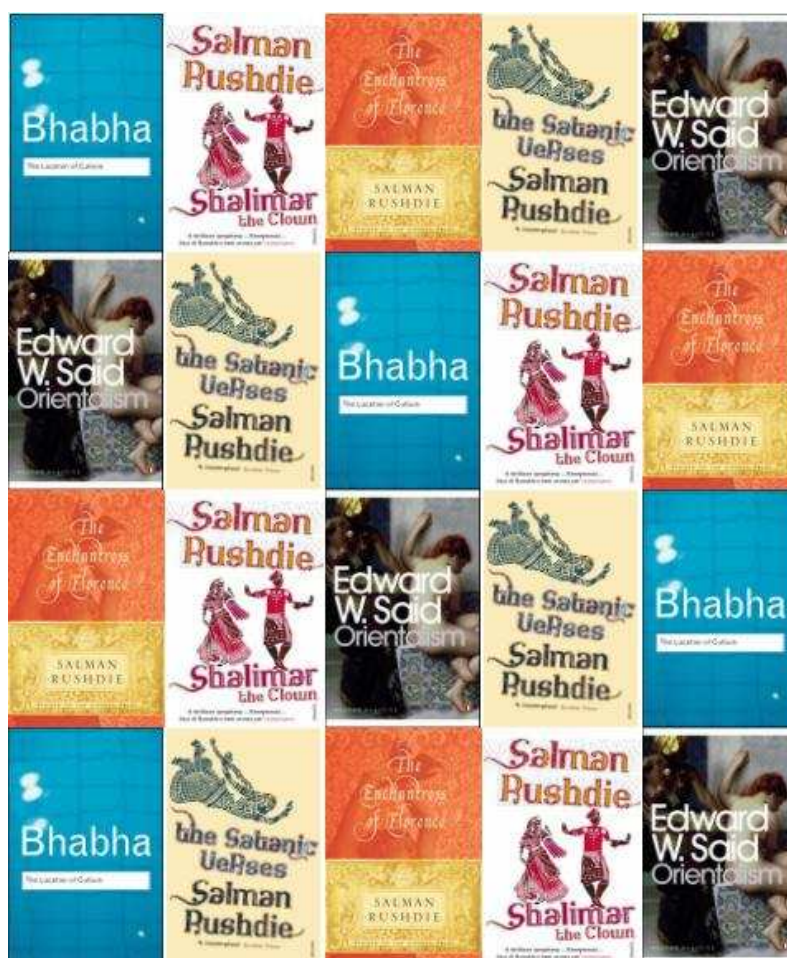


# A Dialogue Between Cultures

## The Depiction of the Orient and the Oriental in Two Works by Salman Rushdie



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## Introduction

Salman Rushdie was born in Mumbai, India in 1947 and is a world-renowned author of exceptional talent. He was brought up in Mumbai and later on in his life his family emigrated to England where he studied History at King's College, Cambridge. His novel *Midnight's Children* won the Booker Prize in 1981 and he was awarded The Best of the Booker award in 2008 for the same novel.

Most people around the world became acquainted with Rushdie and his work shortly after the fatwa issued on February 14<sup>th</sup> 1989 by the Iranian ayatollah Khomeini against his life. Rushdie's work deals with essential problems in our contemporary post-colonial society, like migration and identity and he does not shy away from touching upon – what many would consider – painful matters. He has a firm belief in the role that literature plays in reshaping and reforming societies: “I do not believe that novels are trivial matters. The ones I care most about are those which attempt radical reformulations of language, form and ideas, those that attempt to do what the word *novel* seems to insist upon: to see the world anew. I am well aware that this can be a hackle-raising, infuriating attempt” (Rushdie 1990, 393). That it truly can be a “hackle-raising” and “infuriating attempt” is something he experienced firsthandly after the publication of *The Satanic Verses*, but in contrast to what some people believe, the novel does not merely “serve as [handmaiden] to some political [according to Muslims, Western-] ploy”, as Azar Nafisi so beautifully describes the role of literature (339). The biggest problem at the time with *The Satanic Verses* was that most people, according to Rushdie, had only read “the various pamphlets that [had] been circulated [...] two chapters

dragged out of the whole; [...] a piece of blubber” instead of the “whole wretched whale” (Rushdie 1990, 396). In essence *The Satanic Verses* is a novel about the

migrant’s-eye view of the world. It is written from the very experience of uprooting, disjuncture and metamorphosis (slow or rapid, painful or pleasurable) that is the migrant’s condition, and from which, I believe, can be derived a metaphor for all humanity.

Standing at the center of the novel is a group of characters most of whom are British Muslims, or not particularly religious persons of Muslim Background, struggling with just the sort of problems that have arisen to surround the book, problems of *hybridization* and ghettoization, of reconciling the old and the new. (Rushdie 1990, 394, emphasis added)

It is the aspect of migration and the problems that this poses to the migrant’s identity that this thesis will investigate further. It will investigate how Rushdie deals with the post-colonial identity and cultural-hybridity.

It will do so by comparing *The Satanic Verses*, published in 1988, to a novel written some twenty years later, namely *The Enchantress of Florence*. This novel, currently Rushdie’s latest, is an enthralling work of fiction written in Rushdie’s favourite genre of ‘Magical Realism’ and ingeniously merging two cultures, namely Renaissance Italy and the Orient, more specifically the court of the sixteenth century Mughal Emperor Akbar. According to Rushdie, *The Enchantress of Florence* is his most researched book to date and it even contains a bibliography that covers eight pages in the 2009 Vintage edition and took Rushdie years to read. In this novel, he shows that East and West are not merely two antipodes. The following quote, which was taken from an online interview that can be found

on barnesandnoble.com between Rushdie and their 'Editor-in Chief of the Barnes & Noble Review' James Mustich, illustrates this:

It was certainly one of the big light-bulb moments. When you read the *Baburnama*, you realize that the kind of thinking about power that's going on in it is very, very similar to the thinking in *The Prince*. You can actually almost transpose sentences and paragraphs between the two books. I found it wonderfully strange that these two worlds coincided in that way; that was one of the genesis moments of the book, the recognition that there were these two worlds which were not communicating with each other in any way, and yet here are Babur and Machiavelli coming to the same conclusions. (Mustich par. 36)

It shows that, in *The Enchantress of Florence*, Rushdie is looking for a common denominator, and for things Eastern and Western cultures have in common.

As will be shown in the first chapter, the West's image of the Orient has been construed throughout the centuries. Ever since the French and English invasion/colonization of the Middle East, the West has unilaterally constructed an image of 'the Other' and 'the Orient' and ever since, there has existed a clear-cut dichotomy between East and West / Muslim and Christian. Additionally, this picture of the East was severely complicated after the United States' policy to interfere in foreign affairs after World War II. This led to an even bigger sense of demonization, of which Edward Said said: "The terrible reductive conflicts that herd people under falsely unifying rubrics like 'America,' 'The West' or 'Islam' and invent collective identities for large numbers of individuals who are actually quite diverse, cannot remain as potent as they are, and must be opposed, their murderous effectiveness

vastly reduced in influence and mobilizing power" (xii). The relationship between East and West became even more complex after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001. Reconstructing the image of the Other as construed by the West throughout the centuries plays an important role in Rushdie's novel writing. That these issues occupied Rushdie can be seen in his essay "In God We Trust". In this essay he refers to Said and states the following:

Consider the so-called 'Islamic revival' or 'fundamentalist Islamic revival'. The sloganizing of the term 'Islam' by the West in recent years has been extensively examined by Edward Said in his book *Covering Islam* (1981). What 'Islam' now means in the West is an idea that is not merely medieval, barbarous, repressive and hostile to Western civilization, but also united, unified, homogenous, and therefore dangerous [...] *We are back in the demonizing process* which transformed the Prophet Muhammad, all those years ago, into the frightful and fiendish 'Mahound'. (382, emphasis added)

Rushdie, like Said, is a writer who tries to deconstruct and subvert the prevalent Western notion of 'the Other'. However, after reading Rushdie's novels *The Satanic Verses* and *The Enchantress of Florence*, as well as quite a number of his essays and other novels, I discerned a discrepancy in his approach to the migrant's identity and portrayal of the East and the West. This might be due to the changed world after the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York on 11 September 2001 and its aftermath, or as Tariq Ramadan states:

[f]rom New York in September 2001 to Madrid in March 2004 or London 2005, the Muslim presence now imports international demands through

violent, extremist Islamist networks that strike out at innocent citizens. Violent extremism strikes from within, since most of the perpetrators of those attacks were either born and raised in the West or immersed in Western culture. *The experience of this violence completes the picture of this deep identity crisis: globalization, immigration, new citizenships, and social as well as extremist violence have palpable effects on Western societies' social psychology.* (26, emphasis added)

Perhaps this new global situation has led to a different approach in Rushdie's novel writing. Hence what this thesis will try to show is the following: it will follow a critical approach towards Rushdie's novels and see how he utilizes notions such as 'the Other' and West vs. East, and it will investigate whether there is a difference in approach between his pre-9/11 novel, *The Satanic Verses*, and his post-9/11 novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*.

However, before such an in-depth analysis of Rushdie's works can commence, this thesis will discuss the notion of 'Orientalism' – and what this means for our contemporary post-colonial society – and 'hybridization'. The most important book written on 'Orientalism' was Edward Said's study of the same title (1978). The first chapter of this thesis will extensively look at and assess this work in order to set up a framework for the rest of this thesis. This chapter will enable us to better understand what forces have forged our multi-cultural society and how the field of 'Orientalism' has shaped our thinking concerning the East and the 'Other'. As was shown above, Rushdie and Said were acquainted with each other's work, but they also knew each other personally. They shared a vision on the status of the migrant in our society, and a thesis on migration from East to West and post-colonial identity would not be complete without incorporating *Orientalism*.

“Chamcha in his semi-consciousness was seized by the notion that he, too, had acquired the quality of cloudiness, becoming metamorphic, *hybrid*” (SV 6-7, emphasis added). The second chapter will be devoted to the notion of ‘hybridization’. No post-colonial writer has investigated this aspect of the ex-colonized living in the Western metropolis more extensively than Homi Bhabha. So after chapter one, concerning Said’s *Orientalism*, this chapter will assess Bhabha’s views on ‘hybridization’ as expressed in his book *The Location of Culture*. Alongside, it will discuss Rushdie’s own version and thoughts upon this subject.

After chapters one and two, this thesis will start investigating how these notions are presented to the reader in *The Satanic Verses* and *The Enchantress of Florence* by Salman Rushdie.



## Chapter I: Orientalism

The field of Orientalism, as discussed in Said's *Orientalism*, has nourished and shaped the way the West thinks of the Arab, the Orient and the Muslim, but it is also a reflection of the West's attitude towards the Orient and its inhabitants, whether they are still living there, or have migrated to the West. The picture sketched by Said's *Orientalism* is essentially the background to which Salman Rushdie writes his novels. In order to be able to better understand the current attitude towards the Other in our post-colonial society and in post-colonial literature, of which Rushdie's novels are perfect examples, knowledge of the origins of Orientalism and Orientalism in general is indispensable, or as Said himself states: "my study of Orientalism has convinced me (and I hope will convince my literary colleagues) that society and literary culture can only be understood and studied together" (Said 27). Thus, to be able to understand how the twenty-first century image of the Orient has come into existence, one has to look into how this picture has evolved from its early beginnings. As we will see later in this chapter, from the eighteenth century onwards (the point of departure for Said) the Oriental has had to face and live up to the expectations of texts written by Western Orientalists and novelists, with the result that "no matter how deep the specific exception, no matter how much a single Oriental can escape the fences placed around him, he is *first* an Oriental, *second* a human being, and *last* again an Oriental" (Said 102). Said himself also suffered from this fate. In a conversation with Rushdie, Said told him that whenever there was a serious incident, like for instance a hijacking, he was contacted by the various media to voice his opinion on the matter. Because of his Palestinian background and the image the public has of Palestinians (created by these same media), he was turned into a spokesperson

or ambassador for terrorism. It did not matter that he was a highly influential and intelligent university professor. He would always be, as he said himself, an Oriental first.

Edward Said was one of the essential founding figures of post-colonialism. Other important writers were Homi Bhabha, whose ideas concerning post-colonialism and hybridity will be discussed in chapter II, and Frantz Fanon, who as a psychiatrist wrote extensively on the relationship between black and white communities.

Said was born in 1935 in Jerusalem and moved to the United States in the 1950s where he attended high school and university. He obtained a Ph.D. in English Literature from Harvard University in 1964 and was Professor in Comparative Literature at Columbia University. His work *Orientalism* (1978) has been subjected to severe criticism, but has also found support, or as Terry Eagleton states: “Edward Said got many things wrong, but his central argument was basically right. The west's denigration of the east has always gone with imperialist incursions into its terrain” (par. 1). On top of this, he mentions that “[Said's] orientalism signifies a whole cultural discourse, one that habitually represents the East as indolent, treacherous, passive, inscrutable, devious, feminised and inferior” (par. 6).

Orientalism is the study of the Orient, in which the Orient has always been juxtaposed and put in the shadow of the Occident, i.e. the West. Its main dogma has always been the East's disability to represent itself. Only the Orientalist and the 'Occident' were able to represent the Orient. This one-sided approach led to a stereotyped notion of the Arab or the Muslim in the West. V.S. Naipaul, Tony Morrison, and Salman Rushdie are all examples of writers who strenuously try to subvert this unilateral representation. These writers are considered to belong to the so-called “empire writes back” generation. Said explains the effects of this unilateral representation by means of a hypothetical analogy concerning the fierceness of lions. If an author writes a book on this fierceness and how to deal with a fierce lion which in turn ends up being successful, this book will instigate a “complex dialectic of

reinforcement” (Said 94). This means that an entire tradition on writings about the fierceness of lions might immerse, which in turn might narrow down upon the fierceness aspect solely. This kind of text might “center more narrowly on the subject – no longer lions but their fierceness – we might expect that the ways by which it is recommended that a lion’s fierceness be handled will actually *increase its fierceness, force it to be fierce* since that is what it is, and that is what in essence we know or can *only* know about it” (Said 94, emphasis added). This ‘complex dialectic of reinforcement’ “lives its own life [...] until lions can talk back” (Said 95). Said deals with the restricted, incomplete and often racist approach of the Orientalists. Many influential writers like “Hugo, Goethe, Nerval, Flaubert, Fitzgerald, and the like” (Said 53) “accepted the basic distinctions between East and West [as stipulated by the Orientalists] as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social descriptions, and political accounts concerning the Orient, its people, customs, ‘mind,’ destiny, and so on” (Said 2-3). This, amongst others, created a popular and deficient picture of the Other. Flaubert’s encounter with an “Egyptian courtesan,” for instance, served as a model for the quintessential sensual Oriental woman. This picture of the Oriental woman was completely sketched by the “comparatively wealthy” white European; he was the only one who spoke for her (Said 6). He created her. This is just one instance of how the Other has always been represented by the West. There were relatively few instances in which the Oriental was able to speak for him or herself; “the Orientalist, poet and scholar, [make] the Orient speak, describes the Orient, renders its mysteries plain for and to the West,” but what should be stressed according to Said is that these depictions are representations of the East and the writers were rarely concerned with its correctness (Said 20-1). As Said explains, this is not a strange fact. The European or American studying the Orient necessarily always approaches the Orient from his or her own perspective. There is no escaping that. This is a very poignant fact when we consider that this European or American scholar “belongs to a power with

definite [political and economical] interest in the Orient,” which inevitably leads to a corrupted version of reality (Said 11). Especially the post-colonial world, which has been witness to a period of extreme turmoil when it comes to the opposition between Muslim and Non-Muslim, has seen a renewal and increase in the creation of the popular anti-Islamic, anti-Arab stereotype, but, as Said argues, all these pictures of the East have been “years, even centuries, in the making” (Said 39).

Up to the twenty-first century the field of Orientalism has shaped how the West considers the East and the Oriental, a thing Said has strenuously brought to light and which, like Rushdie, he has tried to subvert. Rushdie and Said were acquainted and had an elaborate conversation in 1984 about the Palestinian cause on which Rushdie reported in his essay “On Palestinian Identity: A Conversation with Edward Said.” Rushdie sympathised with Said because they both come from a “minority group within a minority group” (168). About Said, Rushdie says the following: “For those of us who see the struggle between Eastern and Western descriptions of the world as both an internal and an external struggle, Edward Said has for many years been an especially important voice” (166). And of *Orientalism* he states that Said “analysed ‘the affiliation of knowledge with power’, discussing how the scholars of the period of Empire helped to create an image of the East which provided the justification for the supremacist ideology of imperialism” (166). This shows a direct sympathetic bond between Rushdie and Said. On top of this, when Said’s last work *Out of Place* was unjustly attacked by opponents, Rushdie wrote an angry column (reprinted in a collection of essays and other various writings by Rushdie called *Step Across This Line*) in support of Said and his work.

Said took the French colonization of Egypt in the eighteenth century by Napoleon as his starting point. At the same time, he adds that the picture of the Oriental had been in the making since Homeric times, and the Medieval occupation in the eighth and ninth century by

the Muslims of Southern Europe and their ferocious warfare that accompanied it had already left an image of “Islam [that] symbolize[d] terror, devastation, the demonic, [and] hordes of hated barbarians” (Said 59). Said adds that [f]or Europe, Islam was a lasting trauma” (59). However, the “period of immense advance in the institutions and content of Orientalism [takes place after Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt, and] coincides exactly with the period of unparalleled European expansion; from 1815 to 1914 European direct colonial dominion expanded from about 35 percent of the earth’s surface to about 85 percent of it” (Said 41). The areas that were mostly affected by this European expansion were Africa and Asia.

This epoch of extreme colonialization ended shortly after World War II, which led to an influx of migrants from the East and other prior colonies. Whereas during the centuries before, migration was primarily a one-sided affair, namely from West to East, this changed dramatically after the “granting of self-government to India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon (Sri Lanka) by the Attlee government in 1947-9” (Morgan 573). In Britain, which was the biggest colonial power, this led to an influx of over a million immigrants from the ex-colonies who suffered from “dilapidated housing and racial discrimination in employment and (sometimes) at the hands of the police, there was the hazard of racial bigotry in older urban areas” (Morgan 578). It was even suggested that things might escalate and become similar to the American situation, as America witnessed dreadful race riots in the 1960s. After the British Empire was dissembled, America became the most important player in Oriental affairs, or as Said states: “From the beginning of the nineteenth century until the end of World War II France and Britain dominated the Orient and Orientalism; since World War II America has dominated the Orient, and approaches it as France and Britain once did” (Said 4). The influx of immigrants and the negative picture sketched by Orientalism have had a significant impact on the Muslim’s identity: “In short, the construction of identity is bound up with the disposition of power and powerlessness in each society” (Said 332). If this is viewed in the light of the

current trends of “the electronic and print media [who] have been awash with demeaning stereotypes that lump together Islam and terrorism, or Arabs and violence, or the Orient and tyranny” (Said 347), it can be imagined how this might seriously affect the Muslim immigrant’s identity. That *Orientalism* is also mainly occupied with – as well as responsible for – the nature of the immigrant’s identity is shown in the following lines:

This [the thesis proposed by an academic that “Western, Confucian and Islamic civilizations” are “water-tight compartments whose adherents were at bottom mainly interested in fending off all the others”] is preposterous, since one of the great advances in modern cultural theory is the realization, [...] that cultures are hybrid and heterogeneous and, [...] that cultures and civilizations are so interrelated interdependent as to beggar any unitary or simply delineated description of their individuality. How can one speak today of “Western civilization” except as in large measure an ideological fiction, implying a sort of detached superiority for a handful of values and ideas, none of which has much meaning outside the history of conquest, immigration, travel and the mingling of peoples that gave the Western nations their present mixed identities? (Said 348-9)

When reading these lines it becomes immediately poignant why *Orientalism* is such an important source to be read alongside the works of Rushdie. Rushdie, especially in *The Satanic Verses*, denies the dogmas of traditional Orientalism and instead, as he himself points out in his essay “In Good Faith,” “celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas [and] politics. It rejoices in mongrelisation and fears the absolutism of the Pure” (394).

The essence of Said's study is best captured by the text on the back of the 2003 edition of *Orientalism* published by Penguin, where it states that "[in] this highly acclaimed work, Edward Said surveys the history and nature of Western attitudes towards the East, considering orientalism as a powerful European ideological creation – a way for writers, philosophers and colonial administrators to deal with the 'otherness' of Eastern culture, customs and beliefs." He does this by going back to the roots of modern Orientalism and following its developments throughout the centuries. He surveys well-known novelists who have contributed to our romantic, sensual and exotic picture of the East. Furthermore, an analysis of writings by various scholars and people working within an academic framework reflects the West's racial and imperial prejudices. In short, and this makes it such an interesting work for this thesis, *Orientalism* "[stresses] the actualities of what was later to be called multiculturalism, rather than xenophobia and aggressive, race-oriented nationalism" (Said 336). This is a shared belief between Rushdie and Said.

## Chapter II: Hybridity

Hybridity is a prevalent concept in contemporary post-colonial discourse and is mostly concerned with the place of the post-colonial migrant in the West, but can also refer to the encounter between two or multiple cultures in (formerly) colonized areas. As an aside, it may be useful to contemplate the concept of post-colonialism, from which the notion of hybridity springs. Bhabha himself described post-colonialism as follows:

It bears witness to the *unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation* [see Chapter I on ‘Orientalism’] involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order. [It] emerge[s] from the colonial testimony of Third World countries and the discourses of ‘minorities’ within the geopolitical divisions of East and West, North and South. [It] intervene[s] in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give a *hegemonic* ‘normality’ to the uneven development and the differential, often disadvantaged, histories of nations, races, communities [and] people. (Bhabha 245-6, emphasis added)

From this take on the post-colonial world, which has witnessed an unprecedented influx of migrants from the “Third World countries” talked about in the quote above, the notion of hybridity has been derived. According to Edward Said, Bhabha “is that rare thing, a reader of enormous subtlety and wit, a theorist of uncommon power [and] his work [*The Location of*



*Culture*] is a landmark in the exchange between ages, genres and cultures; the colonial, post-colonial, modernist and postmodern” (Bhabha, i). Bhabha was born in Mumbai in 1949 and is currently a Professor of English and American Literature at Harvard University. That Bhabha in his turn was heavily indebted to Said can be witnessed from the acknowledgements in *The Location of Culture*, in which he says that he “[wants ...] to acknowledge the pioneering *oeuvre* of Edward Said which provided [him] with a critical terrain and an intellectual project” (Bhabha xxvi). In *The Location of Culture* (1994), he wrote extensively on the position of the (ex-) colonized. His work acknowledges both Edward Said and Salman Rushdie. The latter, as was already shown in the introduction of this thesis, also has a fervent belief in the notion of hybridity and it plays an important role in many of his novels, especially *The Satanic Verses*.

The very definition of hybridity already creates some ambivalence and ambiguity. Firstly, there is the biological definition, as Antony Easthope points out. A cocker spaniel and a small munsterlander (two different breeds of dogs) can mate and create offspring; this offspring is considered an “example of genetic hybridity” (342). However, this definition contains “dire political applications” and also poses a problem “once DNA is taken into account” (Easthope 342). The current notion of hybridity, as sketched in amongst others *The Location of Culture*, is derived from this biological concept of hybridity, but has evolved into a cultural phenomenon, one that Bhabha himself is also subject to, for he has “lived that moment of the scattering of the people that in other times and other places, in the nations of others, becomes a time of gathering. Gatherings of exiles and *émigrés* and refugees; gatherings on the edge of ‘foreign’ cultures” (Bhabha 199). This situation in which many groups of people found themselves after the period of colonialism led to Bhabha’s formulation of hybridity. In general it can be said that ‘hybridity’ is a post-colonial invention, because due to “the syncretic reality of a post-colonial society it is impossible to return to an

idealized pure pre-colonial cultural condition,” and therefore is the “post-colonial text [...] always a complex and hybridized formation” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 108). In essence, Bhabha’s definition of hybridity coincides with Rushdie’s. For instance, Rushdie’s protagonists Saladin Chamcha and Gibreel Farishta find themselves, all of a sudden, after the explosion of their airplane, in completely foreign surroundings and from this moment onwards their hybrid identities are further explored. This situation leads to notions, also extensively researched by Bhabha, like aporia, mimicry and the interstice. Chamcha, for instance (as will be shown in the next chapter), is an example of “the effect of a flawed colonial mimesis, in which to be Anglicized is *emphatically* not to be English” (Bhabha 125). In spite of all his attempts of mimicry in order to become a quintessential Englishman, he still remains a foreigner. This situation of diaspora and the “[g]atherings of exiles and *émigrés* and refugees [...] on the edge of ‘foreign’ cultures” leads to Bhabha’s evocation of the “‘third space of enunciation’” (Bhabha 54). The ‘third space of enunciation’ boils down to the following: it is an in-between space between cultures, and its function is to “elude the politics of polarity” and makes us contemplate notions like the other, and the alien (Bhabha 56). It is Bhabha’s belief that negotiations between different cultures should take place within this third space and that our

willingness to descend into that alien territory [...] may open the way to conceptualizing an *international* culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture’s *hybridity*. To that end we should remember that it is the ‘inter’ – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *inbetween* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. It makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-nationalist histories of the ‘people’. And by

exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves. (Bhabha 56, emphasis added)

Therefore, Bhabha disapproves of a critic like Fredric Jameson, because of his “inability to move beyond the binary dialectic of inside and outside, base and superstructure” (Bhabha 317). His explanation for this disapproval of a critic like Jameson is straightforward, because if we want to “revise the problem of global space from the postcolonial perspective [we have] to move the location of culture difference away from the space of demographic *plurality* to the borderline negotiations [i.e. The Third space of enunciation] of cultural translation” (Bhabha 319). This Third Space is often explored in literature. According to Bhabha, this is primarily done by novelists who stem from nations that have suffered severely from colonization, like the South-African novelist Nadine Gordimer and African-American novelist Toni Morrison. Bhabha sees their novels, like those of Salman Rushdie, as excellent examples of literature that try to explore “borderline negotiations” (Bhabha 319). Gordimer’s and Morrison’s protagonists’ “in-between identity and [...] double lives both affirm the borders of culture’s insurgent and *interstitial* existence. In that sense, they take their stand with [...] Rushdie’s migrant history of the English written in the margins of the satanic verses” (Bhabha 26, emphasis added).

This last quote brings us to Rushdie. One of the most interesting and in-depth analyses of *The Satanic Verses* can be found in Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, namely in his essay called “How Newness Enters the World,” a title which instantaneously reminds us of Rushdie:

*How does newness come into the world? How is it born? Of what fusions, translations, conjoining is it made? How does it survive, extreme and*

dangerous as it is? What compromises, what deals, what betrayals of its secret nature must it make to stave off the wrecking crew, the exterminating angel, the guillotine? (SV 8, emphasis added)

This newness refers directly to the merging of different cultures and how this takes place and which difficulties it has to overcome, if they can be overcome at all. Does this newness come in the form of a multicultural ‘salad bowl’, or ‘melting pot’, or is it perhaps ‘hybridity’? All these hypotheses contain their own pros and cons. In the case of hybridity, it is interesting to look at a couple of lines from performance artist Guillermo Gomez-Peña as quoted in *The Location of Culture*. Gomez-Peña writes often about the complex situation of Mexican migrants in the United States. He uses the metaphor of a soup, the *menudo chowder*:

This new [postcolonial] society is characterized by mass migration and bizarre interracial relations. As a result new *hybrid* and transitional identities are emerging [...] The bankrupt notion of the melting pot has been replaced by a model that is more germane to the times, that of the *menudo chowder* [a notion similar to hybridity]. According to this model, most of the ingredients do melt, but some stubborn chunks are condemned merely to float. (Bhabha 313, emphasis added)

This quote illustrates the pitfalls or difficulties of hybridity, for “hybrid hyphenations emphasize the incommensurable elements – the stubborn chunks – as the basis of cultural identification” (Bhabha 313). This also features prominently in *The Satanic Verses*. When Saladin Chamcha, in his goat-like appearance, is hiding in the Indian-Pakistani part of London, he resides with landlady Hind and Landlord Sufyan, and as Bhabha points out, these

two figures are diametrically opposed: can you merge on the surface, and yet preserve your own identity, or is there a “freedom from the essence of the self” when “crossing [...] cultural frontiers?” (Bhabha 321). This shows the relevance of discussing Bhabha in conjunction with Rushdie. Rushdie’s use of hybridity is a disavowal of the Western idea that there is such a thing as a ‘pure’ historical society, or nation. He therefore writes back “to the imperial ‘centre’, not only through nationalist assertion, proclaiming itself central and self-determining, but even more radically by questioning the bases of European and British metaphysics, challenging the world-view that can polarize centre and periphery in the first place” (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 32). As stated above, Rushdie like Bhabha, seems to subscribe to a Third Space, a hybrid space.

Finally, relevant to note concerning a concept like hybridity and the Third Space is the absence of time and history. Bhabha wants to get rid of historicity. Nations and people turn to history to (re-) establish their identities. Identities are formed in opposition to others; I am Dutch because I am not French, and from this so-called Dutch heritage I have inherited essential traits that make me Dutch and not French, and so on. This restrictive notion derived from history is something that diametrically opposes persons and can result into (inherited) feelings of superiority (as discussed in Chapter I on ‘Orientalism’) and racial prejudice. This also shown by quotes taken from Tariq Ramadan’s book *What I Believe* later on in this thesis. Bhabha, and also Said, delineate this in greater detail. All in all, it can be said that post-colonial discourse

run[s] European history aground in a new and overwhelming [Third] space which annihilates time and imperial purpose. Received history is tampered with, rewritten, and realigned from the point of view of the victims of its destructive process. (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin 33)

Rushdie is highly aware of the major principles that have given shape to post-colonial discourse, and as will be shown in the next chapter, the enormous eruption of controversy surrounding his novel *The Satanic Verses* might have more to do with the fact that his post-colonial notions are “destructive of the very cement of community” than with a so-called attack on the “sacrilegious” (Bhabha 322).

## Chapter III: The Satanic Verses

### III.1: Intertextuality

After surveying Orientalism and hybridity in the previous two chapters, this chapter will look at how these concepts function in Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses*. It is interesting to note that Rushdie's novel itself can also be regarded as a hybrid entity. This hybridity manifests itself in Rushdie's specific use of intertextuality, a hybrid intertextuality, which connects *The Satanic Verses* to a myriad of other texts and cultural notions. As Carmen Lara-Rallo points out, the notion of intertextuality is a difficult one and over the past four decades many metaphors to describe this notion have been brought forth, like for instance the "mosaic" and "invisible ink" (Lara-Rallo 106). This all to show that "like a picture being 'worth a thousand words', every single text *stands for* a myriad of texts that constitute its intertextual (con)figuration" (Lara-Rallo 106, emphasis added). Rushdie's notion of hybridity and intertextuality go hand in hand, for it shows the 'impurity' of a novel and the 'impurity' of its ancestry, much like Rushdie tries to show culture's 'impurity' in his novels. As will be shown below, *The Satanic Verses* is intertextually connected with James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, because both

texts [...] are highly reflexive and concerned with their own composition and that of texts in general. Each presents a world where characters undergo wild metamorphoses and where uncertain ontological conditions powerfully challenge the traditional notion of the unified, stable, autonomous subject.

Both employ an impressive range of multinational cultural references and allusions. (Booker 191)

This quote taken from an article by M. Keith Booker illustrates Rushdie's strategy concerning intertextuality.

Booker points out that *The Satanic Verses* is not the only novel that explicitly utilizes intertextuality: Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, for instance, "bears important stylistic and structural similarities to works of authors ranging from Laurence Sterne to Günter Grass to Gabriel García Márquez [and] [t]he book also includes overt allusions to such diverse literary figures as Shakespeare, Defoe, Wordsworth, Rostand, and Superman" (190). Booker shows the same for Rushdie's novel *Shame*, in which he is able to trace references to writers like Shakespeare and Marquez again, and on top of these a variety of writers like Kafka, Saul Bellow, Robert Louis Stevenson, and even to the Batman comics (190). It is no surprise then that *The Satanic Verses* also abounds in numerous intertextual references to other literary and non-literary works. As can be seen in the quotes above, Rushdie does not only draw upon highbrow literary works. He also employs references to Superman, the Batman comics and in *The Satanic Verses* he also alludes to folksinger/songwriter Bob Dylan, next to literary figures like: "Keats, Melville, Dickens, Nietzsche, Beckett, Borges, Nabokov, [etc]" (Booker 190). However, the use of intertextuality employed in *The Satanic Verses* is much more specific as will be discussed below.

So before going into the novel in greater detail, this part of this chapter will take a look at *The Satanic Verses*' specific use of intertextuality and how this relates to hybridity. To write on intertextuality and Rushdie is an enormous undertaking. This chapter will therefore focus upon two writers who are intertextually bound up with *The Satanic Verses*, namely James Joyce and John Milton. By referring to these two writers, Rushdie is able to underscore



his message. His message is further emphasized by Rushdie's use of magical realism. This genre enables him to cleverly subvert reality. His references to *Finnegans Wake*, as mentioned above, are therefore perfectly chosen. As Booker points out:

*Finnegans Wake* and *The Satanic Verses* have much in common. Both books rely heavily on the metaphor of the dream *to aid in an escape from the restrictions of realistic representation*, and they employ a complex writing practice that operates simultaneously in several textual modes – parody, allegory, poetry – and on several ontological levels – dreams, hallucinations, myth, film. (Booker 191, emphasis added).

Thus, by referring to *Finnegans Wake*, Rushdie is able to escape the restrictions posed by conventional novel writing, and is therefore able to discuss hybridity and other ontological problems on a different level.

The person who first “popularized” the concept of intertextuality, according to M.H. Abrams, was the Bulgarian-French literary critic Julia Kristeva (317). According to Andrea Lesic-Thomas, intertext can be used to point out a direct, almost unambiguous, relationship between two or more texts. She mentions parody as an example. Additionally, it can also be used to denote the notion that no text stands on itself, but is related to numerous other texts (1). All in all, it can be said that no text functions unilaterally, but it “[exists] only through its relations to other texts” (Abrams 317). Especially the latter description of the term intertextuality is very poignant for a post-modern novel like *The Satanic Verses*, because it coincides with Ashton, Griffiths and Tiffin's description of contemporary culture. They argue that in “the syncretic reality of a post-colonial society it is impossible to return to an idealized pure pre-colonial cultural condition,” and that therefore the “post-colonial text [... is] always

a complex and hybridized formation” (108). The same is true for Rushdie’s novel; due to our contemporary society, in which texts transcend borders, contemporary novels, because of their ‘impurity’, have become subjected to hybridity and Rushdie exploits this notion in his novels. For *The Satanic Verses* owes its existence to other texts like, for instance, the Qu’ran. The whole controversy surrounding the novel for the last two decades has been due to this interconnectedness. Another example: the novel’s epigraph is a quote from Daniel Defoe’s *History of the Devil*. This reference, before the very first chapter of the novel has even started, already gives the reader more insight into the hybrid nature of the novel, and throughout the novel, Rushdie keeps handing out these references to the reader. Some are in the very open, like the epigraph, and some are more hidden, especially designed for the reader who, like Rushdie, is also familiar with that particular ‘text’.

As mentioned above, there is an intertextual connection between Salman Rushdie and James Joyce. This is, for instance, illustrated by Mimi Mamoulian who remarks to Saladin: “So comprehend, please, that I am an intelligent female. I have read *Finnegans Wake* and am conversant with post-modernist critiques of the West[.]” (SV 261). This is Mimi Mamoulian’s attempt to explain to Saladin Chamcha that she knows what she is doing and that her liaison with Billy is not mere foolishness. It also shows that Rushdie is acquainted with *Finnegans Wake* and that he is “conversant with post-modernist critiques of the West.” He is familiar with concepts like Orientalism, hybridity, intertextuality (all concepts that play an important role in post-modernism) and employs them fully in his novels. In *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie alludes to *Finnegans Wake* once more. This time he refers to the Irish ballad *Finnegan’s Wake* from which Joyce derived the name for his work; when at the end of his life Saladin’s father welcomes people in his house for the last time, Saladin muses: “[It’s] like Finnegan’s Wake. The dead man refusing to lie down and let the living have all the fun” (SV 528). Besides referring to the Irish ballad, this quote echoes the very first chapter of *Finnegans*

*Wake*. Finnegan seemingly dies after a horrendous fall from a ladder, however, after being splashed with some whisky at his wake, he sits up in his coffin. This touches upon perhaps one of the most important themes of these novels, namely: ‘the Fall’. Falling, as in *Finnegans Wake*, occurs multiple times in *The Satanic Verses*. Like Rushdie’s protagonists Saladin Chamcha and Gibreel Farishta, Finnegan comes to life again. Finnegan, however, is persuaded by the people surrounding him to lie down again in his coffin and they reassure him that “you’re better off, sir, where you are[.]” (Joyce 24). Booker states that “[b]oth artists [i.e. James Joyce and Salman Rushdie] employ the myth of the fall and its associated archetypal pattern of death and rebirth as central tropes for the representation of this effort to bury the past in order to clear the way for the future” (205). This is in line with what Saladin says at the end of *The Satanic Verses*: “Let the bulldozers come. If the old refused to die, the new could not be *born*” (547, emphasis added). This seems to be one of the answers to the important question proposed to the reader in chapter one: “How does newness come into the world? How is it *born*?” (8, emphasis added). The answer thus seems to be: first, the old has to die, both literally as well as metaphorically; Saladin’s father literally has to die in order for Saladin to gain a new perspective on his life and his identity and to fully complete the cycle of his rebirth: “Zeeny’s re-entry into his life completed the process of renewal, of regeneration, that had been the most surprising and paradoxical product of his father’s terminal illness” (SV 534). Finnegan’s tale seems to underscore this notion and is therefore of capital importance in analyzing *The Satanic Verses*. For the story of *Finnegans Wake* to evolve, first Finnegan has to die, metaphorically speaking. On the other hand, Rushdie seems to argue that old concepts of “*home, land, belonging*” (SV 4) have to die, so that a new hybrid identity or society can emerge. Like Joyce, Rushdie makes use of one of the most important symbols in Western society, namely ‘The Fall’. This echoes Icarus, Satan, Adam and Eve, just to mention a few, and he uses a great Western writer to underscore this. On top of this, there is a similarity

between Joyce and Rushdie. Both are migrant writers (i.e., writing in a foreign country) and both stem from a country that was once colonized by the English. This underscores the hybridity of English culture. Joyce's works are essential to the canon of English literature. Even though he was Irish and wrote most of his works on European mainland. Aside from this, Joyce instigated an entirely new way of novel writing when it comes to, for instance, experimenting with language, form, plot, our notion of history, to which Rushdie is also indebted.

The notion of 'the Fall' brings John Milton's *Paradise Lost* to mind. Rushdie has devilish-angelic characters fall from the sky, and this inextricably connects him to Milton, or as Dirk Wiemann states: "Of course, one would expect multiple allusions to *Paradise Lost* in a postmodern novel that parades, among other issues, "'the fall of angels' and 'The Tumble of Woman and Man'" (48). Rushdie does not just employ *Paradise Lost* to support his argument, but Rushdie cleverly subverts Milton's clear cut Western binary division between good and evil, between angels and demons. In Milton, and Western culture, there are no ambiguous characters when it comes to the Christian religion. Rushdie, however, continuously plays with this notion of good and evil. By calling Saladin and Gibreel's fall "angelicdevilish" and by combining their names Gibreelsaladin Farishtachamcha, he makes the division troublesome. And Rushdie would not be Rushdie if he would not make his text even more condense than it already is by, as Wiemann points out, combining two falls at the same time: "If Gibreel thus becomes readable as a site in which originally distinct figures are condensed, a similar fusion occurs at the level of plot inasmuch as the plunge from the sky not only echoes the fall of rebel angels but also the expulsion from paradise" (48). Rushdie protagonists fall from an airplane called *Bostan*. Thus metaphorically speaking, Gibreel and Saladin also fall out of one of the gardens of Eden: "The 747 was named after one of the gardens of Paradise, not Gulistan but *Bostan*" (SV 31). This intertextual relationship "prepares" the reader "for the

schizophrenia not only of [Gibreel's] particular character, but of the text at large" (Wiemann 48). Part VII of *The Satanic Verses* is most notorious for alluding to *Paradise Lost*. In this episode, the severely disoriented and mentally disturbed Gibreel is walking through the city of London in search for his adversary, Saladin Chamcha. In this episode Rushdie tries once more to eradicate the distinction between good and evil, as brought forth by Milton, by having Gibreel, who is supposed to be the angelic character, utter words that clearly resemble a speech by Satan in *Paradise Lost*: "He couldn't have put it better. A person who found himself in an inferno would do anything, rape, extortion, murder, felo de se, whatever it took to get out" (SV 324-5):

Lives there who loves his pain?  
Who would not, finding way, break loose from hell,  
Though thither doomed? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt,  
And boldly venture to whatever place  
Farthest from pain, where you mightst hope to change  
Torment with ease[.] (Paradise Lost, 4.888-93)

This intertextual relationship helps further enhance Rushdie's subverting of the "angelic-demonic binary" (Wiemann 49). Rushdie replaces old-world Western Miltonic thinking with clear distinctions between good and evil, with a post-colonial and hybrid perspective in which these divisions are not so clearly cut. He makes use of an English 'classic' and transforms its central theme into something that befits our post-modern society, in which an angelic character can have demonic traits and vice versa. The Fall is also not a bad thing per se. It also functions centrally in Rushdie's question of how 'newness' enters this world.

Thus far, this chapter has only focused upon Rushdie's European roots. Nonetheless, his Indian ancestry also plays an important role in *The Satanic Verses*. As can be deduced from the following passage in which Rushdie shows he is also well aware of the Eastern literary culture, when he says of someone that she was "struggling with the novels of Bibhutibhushan Banerji and the metaphysics of Tagore in an attempt to be more worthy of a spouse who could quote effortlessly from Rig-Veda as well as Quran-Sharif" (SV 245). However, references to Eastern literature become much more important, as will be shown in the chapter on *The Enchantress of Florence*.

By means of explicitly transforming his novel into a hybrid entity, Rushdie tries to bridge the chasm that exists between various cultures living next to each other in one society. He explains the almost schizophrenic situation in which many immigrants find themselves, or as Rushdie states: "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" (Rushdie 1982, 15). To bridge this gap, Rushdie draws upon literature from various cultures and says about this that he is

inescapably [an] international [writer] at a time when the novel has never been a more international form [...] it is one of the more pleasant freedoms of the literary *migrant* to be able to choose his parents. My own – selected half consciously, half not – include Gogol, Cervantes, Kafka, Melville, Machado de Assis; a *polyglot* family tree against which I measure myself, and to which I would be honoured to belong. (Rushdie 1982, 20-1)

He exemplifies this by engaging into a conversation with Indian writers, but also with writers who belong to the Western-European literary canon. He shows his reader that hybridity is a

two-headed monster: on the one hand, it is the source of many collisions and acts of aggression mostly stemming from xenophobia, and on the other hand, this ‘newness’ is also positive, because a writer like Rushdie is able to choose his own ‘parentage’ and can therefore draw upon more literary traditions, which is part of his message. He shows us the ambiguity, hybridity and impurity of all cultures and therefore he transcends borders. In Bhabha’s words: by means of invoking writers from various backgrounds and cultures, Rushdie has a

willingness to descend into that alien territory [... which] may open the way to conceptualizing an *international* culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture’s *hybridity*. To that end we should remember that it is the ‘inter’ – the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the *inbetween* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. It makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-nationalist histories of the ‘people’. (Bhabha 56, emphasis added)

### III.2: The Protagonists

From the perspective of hybridity as well as Orientalism, Saladin Chamcha is a very interesting character. In the very first chapter, when Rushdie introduces his protagonists to the reader, a great discrepancy between the two is discernable. Saladin Chamcha and Gibreel Farishta are dropped from the sky “like bundles dropped by some carelessly open-beaked stork,” signaling (re-)birth (SV 4). Chamcha, wearing a quintessential English bowler hat, is singing “Rule Britannia,” which is very ironical when taken into account that the writer of the lyrics of “Rule Britannia,” James Thomson, was a Scot. Farishta, on the other hand, sings a more hybrid song in which he proclaims that his “shoes are Japanese,” his trousers English and his hat Russian, all this in “semi-conscious deference to the uprushing host-nation [i.e. England]” (SV 5). Farishta had already accepted his hybrid existence, or so it seems initially, while, on a conscious level, Chamcha is still fighting this. Nonetheless some change is already taking place, because on a semi-conscious level Chamcha “was seized by the notion that he, too [like Farishta], had acquired the quality of cloudiness, becoming metamorphic, hybrid” (SV 7). For years Chamcha had fought the Indian part of his existence by chasing English women and adapting his voice to English standards, and despite his English education, he was only able to make it in English society by imitating voices, in real life as well as in his job as a voice-actor, but during his fall his inner-self informed him “that it wanted nothing to do with his pathetic personality, that half-reconstructed affair of *mimicry* and voices” (SV 9, emphasis added). In his collection of essays, *The Location of Culture*, Homi Bhabha has written an



interesting essay concerning the notion of mimicry alluded to in the previous quote. He argues that in colonial discourse “which Edward Said describes as the tension between the synchronic panoptical vision of domination – the demand for identity, stasis – and the counter-pressure of the diachrony of history – change, difference – mimicry represents an *ironic* compromise,” therefore to mediate between identity and stasis on the one hand, and change and difference on the other, colonial mimicry evolved as “the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite*” (Bhabha 122). This has serious consequences for the identity of the mimicking Other, because the “*ambivalence* of mimicry (almost the same, *but not quite*) does not merely ‘rupture’ the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject [in the case of *The Satanic Verses*, Saladin Chamcha] as a ‘partial’ presence” (Bhabha 123). By partial presence Bhabha also means “incomplete” and “virtual” (*ibid*). In Chamcha’s case this means that his attempt at mimesis is futile, because, according to Bhabha, “the effect of a flawed colonial mimesis” means that “to be Anglicized is *emphatically* not to be English” (125). On top of this, mimicry problematizes “the very notion of ‘origins’” (Bhabha 127). Bhabha illustrates this by quoting Freud:

Their mixed and split origin is what decides their fate. We may compare them with individuals of mixed race who taken all round resemble white men but who betray their coloured descent by some striking feature or other and on that account are excluded from society and enjoy none of the privileges. (Bhabha 127)

In the first part of the book, Chamcha is a perfect illustration of colonial mimicry. Very early on in his life he decided he wanted to become, according to the narrator, “the thing his father

was-not-could-never-be, that is, a goodandproper Englishman” and he started to “find *masks* that these fellows [i.e. the English] would recognize, paleface masks, clown-masks, until he fooled them into thinking he was *okay*, he was *people-like-us*” (SV 43, emphasis added). This is further complicated, because to achieve this

Mr Saladin Chamcha had constructed this [English] face with care – it had take him several years to get it just right – and for many years now he had thought of it simply as *his own* – indeed, he had forgotten what he had looked like before it. Furthermore, he had shaped himself a voice to go with the face, a voice whose languid, almost lazy vowels contrasted disconcertingly with the sawn-off abruptness of the consonants. (SV 33)

To add to this mimesis, Chamcha had in the years prior to that, when he had already established for himself that he wanted to be ‘English’, Anglicized his name from Salahuddin Chamchawala into Saladin Chamcha. However, very soon in the novel, Chamcha gradually starts to realize that this mimicry is nothing but a farce and his transmutation begins. When flying from Bombay to London in the airplane that would eventually be blown up, he says to himself: “*I’m not myself*” (SV 34). This realization follows the recent breakdown of his English voice during his visit to India.

Rushdie is aware of the mimicry, i.e. the denying of one’s roots, involved in migration, as can be deduced from the following quote:

A man who sets out to make himself up is taking on the Creator’s role, according to one way of seeing things; he’s unnatural, a blasphemer, an abomination of abominations. From another angle, you could see pathos in

him, heroism in his struggle, in his willingness to risk: not all mutants survive. Or, consider him sociopolitically: most migrants learn, and can become disguises. Our own false descriptions to counter the falsehoods invented about us, concealing for reasons of security our secret self. (SV 49)

This quote seems to encapsulate almost all aspects of *The Satanic Verses* and after the reader's first acquaintance with Saladin Chamcha, all of this is further explored in the novel.

Chamcha's relationship with Pamela Lovelace is an interesting example. This relationship firstly helps him to "reassure himself of his own [English] existence" (SV 50), but secondly, as Frantz Fanon states in his work *Black Skin, White Masks*, it is an attempt to "espouse white culture, white beauty, white whiteness. Between these white breasts that my wandering [in Saladin's case Indian] hands fondle, white civilization and worthiness become mine" (45). For Saladin, courting Pamela Lovelace, which took a lot of time, was one more attempt at becoming even more English. This also fits with the description which Jumpy Joshi gives us of Chamcha's room, or den as he calls it himself, in the attic of his London house:

Chamcha's room struck [Jumpy Joshi] as contrived, and therefore said: the caricature of an actor's room full of signed photographs of colleagues, handbills, framed programmes, [...] a room bought of the peg, by the yard, an *imitation* of life, a mask's mask. Novelty items on every surface: [...] the lamp borne by a bronze Eros, in the mirror shaped like a heart, oozing up through the blood-red carpet, dripping from the ceiling, Saladin's need for love. In the theatre everybody gets kissed and everybody is darling. The actor's life offers, on a daily basis, the simulacrum of love; a mask can be satisfied, or at least consoled, by the echo of what it seeks. (SV 174)

That his den is a “simulacrum of love” does not mean that Chamcha found it difficult to approach women (*ibid*). On the contrary, his oriental demeanor made him very popular among women: “A few moments later Chamcha came up, reeking of patchouli, wearing a white kurta, everybody’s goddamn cartoon of the mysteries of the East, and the girl left with him five minutes later” (SV 174). The sole reason for Chamcha to gain Pamela’s affection was because of her Englishness, something she eventually realizes herself as well:

“Him and his Royal Family, you wouldn’t believe. Cricket, the Houses of Parliament, the Queen. The place never stopped being a picture postcard to him [Chamcha]. You couldn’t get him to look at what was really real.” [...] “He was a real Saladin,” Jumpy said. “A man with a holy land to conquer, his England the one he believed in. You were part of it, too.” [...] “Part of it? I was bloody Britannia. Warm beer, mince pies, common-sense and me.” (SV 174)

In his quest for becoming quintessentially English, Chamcha also “found himself dreaming of the Queen, of making tender love to the Monarch. She was the body of Britain, the avatar of the State, and he had chosen her, joined with her; she was his Beloved, the moon of his delight” (SV 169). This quote also further underscores Fanon’s theory of the love between a black man and a white woman. It shows that Chamcha is only concerned with becoming English and nothing is more English, of course, than the Monarch. However, all of this changes in a rapid pace. From more or less the third part, entitled “Elloven Deeowen,” onwards, Chamcha becomes acquainted with the ‘really real’ England. This change is brought forth after his most recent visit to India, when he is reacquainted with Zeeny Valkil. She feels

sad for him because of his role in *The Aliens Show* and a minority part he plays in a theatre company:

“Such a fool, you, the big star whose face is the wrong colour for their colour TVs, 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” [...] she grabbed his shoulders and shook him [...] “Salad baba, whatever you call yourself, for Pete’s sake *come home.*” (SV 61)

This is exactly what he eventually does: he *comes home*. He sheds his false English skin, but before he achieves this he has to ‘fall’ a great deal.

To waylay Chamcha’s notion of being able to be purely English, Rushdie stresses the hybridity, or impurity of England itself. The beginning of “Ellowen Deeowen” is an excellent example of this. Here Rushdie introduces his readers to Rosa Diamond, an elderly lady who lives at the English coast. Her home is located at a spot where “[n]ine centuries past, the Norman fleet had sailed right through” (SV 129). However, nine centuries later, no one ever talks about Normans and Anglo-Saxons. They have merged into one category called the English. Chamcha and his Indian fellow traveller find themselves on this exact same spot after their plane has exploded in mid-air. Unfortunately, they have not blended into the existing society yet like the Normans, and to accentuate their minority and demonized status, Rushdie has them undergo a metamorphosis. Chamcha notices this when he is unable to recognize England and thinks he “had fallen out of the sky into some wrongness, some other place, not England or perhaps not-England, some counterfeit zone, rotten borough, altered state. Maybe, he considered briefly: Hell? No, no, he reassured himself as unconscious threatened, that can’t be it, not yet, you aren’t dead yet; but dying” (SV 132). In a metaphorical sense, he is right.

He is dying, or rather his old acquired Anglicized identity is gradually dying. Chamcha and Gibreel Farishta are taken in by the aforementioned Rosa Diamond. During his fall and his short stay at Diamond's home, Chamcha is gradually transforming into a goat. Chamcha is arrested by immigration officers who are afraid that he is an immigrant seeking refuge in England. Shortly thereafter, he is taken away and maltreated by a group of immigration officers who are named 'Stein,' who has an exaggerated Scottish accent, 'Novak', and 'Bruno' (SV 160). All these names are not British by origin but they stem from different countries, or as Chamcha says after hearing these names: "'And what about them?' he demanded, jerking his head at the immigration officers. 'They don't sound so Anglo-Saxon to me'" (SV 163). This point is also stressed by Ramadan, when he says: "[how] long does one remain an immigrant, while the only difference between 'ethnically French' or 'ethnically British' citizens and recent immigrants lies in the fact that the 'ethnically French' or 'ethnically British' are simply immigrants of longer standing?" (68). Additionally, Paul Brians says about Rushdie's London: "People of traditional Anglo-Saxon stock are almost entirely absent from the London of *The Satanic Verses*. Instead the city swarms with immigrants: Indians, Bengalis, Pakistanis, Jamaicans, German Jews, etc. He reminds the English that they too were colonized" (par. 10). The immigration officers treat Chamcha in this fashion because even though "[t]he bigots who beat Chamcha in the police van are all - as he notes - no more English in their heritage than he, [...] his color and identity as a postcolonial immigrant allows them to treat him as a complete alien" (Brians par.11). This puzzles Chamcha and

struck him as utterly bewildering and unprecedented – that is, his metamorphosis into this supernatural imp – was being treated by the others as if it were the most banal and familiar matter they could imagine. 'This isn't

England,' he thought, not for the first or the last time. How could it be, after all; where in all that moderate and common-sensical land was there room for such a police van in whose interior such events as these might plausibly transpire? (SV 158)

Initially, he is unable to grasp what is happening to him and that the English are capable of such monstrosities: “The humiliation of it! He was – had gone to some lengths to become – a sophisticated man! Such degradations might be all very well for riff-raff from villages in Sylhet or the bicycle-repair shops of Gujranwala, but he was cut from a different cloth!” (SV 159). However, the manticore he meets in the hospital shortly after his beating by the immigration officers explains it very clearly to him. It goes back to the very roots of Orientalism as explained by Edward Said in *Orientalism*, namely the demonization and false depiction of the Oriental, or as the manticore states: “‘They describe us,’ the [manticore] whispered solemnly. ‘That’s all. They have the power of description, and we succumb to the pictures they construct’” (SV 168). When he escapes the hospital together with his fellow inmates, one of them hints to the solution to Chamcha’s identity crisis: running over the pavement together she tells him to go “*east* [... and] east east east they ran” (SV 171).

In the end, change comes at a rapid pace. Rushdie illustrates this by comparing it to a new theory in Evolutionism in which it is assumed that evolution takes place in “radical leaps [... it is] violent, a thing of dramatic, cumulative transformations: in the old formulation, more revolution than evolution” (SV 418). Chamcha finally comes to terms with himself and he is able to accept that his identity was built up out of different ‘blocks’ as it were. That he is neither English, nor Indian, but that his identity contains both, in other words, that he has a hybrid identity, and that he also has to embrace his Indian heritage. This change is also shown when an Englishwoman, who is proud of her country and who shows this by having a “map of

London [...] in red magic-marker” on her right breast, offers herself freely to him; he flatly refuses (SV 424). He is no longer, in the Fanonian sense, occupied with espousing Englishness. Things are further explained in the last chapter of the novel, when Chamcha returns ‘home’ to visit his dying father. When he has arrived in India, he starts using his original Indian name again, Salahuddin, and he “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” (SV 523). Due to this acceptance and transformation, he is the only one of the two protagonists who is able to survive.

Gibreel Farishta, the other protagonist, is not so lucky. Whereas Saladin Chamcha is primarily used to illustrate Rushdie’s notions concerning hybridity, Farishta’s role serves to underscore his ideas concerning religion, but not solely. Initially, it is Farishta who seems to be able to cope best with the transformation. He is even ‘metamorphosed’ into an angel. Eventually, his ideas concerning Englishness and England are juxtaposed to those of Chamcha. Where Chamcha only sees the positive aspects of London for example, Gibreel sees “[the] city’s streets coiled around him, writhing like serpents” (SV 320). According to him

London had grown unstable once again, revealing its true, capricious, tormented nature, its anguish of a city that had lost its sense of itself and wallowed, accordingly, in the impotence of its selfish, angry present of masks and parodies, stifled and twisted by the insupportable, unrejected burden of the past, staring into the bleakness of its impoverished future. (SV 320)



He is unable to adjust to his new surroundings and is unable to become a migrant with a hybrid identity. He views his home, India, as superior and more preferable and uses everything in his power to change England:

The trouble with the English was that they were English: damn cold fish! [...] Well: he was here now, the great Transformer, and this time there'd be some changes made. [...] He would show them – yes! – his *power*. – These powerless English! – Did they not think their history would return to haunt them? – ‘the native is an oppressed person whose permanent dream is to become the persecutor’ (Fanon). English women no longer bound him; [...] away with all fogs. He would make this land anew. (SV 353)

In short, he wants to turn England into India, and the best way to do this is by changing the climate. A climate in which there would be “new birds in the trees (macaws, peacocks, cockatoos), new trees under the birds (coco-palms, tamarind, banyans with hanging beards) [and] ceiling fans,” and much more (SV 355). Everything that was quintessentially English should be transformed. His longing for home and his unwillingness to accept his own transformation, ultimately lead to his downfall. He develops a schizophrenic personality, and is, in the end, unable to recover from his mental illness and commits suicide. It is Chamcha, the one willing to accept ‘newness,’ who is able to survive: “To the devil with it! Let the bulldozers come. If the old refused to die, the new could not be born” (SV 547).

## Chapter IV: The Enchantress of Florence

Salman Rushdie's most recent novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*, shares quite some similarities with *The Satanic Verses*. For instance, like Gibreel in *The Satanic Verses*, one of the protagonists from *The Enchantress of Florence* is "left to question his memory and wonder how much of his waking life had been infected by dreams" (EoF 147). On top of this, Rushdie again uses the story of Hind and how "Hind of Mecca on the battlefield of Uhud had eaten the heart of the fallen Hamza, the Prophet's uncle" (EoF 87). However more importantly, *The Satanic Verses*, like *The Enchantress of Florence*, is primarily occupied with religion and even more importantly with the collision between East and West. In *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie focuses on the migration from East to West, and what this means for the migrant's identity. This leads to his notion of hybridity. This notion of hybridity entails that there is a big discrepancy between East and West and that the immigrant's identity consists of, at least, two different components. In *The Enchantress of Florence*, Rushdie takes a different approach. He is no longer concerned with newness but travels back in history and searches for a common denominator to show that Eastern and Western cultures might not be as diametrically opposed as is generally assumed, or as the cart driver says to himself while he is transporting the eccentric 'Mogor dell' Amore': [p]erhaps [the Mogor dell' Amore is] someone to be reckoned with. If he had a fault, it was that of ostentation, of seeking to be not only himself but a performance of himself as well, and, the driver thought, *around here everybody is a little bit that way too, so maybe this man is not so foreign to us after all* (EoF 7, emphasis added).

However, before an in depth analysis can commence of such a complex work, a short summary of the novel and its structure will now follow to make reading the remainder of this chapter easier.

The novel does away with the prevailing East-West dichotomy by comparing a high point of European culture, Renaissance Italy, with a similar period in Indian history, namely the reign of the Grand Mughal Akhbar. It is an intricate story in which a story narrated by the protagonist, who gives himself multiple names, one of which is Mogor dell' Amore, weaves together these two cultures. This Mogor dell' Amore travels to India as a stowaway on a Scottish ship to narrate the story of his ancestry in order to show to the emperor that he is his relative, his uncle to be more precise. Being a cunning conjuror, he is able to trick and charm the ship's captain, and by doing so, he is able to steal many of the captain's precious artefacts, as well as a letter directed to the Grand Mughal from the English Queen Elizabeth. This enables him to enter the Grand Mughal's court and to disclose his secret to the Grand Mughal, namely that he is his uncle and son of a lost Mughal princess named Qara Köz. Qara Köz was a victim of strife and warfare and finally found her way to Florence. This is where part one of the novel ends. Part two brings the reader to Renaissance Florence where the story unfolds further. This narrative is regularly interrupted by the emperor Akbar, or by a passage that tells the reader of what is happening in the emperor's city during the narration of the Mogor's story. In this part, the reader learns of three young Florentines: Niccoló il Machia (Niccoló Machiavelli), Agostino Verspucci and Antonino Argalia. Argalia is the one who, after his parents die from the plague, leaves Florence to become a soldier of fortune. He is the one who wins Qara Köz's love. The final part can be seen as the denouement. The story is finished by the Mogor and he narrates how Argalia returns home to Florence with Qara Köz, and how after his death she flees with Agostino Verspucci, relative of Amerigo Verspucci, to the New World, where she becomes pregnant of the Mogor dell' Amore.

## IV.1: Eastern vs. Western Culture

One device Rushdie uses in his attempt to do away with the Western feeling of cultural superiority is by downsizing its cultural and geographical peaks. This ties in with the aspect of ‘sameness’, which will be discussed in chapter IV.2. By downsizing Western culture, he is able to equate it with the culture of the Orient. This idea fits with the ideas of other modern intellectuals like Tariq Ramadan who states that “[all] of us should show humility, respect, and consistency. *Humility*, by admitting that nobody, no civilization or nation, holds a monopoly on universals and on the good, and that our political and social systems are not perfect; *respect* toward others because we should be convinced that their richness and achievements can be beneficial to us” (22). Rushdie talks about this in an interview he had with James Mustich, editor-in chief of the Barnes & Noble review. He says that in general

[we] think of the High Renaissance as a time of noble culture, of great sophistication and philosophy, of enlightened humanism and blah-blah-blah, when actually it was a street city, with all kinds of things happening in the street, people sodomizing each other in the shadows and so on. It was a wild kind of place. I had never seen it described like that, and yet there it was in the historical record. So I thought, again, maybe I can bring it to life in a way that's unexpected, but honest, not just made up. (Mustich par. 54)

And when the Mogor tells the emperor about the new “heliocentric model of the universe,” something which could still lead to your death in Renaissance Florence, the emperor Akbar

responds with: “This has been known for hundreds of years [...] How backward your reborn Europe seems to be” (EoF 193-4). Additionally, the Grand Mughal’s invisible wife states that

[w]hen the emperor showed her the pictures [the Western missionaries] brought with them of their mountains and valleys she thought of the Himalayas and Kashmir and laughed at the foreigners’ paltry approximations of natural beauty, their *vaals* and *aalps*, half-words to describe half-things. Their kings were savages, and they had nailed their god to a tree. What did she want with people as ridiculous as that? (EoF 59)

Shortly after this passage, Rushdie brings to mind the difficulty and the flaws that accompany any representation of a culture as thoroughly described by Edward Said. The emperor in *The Enchantress of Florence* states in response to the thoughts of his invisible wife that were quoted above: this place, Sikri, was a fairyland to them, just as their England and Portugal, their Holland and France were beyond her [i.e. the invisible wife’s] ability to comprehend. The world was not all one thing. ‘We are their dream,’ she had told the emperor, ‘and they are ours’,” and in Rushdie’s attempt to mutual understanding he has the emperor respond with: “[What] if we could awake in other men’s dreams and change them, and if we had the courage to invite them into ours [...]?” (EoF 60). Like Gibreel in *The Satanic Verses*, the emperor is a ‘dreamer,’ hence also the reference to dreaming in the previous quote. He dreams of and would like to create another kind of world, or as Rushdie states, he would like to “conjure a new world, a world beyond religion, region, rank and tribe” (EoF 53). On top of this, the emperor is ridiculed for “his megalomaniac fantasies of creating a joint global empire that *united the eastern and western hemispheres*” (EoF 92, emphasis added). That there is a common denominator between East and West is also pointed out by Tariq Ramadan, who

states that the West's "[curricula] must also be reassessed (especially in history but also in literature, philosophy, etc.) to become more representative of a *shared history and include its wealth of remembered experience*. The West must start a dialogue not only with 'the other' but also with itself: an earnest, profound, and constructive dialogue" (6, emphasis added).

This seems to be completely in line with Rushdie's motivation for writing *The Enchantress of Florence*: the West has to acknowledge that there is shared history and that societies are intertwined. By establishing and acknowledging that, the West's relationship with the East can only improve, according to Ramadan, as well as our relationship with migrants from the East.

As will be shown in the next chapter as well, these concepts are peculiar to Rushdie's novels written after 9/11. He is no longer searching for clearly distinguishable components, of for instance the migrant's identity, but instead, he is equating and searching for the things that connect us and which people have in common.

## IV.2: 'Interconnectedness' and 'Sameness'

The emperor's 'fantasy' as quoted in chapter IV.1 relates to the themes of 'sameness' and 'interconnectedness.' This is also found later on in the novel, when Argalia states that Qara Köz has come to Florence in "the hope of forging a union between the great cultures of Europe and the East, knowing she has much to learn from us and believing, too, that she has much to teach" (EoF 349).

As suggested above, in this novel Rushdie is looking for a common denominator, something that binds all human beings together. In other words, he wants to show "[h]uman beings were not singular creatures [...], they were plural, their lives were made up of interdependent forces, and if you wilfully shook one branch of that tree who knew what fruit might fall on your head" (EoF 133-4). The immigrant is not just plural anymore, but all human beings are: "This idea of self-as-community was what it meant to be a being in the world, any being; such a being being, after all, inevitably a being among other beings, a part of the beingness of all things" (EoF 39). Rushdie explains this further in the Mustich interview. He explains that we are no longer living in "boxes," or in separate spheres like the characters in the novels by Jane Austen, who wrote in a time when the lack of advanced infrastructure led to more homogeneous societies. So instead of writing novels about small societies and their 'small' problems he is

interested in joining things together. If you can create a kind of synthesis at the level of aesthetics - in *The Enchantress*, for instance, combining the picaresque

and the Swiftian and the vaudevillian, the carnival-esque and the this and the that - it also helps to create, if you like, a kind of artistic echo of what the story is trying to do, *which is to bring together different parts of the world. Showing that the world is no longer composed of little boxes is something that I try to do in my books.* [...] Now, it seems to me, in the world in which we currently live, all the boxes open into other boxes, and here is *connected* to there, whether we like it or not. And to understand the story of over here, we also have to know something about the story of over there, otherwise our world makes no sense. (Mustich par. 79, emphasis added)

Rushdie loves this sense of ‘interconnectedness,’ as can be read in the following quote: “[and] isn’t it interesting to see that the world actually goes together, that the world is not just made up separate and unconnected narratives?” (Mustich par. 80) After this, he continues with the second notion that features so prominently in *The Enchantress of Florence*, namely ‘sameness,’ because his search for ‘interconnectedness’ made him aware of the fact that

what is revealed by joining things is often a similarity. *You start off believing the world to be full of different things, and the discovery is how alike we all are.* When you start looking at how people wearing different clothes, speaking different languages, believing different things, etc. - when you start looking at how they actually behave, you realize the similarities outweigh the differences. Even across time: we behave the same way now as we did then. We just have different tools. Human nature is the great constant. (Mustich par. 82, emphasis added)



This sense of sameness can also be found in words uttered by the Mogor, when he says that “[this] may be the curse of the human race [...] Not that we are so different from one another, but that we are so alike” (EoF 171). Qara Köz adds something similar to this when she says that there “is no particular wisdom in the East [...] All human beings are foolish to the same degree” (EoF 360). That we are so alike is further exemplified in a passage in which the women in the emperor’s city have begun to fight with each other due to the Mogor’s story about Qara Köz. Two prostitutes come with the solution. The women, while the men were blindfolded, had to walk around town naked and

in the absence of the men the women of the capital learned all over again that they were not made of lies and treason but only of hair and skin and flesh, that they were all as imperfect as each other, and that there was nothing special they were hiding from one another, no poison, no plots, and that even sisters can, in the end, find a way of getting along. (EoF 260)

As shown above, Rushdie believes that across space, but also across time, people show remarkable similarities. In his book *What I Believe* (2010), Tariq Ramadan also puts a lot of emphasis on sameness: “I now meant to stand up for my religion [Islam], explain it, and, above all, show that we have so much in common with Judaism and Christianity but also with the values advocated by countless humanists, atheists, and agnostics” (13). Like Rushdie, he “means to question prejudices, to question the false constructions of Europe’s past (from which Islam was supposed to have been absent), and of course, help open the way confidently to living together in harmony as our common future requires” (13). To underscore this concept of sameness even further, he adds: “I fully accepted both my Muslim faith and my

Western culture and I claimed that this is possible and that *common values and hopes are more essential and more numerous than differences*” (14, emphasis added).

Using the Renaissance has another level. According to *The Enchantress of Florence*, the “past was a light that if properly directed could illumine the present more brightly than any contemporary lamp. Knowledge was never simply born in the human mind; it was always reborn. The relaying of wisdom from one age to the next, this cycle of rebirths: this was wisdom” (EoF 316). In a sense, what Rushdie is trying to do, is handing out knowledge from the past to the present. He is “relaying wisdom” concerning the East and human beings in general, showing that there is a great source of knowledge and wisdom to be found in the East, just like in the West, and that our histories are more intertwined than that most people in the West would like to admit.

This quest for ‘interconnectedness’ and ‘sameness’ is something that becomes especially poignant in Rushdie’s post 9/11 novels. For example, these notions are also important in his novel *Shalimar the Clown* (2005). One of the protagonists describes the world she lives in as:

Everywhere was now a part of everywhere else. Russia, America, London, Kashmir. Our lives, our stories, flowed into one another’s, were no longer our own, individual, discrete. This unsettled people. There were collisions and explosions. The world was no longer calm. (Shalimar 37)

It underscores what Rushdie says in the ‘Mustich’ interview, namely that people no longer live disconnected lives: “here is connected to there, whether we like it or not” (Mustich par. 79). This is not the only instance of ‘sameness’ and ‘interconnectedness’ that can be found in

*Shalimar the Clown*. When the new American ambassador to India and World War II resistance hero Max Ophuls arrives in Kashmir, he says:

He had come a long way but perhaps not so very far. Could two places have been more different, he asked himself; could any two places have been more the same? Human nature, the great constant, surely persisted in spite of all surface differences. (Shalimar 180)

A final example from *Shalimar the Clown* shows that ‘sameness’ and ‘interconnectedness’ have become important and central themes in his post 9/11 novels: “Everywhere was a mirror of everywhere else. Executions, police brutality, explosions, riots: Los Angeles was beginning to look like wartime Strasbourg; like Kashmir” (Shalimar 355). Again, there is the ‘downsizing’ of the West by equating Los Angeles and Strasbourg with the dire situation in Kashmir.

This becomes more apparent when contrasting *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008) and *Shalimar the Clown* (2005) with Rushdie’s pre-9/11 collection of short stories entitled *East, West* (1994). In many of these stories, like in *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie focuses on the issues of ‘home’, ‘belonging’ and forging a ‘hybrid identity’, as can be seen in the following quote; an Indian character who lives in England says: “I thought I’d found another way of making a bridge between here-and-there, between my two *othernesses*, my double unbelonging” (*East, West* 141, emphasis added). Especially poignant to note is that this character actually uses the word ‘othernesses’, whereas, Rushdie’s focus in his latest novels is on ‘samenesses’. Another Indian character from *East, West* is occupied by the same problem as Chamcha in *The Satanic Verses*: “I, too, have ropes around my neck, I have them to this day, pulling me this way and that, East and West, the nooses tightening, commanding, *choose*,

choose” (*East, West* 211). Like Chamcha, he has troubles coming to terms with his identity and his sense of home. Should he consider himself Indian, because of his Indian roots, or is he English, the country he has lived in for so long? These are no longer central questions in *The Enchantress of Florence* and in *Shalimar the Clown*.

This chapter has shown that Rushdie’s focus has shifted and that there is a discrepancy between his post-9/11 works and the novels he wrote before. His latest novels are no longer occupied with the individual, but they are looking for common ground in a world in which people’s lives are intertwined with each other, and it does not matter whether they are living in the East or in the West.

### IV.3: 'Similarities' between the Two Novels

Even though, Rushdie's angle on the depiction of the discrepancy between East and West may have changed, some notions have more or less remained, but with a twist. One of them is his unrelenting belief that the immigrant plays an important and valuable role in the host culture. For instance, when the emperor brings the Mogor dell' Amore to the Tent of the New Worship, a tent in which new and, sometimes, dangerous ideas can be freely discussed, the Mogor makes a dangerous remark that sparks a lot of hostility. Nonetheless, the emperor "slapped Mogor dell' Amore on the back and nodded vigorously. 'Gentlemen, an outsider has taught us a great lesson,' he said. 'One must stand outside a circle to see that it is round'" (EoF 100). However, this is a scary thought, for one has to let go of some his most deeply rooted beliefs, as can be witness a few pages further when the emperor adds: "[c]ould foreigners grasp what his countrymen could not? If he, Akbar, stepped outside the circle, could he live without its comforting circularity, in the terrifying strangeness of a new thought?" (EoF 103)

What has also remained is Rushdie's notion of the uprooted and 'homeless' migrant. This becomes clearer when one compares the epigraph from *The Satanic Verses*, in which Rushdie likens the situation of the migrant to the situation of the Devil in Daniel Defoe's *The History of the Devil*, with a passage from *The Enchantress of Florence*:

Satan, being thus confined to a vagabond wandering, unsettled condition, is without any certain abode; for though he has, in consequence of his angelic nature, a kind of empire in the liquid waste of air, yet this is certainly part of his punishment, that he is ... without any fixed place, or space, allowed him to rest the sole of his foot upon. (SV epigraph)

The passage from *The Enchantress of Florence* tells the reader of the young Arcalia who, like Satan in the previous quote, has been deserted and is drifting all alone on the foggy sea:

This is what was left of a human individual when you took away his home, his family, his friends, his city, his country, his world: a being without context, whose past has faded, whose future was bleak, an entity stripped of name, of meaning, of the whole of life except a temporarily beating heart. (EoF 220)

However, in *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie sought his answer in hybridity, but in *The Enchantress of Florence*, written after 9/11, this has been replaced with ‘interconnectedness’ and ‘sameness,’ as was shown in chapter IV.2. In the contemporary world of globalisation, the migrant has to look for his home in the things that we all have in common, or as Rushdie said: “what is revealed by joining things is often a similarity” (Mustich par. 82).

What has also remained is that in *The Enchantress of Florence*, like in *The Satanic Verses*, intertextuality is used to underscore culture’s complexity and that living in the twentieth century meant that the “literary migrant [is] able to choose his [own] parents”(Rushdie 1982, 20-1). Additionally, it also underscores that the Indian literary tradition is one to be reckoned

with and that it surely is not inferior to Western literature. Rushdie explains this in the interview with Mustich. He talks about an important literary work from Asia, the *Baburnama*, which he compares to *The Prince* by Machiavelli. He states that

[it] was certainly one of the big light-bulb moments. When you read the Baburnama, you realize that the kind of thinking about power that's going on in it is very, very similar to the thinking in *The Prince*. You can actually almost transpose sentences and paragraphs between the two books. I found it wonderfully strange that these two worlds coincided in that way; that was one of the genesis moments of the book, *the recognition that there were these two worlds which were not communicating with each other in any way, and yet here are Babur and Machiavelli coming to the same conclusions*. (Mustich par. 36, emphasis added)

Every text is subject to intertextuality, but what has changed is the specific use of intertextuality that Rushdie used in *The Satanic Verses*. This use is absent in *The Enchantress of Florence*. In *The Satanic Verses*, Rushdie referred to, for instance, Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* because both "books rely heavily on the metaphor of the dream to aid in an escape from the restrictions of realistic representation" (Booker 191), and by doing so he was able to write about difficult issues like 'identity' from an other perspective (see chapter III.1). In *The Enchantress of Florence*, intertextuality is primarily used to underscore similarities, for instance, the fact that Babur and Machiavelli were occupied by the same issues, even though they lived on different continents.

## Conclusion:

This thesis started off by introducing two key-concepts in the field of post-colonial studies. These concepts, Orientalism and hybridity, functioned as theoretical background. Especially the chapter on Orientalism can be seen as a kind of foil. The negative light that has been shed on the Other by Orientalism is something Rushdie has strenuously tried to subvert. In his novels, he offers a different view on the migrant from the 'Orient.' As Ramadan has voiced it: "Europe's stormy relations with religion, and in particular with Islam – including denied intellectual influence, the Crusades, and colonization – still needs to be cast off" (17). And this is something Rushdie is trying to do. By means of his latest novel, *The Enchantress of Florence*, he is trying to show a different, more evolved picture of the East by, for instance, juxtaposing the ideas of Machiavelli to those of the emperor Akbar in order to show that the East is also a great source of knowledge. He is doing what Ramadan is urging the West to do. Ramadan states that because the "scientific, legal, philosophical, and religious input of Muslim scholars and intellectuals has been overlooked to such an extent [...] that one cannot see this as an ideological choice in the process leading to self-construction" (Ramadan 81). According to him, even Eastern intellectuals who were living in the West and who have influenced the West have been systematically overlooked, and it should be the West's primary goal to reincorporate those Eastern intellectuals and their ideas in the West: [the] West and Europe must come to terms with the diversity of their past in order to master the necessary pluralism of their future" (83). In his latest novel, Rushdie has tried to do this.

In *The Enchantress of Florence*, as in *Shalimar the Clown*, both written after 11 September 2001, Salman Rushdie is no longer occupied with trying to understand the migrant



from the perspective of his adopted homeland like he was in his novels before the terrorist attacks in 2001. In *The Satanic Verses*, the focus was on the struggle of identifying the various parts of the Self and of how to unite them into a hybrid Self. In the *Enchantress of Florence*, the focus is no longer on identifying the various parts of the Self, but on discovering what these various parts have in common, in other words, how they overlap. His novels have become a quest for searching for 'sameness' and 'interconnectedness' since 9/11.

Rushdie does not completely discard his notion of hybridity and newness in *The Enchantress of Florence*. Instead, he views the East and West dichotomy from a different perspective, a different angle. Newness is replaced by 'Sameness.' Instead of looking for the different elements of which people and especially immigrants are made up, he is looking for common ground, or as Ramadan describes it: "Muslims can show, reasonably and without polemics, that they share the essence of the values on which Europe and the West are based and that their own religious tradition has also contributed to the emergence and promotion of those values" (84).

Times change and demand a different approach, and perhaps Rushdie has voiced this best in *The Enchantress of Florence* when he states that:

Ideas [are] like the tides of the sea or the phases of the moon, they came into being, rose and grew in their proper time, and then ebbed, darkened and vanished when the great wheel turned (EoF 98).

This is exactly what Rushdie has done in recent years. The changed world after 9/11 demanded a different approach to novel writing. Rushdie has not completely discarded the themes he used before, but has changed them and started writing from a different perspective, one that befits the contemporary world.

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