrant Sehgal's article 'Diasporic Identity in Salman Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown*' outlines some of the main theories behind the post-colonial discourse, and he argues, from a diasporic perspective specifically thematic element in Rushdie's *Shalimar the Clown*. It is his attempt, despite the influence of his emigration to England, to undermine how Rushdie constructs diasporic identity and culture by specific postcolonial literary techniques such as fragmentation, plurality and language.

Indah Lestari's paper entitled 'Indianness and Satire of History in Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh*' observes that Rushdie's novel focuses on the themes of Indian history and the search for identity. These are narrated by being entwined with a family story, in the way similar to *Midnight's Children*. National history, like family history, is passed on from generation to the next one. It is told from subjective point of view, and thus is subject to alteration. Through her palimpsest painting, Aurora suggests this alteration. National history is also built by foreign interference. Thus, Indian identity is complex in racial aspect. Moreover, India is also plural in terms of language, religion, and political orientation. The paper further aims to analyze the complexity of India as a nation-state from the aspect of its history as depicted in the novel and

how Rushdie satirizes Indian history intertwining the protagonist's personal life and historical events.

Ajit Kumar's critical venture on 'Journey towards the New World in the Selected Novels of Salman Rushdie' presents the array of diasporic authors and compares with the theme, technique, matter and manner with that of Rushdie's novels and also the content and context of the postcolonial world that is adroitly presented by the author. Kumar concludes that 'in the history of Indian Literature of English, Salman Rushdie's efforts are well visible to the readers. Right from his first novel *Grimus* to *Midnight's Children*, *Shame* and *The Enchantress of Florence*, he seems to be an explorer of the of the human psychology being in the modern world where people long for identity and peace but they all seem wandering for it. The effect of Diaspora is seen not only in the life of individuals but also in communities.'

Hetal K. Kachhia in her article 'Globalization and Cosmopolitanism: Major Themes in the Works of Salman Rushdie' studies the major novels of Rushdie. She beautifully relocates the 'globalization' and 'cosmopolitanism' in the novels of Rushdie. She writes that '(If we look at the terms 'globalization' and 'cosmopolitanism' as the intermingling of different cultures and its different aspects and phenomena into one another, we can say that the works of Salman Rushdie compose a global and intermingled fictional world by including the element of 'intertextuality', from his own works to the different allusions from others' works, which makes the recurrences of characters and places possible from one text to another'.

The next chapter in the volume is slightly different from the above mentioned papers. Hetal M Doshi in her paper titled 'Theological Aspects and Diasporic Sensibilities in Rushdie's *Satanic Verses: An Analysis*' offers Rushdie's attempt to fearlessly question some of the religious tenets which he finds devoid of logic. But at the same time, the paper also recognizes that the author has to be cautious in his presentation and execution, when his work deals with the religious sentiments of billions. Freedom of speech does not provide the license to be blasphemous. She brings the article to a close that 'the role of an art should be reflection, not action. It is the duty of an artist, more so of a writer to *renew* the perceptions about history, society and religion; not to *shatter* them'. History has always surprised us with its various meanings. Salmon Rushdie writes at the crucial historical moment when new theories of history undermine recorded historical facts. Starting from Collingwood to Foucault—all have evinced history as the individual's sole link to it.

Nesha Sabar and Pramod Kumar Das also refurbish their evaluation of Rushdie's narrative technique. But they chose a different novel, *Shame*, to deal with. In the paper titled

‘Salman Rushdie’s *Shame: A Study of Narrative Strategies*’, they focus on the various narrative strategies used in the text. In doing so, they zero in on a range of strategies such as mimicry, history, fairytale, magical-realism, metafiction and intertextuality employed by Rushdie to knit the narrative and these devices, in turn, help us to understand the text in better and improved way. They conclude their observation that ‘Rushdie’s narrative style can be viewed as a tongue-in-cheek use and ‘abuse’ of numerous literary narrative conventions and theoretical perspectives that include exaggerated reflections of colonial mimicry, unreliable narrator’s fairytale motifs and intertextuality.’

The anthology does not end with Ramesh Tibile’s ‘Salman Rushdie: A Self-Proclaimed Controversialist’. Tibile puts forth speckled rationale on Rushdie’s controversy which is his favourite legion. He observes that ‘the political significance of Rushdie’s writing does not change from text to text not because his subject matter changes but also because his political location changes. In his work, Rushdie proposes only one rather tentative answer to the question of how a decentred being can work meaningfully, and that is by writing history of the particular country’.

Temporality and history in the works of Salman Rushdie are unfinalizable and plural. Rushdie’s vindication of the ‘imaginative variety of truth’ and allegoric representations of nations, events and people challenge the established notions about writing history into fiction. In his novels, borderlines between the public and private spheres of experience; memory and imagination; and reality and fantasy are deliberately blurred. Many metaphors suggestive of the nature of time, history and historiography are deployed in Rushdie’s novels and he uses the techniques of anachronism and flashback while turning history into fantabulous fictional narratives. Rushdie justifies the artistic freedom an author may exercise while transforming the raw material of history into fictional narratives. In her critical essay entitled ‘Chutneys, Pickles, Palimpsests and Collages: Lived and Imagined Temporalities in the Works of Salman Rushdie’, Bini B. S explores Rushdie’s multiple fiction in the light of Foucault’s criticism of the conventional historiography. She further holds the view that ‘History in Rushdie’s works takes the form of a polyphonic narrative which is dappled with hues of hilarity, violence, shame, pain and caustic satire’. She concludes her paper with a notion that ‘(I)t is not necessary to tell apart lived experiences and a life lived in imagination. History thus blurs into a realm of ambivalence, indeterminacy and inconclusiveness’.

The next paper is complementary to Bini’s paper. The objective of the paper entitled ‘Nation and Non-narration: Multiplicity, Hybridity and Heterogeneity in Salman Rushdie’s *The*