

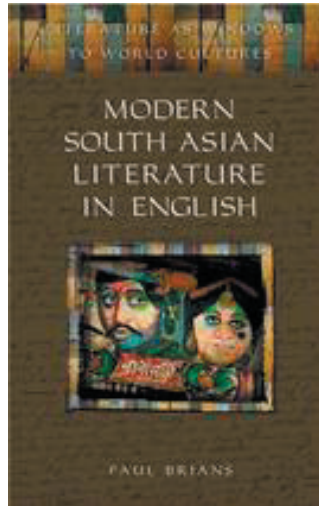
Notes for Salman Rushdie: *The Satanic Verses*

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For more about Salman Rushdie and other South Asian writers, see Paul Brians' *Modern South Asian Literature in English* .

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This study guide was prepared to help people read and study Salman Rushdie's novel. It contains explanations for many of its allusions and non-English words and phrases and aims as well at providing a thorough explication of the novel which will help the interested reader but not substitute for a reading of the book itself. Many links are provided to other sites on the Web where further information can be found.

The "Rushdie Affair"

This is not a site for polemics about the novel or the "Rushdie Affair". To many Western¹ readers *The Satanic Verses* appears as a brilliant attack on religious bigotry. To many Muslims, East and West, it appears as a vicious series of insults to many of their most cherished beliefs. There are other positions: liberal and conservative non-Muslims deplore his irreverence, and liberal Muslims deplore the fatwa against Rushdie and support his right to publish, or even admire his work; some American and British non-Muslim critics have been critical of him. But the important debate, the one that makes a difference in the real world, is the one between the extremes, and between those extremes there remains a seemingly unbridgeable gulf. It is not my desire to exacerbate the tensions surrounding this novel, nor to delve in any depth into the controversy. That has been done, exhaustively, by many others. I recommend especially Michael Hanne's "Salman Rushdie: 'The Satanic Verses' (1988)" as a thoughtful overview of the "affair" and Joel Kuortti's *Place of the Sacred: The Rhetoric of the Satanic Verses Affair* (1997). But one cannot entirely ignore the controversy.

Perhaps the contribution I can most usefully make is to discuss the differences in perspective of the antagonists in the affair toward the modern novel as a form. Islam is a religious tradition which in many influential quarters is self-consciously seeking to purify itself from modernizing, liberal tendencies. Although Islamic tales both short and long abound, and there are many authors of fiction who are highly honored, the modern novel as such is not a comfortable form in the Muslim world. Often it is identified with the West, with mere entertainment, with lax morals. In addition, Muslim writers who write novels are often critical of tradition. The 1994 near-fatal assault on the Egyptian Nobel Prizewinner Naguib Mahfouz illustrates the perils that even the most acclaimed of novelists may encounter in an era of religious polarization. To be sure, most Muslims abhor such assaults; but the feelings which cause them are all too familiar in such countries as Egypt, Iran, Pakistan, and even Turkey.

To a conservative Muslim, Islam is not just a religion in the sense that most Westerners use the term, a private faith which provides hope and consolation within a secular world. Islam is a way of life, a body of law, an all-embracing cultural framework within which novels are distinctly unimportant and potentially troublesome. That a mere novelist should dare to satirize

fundamental religious beliefs is intolerable.

In the Western European tradition, novels are viewed very differently. Following the devastatingly successful assaults of the Eighteenth Century Enlightenment upon Christianity, intellectuals in the West largely abandoned the Christian framework as an explanatory world view. Indeed, religion became for many the enemy: the suppressor of free thought, the enemy of science and progress. When the freethinking Thomas Jefferson ran for President of the young United States his opponents accused him of intending to suppress Christianity and arrest its adherents. Although liberal and even politically radical forms of Christianity (the Catholic Worker movement, liberation theology) were to emerge from time to time, the general attitude toward religion among that class of people who value serious fiction has been negative.

Pious bigots were the objects of scorn by such popular Nineteenth-Century authors as Charles Dickens and Mark Twain. Twentieth-Century writers as different as James Joyce and Margaret Atwood have vividly depicted in novels the threats posed by conservative religious beliefs. So-called "Catholic" authors such as T. S. Eliot and Graham Greene routinely explore doubt more than faith; and even the greatest of all Christian novels, Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *Brothers Karamazov* is so harrowing in its investigation of the challenges of faith that it has probably swayed more people away from religion than toward it.

Furthermore, from the time of Matthew Arnold onward, it has been frequently claimed that serious fiction and art could largely fill the gap left by the collapse of the cultural influence of traditional religion. The claims to the importance of high seriousness in fiction have been under assault by the most recent generation of critics for some time; but the justification for studying novels in an academic setting ultimately rests on the very claims of cultural significance that these critics attack. Fiction has not just been an irritant to religion in the West; it has posed itself as an alternative to it.

Rushdie's own claims for the importance of the novel are only slightly less exalted in his essay, "Is Nothing Sacred". Although at its end he rejects the claims of the novel to be able to replace religion, he makes some strong claims for it:

Between religion and literature, as between politics and literature, there is a linguistically based dispute. But it is not a dispute of simple opposites. Because whereas religion seeks to privilege one language above all others, the novel has always been *about* the way in which different languages, values and narratives quarrel, and about the shifting relations between them, which are relations of power. The novel does not seek to establish a privileged language, but it insists upon the freedom to portray and analyse the struggle between the different contestants for such privileges.

Carlos Fuentes has called the novel "a privileged *arena*". By this he does not mean that it is the kind of holy space which one must put off one's shoes to enter; it is not an arena to revere; it claims no special rights except the right to be the stage upon which the great debates of society can be conducted.(420)

. . . while the novel answers our need for wonderment and understanding, it brings us harsh and unpalatable news as well.

It tells us there are no rules. It hands down no commandments. We have to make up our own rules as best we can, make them up as we go along.

And it tells us there are no answers; or rather, it tells us that answers are easier to come by, and less reliable, than questions. If religion is an answer, if political ideology is an answer, then literature is an inquiry; great literature, by asking extraordinary questions, opens new doors in our minds. (423)

. . . literature is, of all the arts, the one best suited to challenging absolutes of all kinds; and, because it is in its origin the schismatic Other of the sacred (and authorless) text, so it is also the art most likely to fill our god-shaped holes. (424)

In the Twentieth Century the novel came to be viewed as primarily oppositional, critical of the culture which produced it. Rather than providing values, it challenges them. Modern novels are praised for their courage in exposing hypocrisy, challenging tradition, exploring forbidden themes. If blasphemy is not the most common of techniques in Western fiction it is because so few writers take religion seriously enough to feel it worth attacking. Popular religious books are generally excluded from the *New York Times* best seller list as unworthy of notice, no matter how well they sell. The writer who does not challenge the beliefs and prejudices of the reader is generally viewed by the literary establishment as dull if not cowardly.

To complicate matters, the Enlightenment ideals of freedom of speech and press have an almost religious significance in the West. A typical response to the *fatwa* is Silvia Albertazzi's statement that "Freedom of expression is more important than any offence any book might cause," a statement which would be unthinkable in any profoundly religious culture. Albertazzi's own Catholic ancestors would certainly have disagreed.

Rushdie came from a liberal Westernized family which had no great fervor for religious tradition:

My relationship with formal religious belief has been somewhat chequered. I was brought up in an Indian Muslim household, but while both my parents were believers neither was insistent or doctrinaire. Two or three times a year, at the big Eid festivals, I would wake up to find new clothes at the foot of my bed, dress and go with my father to the great prayer-*maidan* outside the Friday Mosque in Bombay, and rise and fall with the multitude, mumbling my way through the uncomprehended Arabic much as Catholic children do—or used to do—with Latin. The rest of the year religion took a back seat. I had a Christian ayah (nanny), for whom at Christmas we would put up a tree and sing carols about baby Jesus without feeling in the least ill-at-ease. My friends were Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis, and none of this struck me as being particularly important. (Rushdie: "In God We Trust" 376-377)

At the time of the writing of the novel he evidently did not even

consider himself a Muslim (see below, note on p. 29). Certainly he was never an adherent of that sort of Islam which believes that apostasy is a capital offense. He was steeped from an early period in fiction, both Eastern and Western; and as a writer seems to have accepted the High Modern view that the writing of outspoken controversial fiction is a calling, perhaps even a duty. All of his works contain controversial themes; and beginning with *Midnight's Children* in 1981 he took on South Asian politics in a way that earned him denunciations and bans as well as praise for his courage. He has often expressed his opposition to the religious extremism that informs modern Pakistani and Indian politics, and *The Satanic Verses* is another stage in a consistent critique of such extremism. What makes it different, however, is that in it he chose to criticize not only modern religious figures such as the Ayatollah Khomeini, but dared to question the authority of the very root of Islam: the inspired nature of the *Qur'an* and the authority of the Prophet Muhammad.

To a secularized European, his critique of Islam in the novel seems very mild and tentative; but there has never been anything like it in the Muslim world. Scoffers and libertines there have been; but they were fundamentally unserious. Rushdie seems to have been trying to become the Muslim Voltaire; but Islam has never undergone an equivalent to the European Enlightenment, let alone the development of a "higher criticism" such as the West has subjected the Bible to for the past two centuries. (But see Saadi A. Simawe's "Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and Heretical Literature in Islam" for a thorough discussion of Islamic scepticism in relation to the novel and Feroza Jussawalla's "Rushdie's *Dastan-e-Dilruba: The Satanic Verses* as Rushdie's Love Letter to Islam," for an interesting exploration of Islamic revisionism in Muslim India.)

In the secularized West his critique seems routine; in much of the Islamic East, it is unspeakable. The modernist assumptions it springs from are irrelevant, hardly understood. Many Muslim critics have asserted that equivalent blasphemy against Christian beliefs would never be tolerated, whereas in fact a wildly anti-Catholic comedy like "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All for You" can have a long, profitable run without any encountering any physical or even legal threat. Obscenity is taken much more seriously in the West than blasphemy. Rushdie tried to bridge the gulf between East and West and instead fell into the void. No one can reconcile these two views with each other because they are rooted in basically incompatible, even hostile world views.

Many of his Muslim critics have argued that *The Satanic Verses*, besides being offensive, is bad fiction. Non-Muslim views have been distinctly mixed, the most common criticism being that the novel does not "hold together" in a disciplined fashion. But that is true of many fine novels, including many of Rushdie's favorites. In a 1983 interview with Una Chaudhuri on the influences on *Midnight's Children* he commented on his penchant for unconventionally-shaped fictions:

As for other influences, well, there's Joyce, for a start. And Swift, and Stern. I'm very keen on the eighteenth century in general, not just in literature. I think the eighteenth century was the great century. Well, take Fielding; the thing that's very impressive about Tom Jones is the plot, that you have this enormous edifice which seems to be so freewheeling, rambling — and actually everything is there for a purpose.

It's the most extraordinary piece of organization which at the same time seems quite relaxed and not straitjacketed by its plot. I think that's why the book is so wonderful. So, yes, I would have thought the eighteenth-century novel had something to do with mine. And Joyce, because Joyce shows you that you can do anything if you do it properly.

“Imaginative Maps,” Turnstile, p. 37.

Unfortunately, many of his most ardent defenders defend him out of ignorance, for they have not managed to read past the first few chapters of this dense postmodern, intertextual, multicultural work. Nevertheless, the book continues to draw admirers, many of whom now consider *The Satanic Verses* Rushdie's finest work. When I first opened its pages I was introduced into one of the most intoxicating, thoughtful, and hilarious works I had ever read. It is a playground for literate readers, filled with allusions and symbols of all kinds, which delight by their incongruity or their aptness. It is also a highly interesting attempt at establishing a middle ground between Western and Eastern chauvinisms, asserting that the immigrant has a uniquely valuable perspective. Rather than being outsiders, exiles, the immigrants create a unique perspective that allows them to comment insightfully on both East and West. (But see also Feroza Jussawalla on this subject.)

The mixture of cultural influences, or what Rushdie calls the “chutneyfication” of culture, is one of the most enlivening aspects of his work. He throws off phrases in Hindi, Arabic, and Urdu which are bound to make the Western reader feel something of an outsider. He delights in playing with those aspects of Indian and Arabic culture which have been trivialized in the West in what Edward Said calls “orientalism,” satirizing the failure of Europeans to grasp what they persistently exoticize. Indeed the work is largely a critique of Western racism, of anti-immigrant prejudice, and a defense of the richness and worth of South Asian and Middle Eastern culture. But because it is a contemporary critique, it is not one-sided. His Indians are no angels—even if they sometimes take on the form of angels. Nevertheless he exuberantly celebrates Indian literature, music, film, and food; portraying the South Asian immigrants as providing an enlivening spice in dull, overcast London.

No one has better described this aspect of the novel than Rushdie himself:

If *The Satanic Verses* is anything, it is a 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 condition, and from which, I believe, can be derived a metaphor for all humanity.

Standing at the centre 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 great problems that have arisen to surround the book, problems of hybridization and ghettoization, of reconciling the old and the new. Those who oppose the novel most vociferously today are of the opinion that intermingling with a different culture will inevitably weaken

and ruin their own. I am of the opposite opinion. *The Satanic Verses* celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs. It rejoices in mongrelization and fears the absolutism of the Pure. *Mélange*, hotchpotch, a bit of this and a bit of that is *how newness enters the world*. It is the great possibility that mass migration gives the world, and I have tried to embrace it. *The Satanic Verses* is for change-by-fusion, change-by-conjoining. It is a love-song to our mongrel selves.

(“In Good Faith“ 394)

After Khomeini condemned Rushdie to death, it became impossible to experience this light-hearted, playful side of the novel in the way he surely intended. Yet to be fair to the book we should try to read it without letting the *fatwa* obscure its merits.

Between its hostile critics who refuse to read it and its supporters who fail to read it, *The Satanic Verses* must be one of the most widely-unread best sellers in the history of publishing. Rushdie's allusiveness is much more transparent than that of James Joyce, one of his main influences; but it still provides a major obstacle to many readers. In the “Acknowledgements” to the novel, Rushdie lists only a few sources, while stating, “The identities of many of the authors from whom I've learned will, I hope, be clear from the text. . . .” But much of the effect of his allusions has been lost on readers curious about this controversial work. These notes are an attempt to gather together the ideas of many different scholars who have contributed to understanding the text, adding my own notions and insights to the mix. Many consultants, both within India and abroad, have contributed to these notes, but requested that they remain anonymous, Such is the fear of Rushdie's enemies. Yet I hope that even they will read these notes as they are intended: not as a brief on behalf of the novel or an indictment of it, but as a guide to understanding it—for whether one views it as a postmodern masterpiece or decadent desecration of all that is sacred, it is incumbent on the reader to understand what is on the page.

I have not assumed that Rushdie's allusions to traditional icons of Western culture are universally understood either, and have taken some pains to explicate for Americans the numerous Britishisms in novel which are easily comprehensible to English readers. My experience with students reading the work leads me to believe that over-explanation is less harmful in this case than under-explanation.

Rushdie clearly never envisioned the kind of annotation I am providing here. After all, part of his style is meant to startle the Western reader into realizing he/she is not the center of all stories. In an interview with *Salon* magazine, he commented on his use of words unfamiliar to many of his readers:

. . . I use them as flavoring. I mean, I can read books from America and I don't always get the slang. American writers always assume that the whole world speaks American, but actually the whole world does not speak American. And American Jewish writers put lots of Yiddish in their books and sometimes I don't know what they're saying. I've read books by writers like Philip Roth with people getting hit in

the kishkes and I think, “What?!”

It’s fun to read things when you don’t know all the words. Even children love it. One of the things any great children’s writer will tell you is that children like it if in books designed for their age group there is a vocabulary just slightly bigger than theirs. So they come up against weird words, and the weird words excite them. If you describe a small girl in a story as “loquacious,” it works so much better than “talkative.” And then some little girl will read the book and her sister will be shooting her mouth off and she will say to her sister, “Don’t be so loquacious.” It is a whole new weapon in her arsenal.

The interview from which this quotation comes.

However, on May 3, 1999, Melinda Penkava interviewed Salman Rushdie about his new novel, *The Ground Beneath Her Feet* on the National Public Radio phone-in talk show, “Talk of the Nation.” Asked about the possibility of “Cliff’s Notes” to his writings, Rushdie answered that although he didn’t expect readers to get all the allusions in his works, he didn’t think such notes would detract from the reading of them: “James Joyce once said after he had published *Ulysses* that he had given the professors work for many years to come; and I’m always looking for ways of employing professors, so I hope to have given them some work too.”

The problem with *The Satanic Verses*, is that many readers have found themselves so disoriented that they have never finished the book. If you want to savor the text the way Rushdie originally intended, try reading it without the notes; but when you come to a term or reference that just begs to be checked out, you can search for it here.

Biography

Much of the following is based on Ian Hamilton’s article, “The First Life of Salman Rushdie,” which is the most systematic and thorough treatment thus far of the author’s life. Rushdie himself is reportedly working on an autobiography.

Rushdie was born to liberal, prosperous Muslim parents in Bombay June 19, 1947. In August 14 of that year, Pakistan divided itself from India as part of an agreement ending the period of British colonialism in South Asia. The result was a chaotic and extremely violent period as 6,000,000 Muslims moved north to the newly-established Islamic state and 8,000,000 Hindus and Sikhs moved south fleeing it. Rushdie’s parents, however, remained in Bombay while Rushdie was growing up, so that he never identified with the strongly pro-Islamic stance of many Pakistanis. In 1961, when he was 13, he was sent to England to study at Rugby School. In 1962, his family followed him to England, became naturalized British citizens, and lived for two years in Kensington, which features as a locale in *The Satanic Verses*. When his father decided to move the family to Karachi, Pakistan, a country that Rushdie detested, he felt as if his homeland had been taken away from him.

In 1965 he went on to study history at Kings College, Cambridge, where his father Anis Ahmed Rushdie had also studied. In his senior year Rushdie investigated the origins of Islam and

encountered for the first time the story of the “satanic verses.” He also pursued his interest in movies and became involved in the theater as an actor. When he graduated in 1968 his father tried to persuade him to take over the new towel factory he had established in Karachi, and their already strained relationship worsened.

Venturing into television production and publishing, he encountered instances of censorship which persuaded him that he belonged back in London, where he lived for a time on welfare and occasionally acted, enjoying being young in London during the height of the sixties. However he eventually went to work writing ads for a firm called Sharp MacManus. In 1971 he finished a novel entitled *The Book of the Pir* (a term which occurs as well in *The Satanic Verses*), but it was rejected and never published. He returned to advertising, preparing television commercials for Ogilvy & Mather. The character of Hal Valance in the novel is based partly on bigoted advertising executives he met during this period in his life.

In 1970 he met Clarissa Luard, the model for Pamela Lovelace in *The Satanic Verses* and they began living together two years later. In 1976 they married. In 1971 he had written his first published novel, *Grimus*, a bizarre science-fiction/fantasy novel with few ties to the South Asian material which was going to inform his best fiction. His experiences in 1977 working with a project to assist immigrants from Bangladesh convinced him that racism permeated British society. He himself, with light skin and English accent, was better accepted.

He comments:

The phrase that really gets me angry is this thing about being “more English than the English.” It is used as if it should be offensive. I point out to these people that if there was an English person living in India who adopted Indian dress, who had learnt to speak Urdu or Hindi or Bengali fluently without an accent, nobody would accuse him of having lost his culture. They would be flattered and pleased that the language had been acquired so efficiently. And they would see it as a compliment to themselves. But they wouldn’t accuse him of having betrayed his origins.

(Quoted in Hamilton 102.)

Although the Anglophile Saladin Chamcha is portrayed as more than a bit of a fool in the novel, his rejection of Zeeny Vakil’s accusations that he has betrayed his Indian roots may reflect Rushdie’s own struggles with this issue.

In 1980 Rushdie published *Midnight’s Children*, the novel that catapulted him to fame. It is a brilliant and searing satire on the history of modern India, with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as one of its main targets. It gained lavish praise in the West and won the famous Booker Prize for fiction, and was also well received in South Asia, But not by everyone. His relatives were offended when they recognized unflattering portraits of themselves in the novel. One of its prime targets, Mrs. Gandhi, sued for libel and won her case demanding an expurgated, revised version shortly before she was assassinated (it was never published).

Like *The Satanic Verses*, *Midnight's Children* combines fantasy and magic with political satire in a manner strongly reminiscent of Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, though he has preferred to claim Günter Grass as a greater influence. Like García Márquez he integrates fantastic elements into everyday life, and routinely refers to events to come as if they were already known, techniques which he were to be a hallmark of his later fiction as well. Another García Márquez pattern which recurs in Rushdie's fiction is the doomed love affair which is at first resisted by the female partner, then burns wildly and destructively in an outburst of almost supernatural eroticism.

His next novel was *Shame*, a 1983 critique of the Zia ul-Haq regime and of Benazir Bhutto which was effective enough to earn its banning in Pakistan. After falling in love with author Robyn Davidson on a tour of Australia, he ended his marriage to Luard by moving in with her for what was to be an extremely stormy relationship, resulting, suggests Ian Hamilton, in the portrait of Alleluia Cone in *The Satanic Verses*. His portraits of both characters based on Clarissa and Robyn in *The Satanic Verses* are rather sympathetic, with Rushdie apparently casting himself in the rather unsympathetic Saladin Chamcha role (Hamilton 106).

A 1986 trip to Nicaragua under the Sandinistas led to the nonfiction book, *The Jaguar Smile*, much criticized as simplistically partisan, but reflecting the constant interest in politics which runs through his fiction. In 1986 Rushdie met the American writer Marianne Wiggins, whom he married two years later. (Their relationship was a difficult one as well; they were to stay together longer than they might have when he was forced underground by Khomeini's *fatwa*, but ultimately they were to be divorced.) In 1987 he returned to India to make a film just in time to encounter the outbreak of Hindu/Muslim violence resulting from the tearing down of the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhya, a conflict which was to have a major influence on the writing of *The Moor's Last Sigh*.

Back in London to edit the film, he was suddenly summoned to his father's deathbed where he achieved a reconciliation with the old man which is reflected in the novel in the final reconciliation between Saladin and Changez.

On September 26, 1988, Viking Penguin published his long-awaited novel, *The Satanic Verses*. Although the book was generally praised in Europe and America, it was viewed by some as undisciplined and by others as baffling. Few Western readers understood much of what was to be so offensive to Muslim readers. A Muslim Minister of Parliament in India attacked the novel, and it was quickly banned there. Photocopies of the pages considered most offensive were circulated among various Islamic organizations and to the embassies of Islamic nations in London. On October 8, a Saudi newspaper published in London denounced Rushdie, and various threats and complaints followed; but it was only in January of 1989 that the protests burst into full public consciousness. The book was burned before the television cameras in England, in Iran five members of a mob attacking the American Culture Center in Islamabad in protest were shot to death, and in Kashmir, sixty were injured in another protest and one person died.

Rushdie responded to the book burning in January with a bold defense in which he said, in part:

Nowadays . . . a powerful tribe of clerics has taken over Islam. These are the contemporary Thought Police. They have turned Muhammad into a perfect being, his life into a perfect life, his revelation into the unambiguous, clear event it originally was not. Powerful taboos have been erected. One may not discuss Muhammad as if he were human, with human virtues and weaknesses. One may not discuss the growth of Islam as a historical phenomenon, as an ideology born out of its time. These are the taboos against which *The Satanic Verses* has transgressed (these and one other: I also tried to write about the place of women in Islamic society, and in the Koran). It is for this breach of taboo that the novel is being anathematized, fulminated against, and set alight. . . .

The Satanic Verses is not, in my view, an antireligious novel. It is, however, an attempt to write about migration, its stresses and transformations, from the point of view of migrants from the Indian subcontinent to Britain. This is, for me, the saddest irony of all; that after working for five years to give voice and fictional flesh to the immigrant culture of which I am myself a member, I should see my book burned, largely unread, by the people it's about, people who might find some pleasure and much recognition in its pages. I tried to write against stereotypes; the zealot protests serve to confirm, in the Western mind, all the worst stereotypes of the Muslim world. "The Book Burning," p. 26.

The Ayatollah Khomeini, leader of the Iranian revolution and the target of a fiercely satirical portrait in the novel, responded by issuing a denunciation of Rushdie called a *fatwa*:

I inform all zealous Muslims of the world that the author of the book entitled *The Satanic Verses*—which has been compiled, printed and published in opposition to Islam, the Prophet, and the Qur'an—and all those involved in its publication who were aware of its content, are sentenced to death.

I call on all zealous Muslims to execute them quickly, wherever they may be found, so that no one else will dare to insult the Muslim sanctities. God Willing, whoever is killed on this path is a martyr. (Quoted in Hamilton 113.)

Many Muslims have since criticized the *fatwa*, and denied Khomeini's authority to issue it; but it has had an immediate and lasting effect on Rushdie's life.

Shortly afterward he went into hiding, guarded by British policemen who have been his constant companions ever since. Rushdie attempted a reconciliation with his enemies by meeting with a number of prominent Muslim clerics and declaring himself Muslim, at least in a cultural sense; but the détente he had attempted to achieve came to nothing, and he has since resolutely defended himself. Rather unfairly, a number of smug academics safe in their offices have blamed this gregarious, energetic man for this early attempt to find a way out of his life of enforced solitude and mortal peril. (The essay "In Good Faith" incorporates his earliest and fullest defence of the novel

and critique of his attackers.) He has become an international celebrity in the cause of freedom of speech, a target for would-be assassins, and the subject of endless discussion over the merits and influence of the novel that began it all: *The Satanic Verses*.

Because the story of his subsequent struggles and triumphs since is readily available from other sources and not really relevant to understanding *The Satanic Verses*, it will not be repeated here. He remains under the threat of the *fatwa*, which has been renewed several times by the successors of Khomeini now governing Iran; but in recent years he has ventured out in public more and more for surprise speeches and other appearances.

About a year after the issuing of the fatwa, a film portraying a successful attack on the author was released but not widely viewed. In a March 1996 interview with the *Gleaner*, an electronic publication of Gleebooks in Sydney, Australia, Rushdie commented on the film:

When, within a year or so after the Fatwah, there was a movie made in Pakistan called *International Guerillas* in which I was portrayed rather unpleasantly as somebody wearing a rather ugly range of pastel safari suits and also behaving as a drunkard, a torturer, and indeed a murderer. And in the end—and the heroes of this film were the international terrorists they sent to hunt me down and in the end I did indeed get killed.

There was one—I have to say in parentheses—one scene of rather good unintentional comedy which I hope you'll appreciate when the kind of—the “me” character has had his fill of lashing and slashing at one of the international terrorists who'd been imprisoned for his pleasure by what looks like the Israeli Army, when he has finished having his fun, he says—he orders the Israeli Army to take this fellow away to some dungeon and spend all night reading him *The Satanic Verses*. Whereupon this man completely crumples, and says, “Not that, anything but that, etc.” That was a good scene. But many of the other scenes of the film were less good.

Anyway the film got to England and was refused a certificate by the British Board of Film Classification largely because the Board correctly saw the film was extremely defamatory, that I would have a very straight-forward case in law, it would be able—if they gave it a certificate to sue not only the film makers but also them. So the film got banned. And so I found myself in the extraordinary position of having to write to the Board, waiving my legal rights, promising that I would not sue and saying, “Would you please give this film a licence,” because I did not want to be defended by an act of censorship.

And the thing turned into a rather shapely parable of the free speech position. Because if this film had been banned, if it had not been given a certificate it would have become a very hot number indeed. The illicit videos of this film would have circulated in their goodness knows how many thousands and it would have become glamorous as an object. And instead it got its certificate and the producers of the certificate booked

a very large cinema in Bradford in the North of England which is where the largest Muslim Community in England lives, and nobody went. You know. The film got taken off after one showing because it was playing to an empty house. It just goes that actually if you do let people make up their minds they can tell the difference between rubbish and what is not rubbish. And nobody wants to pay money to see a bad movie in the end.

According to Sara Suleri (“Whither Rushdie“ 199), popular hostility to the author was so strong that the actor who played Rushdie in the film himself received several death threats.

Rushdie has also replied to those who argue that novels such as his deserve condemnation because they do not respect the religious sensibilities of some believers:

Religious extremists, these days, demand “respect” for their attitudes with growing stridency. Few people would object to the idea that people's rights to religious belief must be respected—after all, the First Amendment defends those rights as unequivocally as it defends free speech—but now we are asked to agree that to dissent from those beliefs, to hold that they are suspect or antiquated or wrong, that in fact they are *arguable*, is incompatible with the idea of respect. When criticism is placed off-limits as “disrespectful,” and therefore offensive, something strange is happening to the concept of respect. Yet in recent times both the American N.E.A. and the very British BBC have announced that they will employ this new perversion of “respect” as a touchstone for their funding and programming decisions.

Other minority groups—racial, sexual, social—have also demanded that they be accorded this new form of respect. To “respect” Louis Farrakhan, we must understand, is simply to agree with him. To “dis” him is, equally simply, to disagree. But if dissent is also to be thought a form of “dissing,” then we have indeed succumbed to the thought police.

I want to suggest that citizens of free societies do not preserve their freedom by pussyfooting around their fellow citizens' opinions, even their most cherished beliefs.

“How News Becomes Opinion, And Opinion Off-Limits“, p.20.

The Title

Rushdie writes of the title:

You call us devils? it seems to ask. Very well, then, here is the devil's version of the world, of “your” world, the version written *from the experience* of those who have been demonized by virtue of their otherness. Just as the Asian kids in the novel wear toy devil-horns proudly, as an assertion of pride in identity, so the novel proudly wears its demonic title. The purpose is not to suggest that the Qur'an is written by the devil; it is to attempt the sort of act of affirmation that, in the United States, transformed the word *black* from the standard term of racist abuse into a “beautiful” expression of cultural pride.

(“In Good Faith“ 403)

List of Principal Characters

Gibreel Farishta, born Ismail Najmuddin

Indian film star, specializing in playing Hindu gods, though he himself is a Muslim, takes the form of an angel. Rushdie has said of Gibreel:

the character of Gibreel himself is a mixture of two or three types of Indian movie star. There was in the forties a Muslim actor, a very big star at the time, who did somehow get away with playing major Hindu divinities and because he was so popular it was not a problem. And it was interesting to me that mega-stardom allowed you to cross those otherwise quite fraught religious frontiers. So there was a bit of that in Gibreel. And then there was an element of the big South Indian movie stars, a bit of Rama Rao. And finally there was a large bit of the biggest movie star in India for the last fifteen or twenty years, Amitabh Bachchan.

Rushdie: "Interview," p. 52.

(See also Brennan 155, Ruthven, Aravamudan: "'Being God's Postman is No Fun, Yaar'" 9 and Jussawalla 231).

Raj Kapoor has also been mentioned as a model (Fischer 122). The name means "Gabriel Angel" in Urdu and Persian.

Saladin Chamcha

Born Salahuddin Chamchawala, a voice impersonator, "Chumch," "Spoon" (because "chamcha" is Hindi for "spoon," see p. 83). Takes the form of a devil. His original name is comical because it combines a heroic first name (Saladin—the great Muslim hero of the Crusades) and the term "spoon-seller." *Chamcha* also means yes-man:

A chamcha is a very humble, everyday object. It is, in fact, a spoon. The word is Urdu; and it also has a second meaning. Colloquially a *chamcha* is a person who sucks up to a powerful people, a yes-man, a sycophant. The British Empire would not have lasted a week without such collaborators among its colonized peoples. You could say that the Raj grew fat by being spoon-fed.

(Rushdie, "Empire" 8).

Feroza Jussawalla says that the name echoes a Bombay street slang insult—"salah chamcha"—"bastard homosexual" ("Resurrecting" 107).

Pamela Lovelace

Saladin's wife, leftist. Her name combines those of the heroine in Samuel Richardson's novel *Pamela* and of the villain in his *Clarissa*; thus the name may be a subtle allusion to the given name of Rushdie's first wife, Clarissa Luard. However, the name is almost certainly also meant to refer to the sixties porn star of *Deep Throat*, Linda Lovelace.

Mahound

The prophet featured in the Satanic Verses plot. His name is taken from a relatively obscure insulting European name for Muhammad, most likely borrowed by Rushdie from Edmund

Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (VI, vii; see Jussawalla: "Resurrecting" 108).

Zeeny "Zeeny" Vakil

Doctor at Breach Candy Hospital, art critic and political activist, lover of Saladin.

Mimi Mamouljian

Female partner of Saladin in the voice impersonation business, later companion of Billy Battuta. Her name may be suggestive of mammalian breasts, though Yasmine Gooneratne suggests the name means something like "worthlessness" in Hindi. On p. 274, the newspapers say her name is Mildred, so "Mimi" may be merely a nickname, or the papers have got it wrong.

Rekha Merchant

Wife of a businessman, lover of Gibreel. Commits suicide with her three children by jumping off the roof of Everest Vilas and then haunts Gibreel throughout much of the novel. Her first name calls to mind the brilliant actress (renowned for her beauty and brilliant dancing) of the same name. The actress was much talked about in the gossip rags of Bombay in the seventies, her name being linked to the megastar Amitabh Bachchan (whose injury during the shooting of a fight scene in "Coolie," and the life-threatening infection that subsequently developed, mirrors what happens to Gibreel. The 1981 movie *Silsila* was partly based on the Amitabh/Rekha affair. (David Windsor) "Merchant" may be an allusion to the famous Indian filmmaker Ismail Merchant, the model for S. S. Sisodia.

Alleluia Cone

Allie Cone (originally Cohen). Tender-footed climber of Mount Everest. Her name may also allude to that of the goddess Al-Lat (Semick 17).

Karim Abu Simbel

Ruler of Jahilia. The last two parts of his name refer to the location of the gigantic sculptures of the Egyptian Pharaoh Ramses II (r. c.1304-1237 BC); probably intended to suggest his imposing, grandiose manner. However, his name is probably also linked to that of Abu Sufyan, an opponent of Muhammad who was married to one Hind (see below).

Jamshed "Jumpy" Joshi

Lover of Pamela Chamcha, Saladin's wife. Like Baal, he is a poet.

Muhammad Sufyan

Proprietor of the Shaandaar Café, father of two daughters: Mishal and Anahita.

S. S. Sisodia

Indian filmmaker living and working in London. His name not only mocks his stuttering, but inspires the punning nickname "Whisky" ("whisky and soda").

Mirza Saeed Akhtar

The zamindar of Titlipur, whose wife, dying of cancer, follows the mysterious Ayesha to the sea in search of a miracle.

Characters who share a name

One of the techniques used by Rushdie to knit this multifaceted work together is to assign the same names to certain characters in different plots of the novel. (It is worth noting that García Márquez also repeats the names of characters in One Hundred Years of Solitude, but to very different effect.)

Ayesha

The cruel ruler of Desh in the Imam plot (playing the role of the former Shah of Iran); the fanatical girl who leads to the march to Mecca in the Titlipur plot; and the name of the youngest and favorite wife of Mahound and of the historical Muhammad, whom he married when she was only eleven and about whom several stories are told which indicate she was rather independent-minded and occasionally critical of the Prophet (see Netton: *Text*, pp. 30-31; Haykal 139, 183-184, 331-333). Her name also alludes to Queen Ayesha of H. Rider Haggard's *She*, pale, long-haired queen of an Arabic-speaking people in Africa (Semnck 24).

Bilal

A follower of Mahound; follower of the Imam. See below, note on p. 101. The historical Bilal was a former black slave who converted to Islam and was made the first muezzin (the official who calls the faithful to prayer).

Hind

The grasping wife of Muhammad Sufyan in the main plot; the cruel, lascivious wife of Abu Simbel in the "satanic verses" plot. Named after the seventh-century Hind bint 'Utba, wife of Abu Sufyan (see above), powerful local leader in Mecca and custodian of the temple (Parekh 30). She is famous for her ferocity during the Battle of Uhud in 625 when she tore open the chest of Muhammad's uncle, Hamzah ibn 'abd al Muttalib, and bit into his liver. She was also the mother of one of Muhammad's wives (Fischer 131-132; see also Haykal 267-268). Hind also shares a characteristic with another fictional character, H. Rider Haggard's Ayesha (see above, note on "Ayesha.")

Khalid

Follower of Mahound; follower of the Imam.

Mishal

Mishal Sufyan is the older daughter of Muhammad Sufyan and lover of Hanif Johnson in the main plot; Mishal Akhtar is the dying wife of Mirza Saeed Akhbar in the Titlipur plot. "Hanif" is the first name of Anglo-Pakistani novelist and film director Hanif Kureshi and historically is a term referring to pre-Islamic monotheists (Haykal 601). His last name is used for the minor character of Mrs. Qureishi (Nazareth 171). The Qureishi (or Quraysh) were the tribe of which Muhammad was a member and whose name means "shark".

Bilal, Khalid and Salman

Followers of Mahound, and of the Imam. The guard outside the Imam's room on p. 210 is Salman Farsi ("Farsi" is a term designating a follower of the Persian religion of Zarathustrianism); Salman the Persian is a follower of Mahound who ultimately loses his faith in him in the "satanic verses" plot; and of course it is the first name of the author.

The notes to each chapter are on a different page. Since the notes are quite detailed, this means that some pages are quite long. I cannot break these notes up into smaller pieces without making them much more difficult to manage. Having a limited number of pages also allows you to search through them for the passage you are interested in with a minimum of trouble.

Note: In the following annotations, the page numbers refer to the hardbound first edition and to the first paperback edition of *The Satanic Verses* published by "The Consortium." Where the pagination of the Holt Owl paperback edition differs, its page numbers are given in [square brackets].

(Notesh)

¹ The terms "East" & "West" as used in this introduction are an unsatisfactory sort of shorthand for the two extremes which the "Rushdie Affair" has tended to produce. "East" means something like "those critics of Rushdie who are Muslims and who live in predominantly Muslim countries, the majority of which are in the Middle East and South and Southeast Asia," though it is also meant to cover people whose cultural heritage is rooted in these countries and who still identify with it. "West" here stands for the predominantly non-Muslim secular cultures from which much of Rushdie's support has come, principally Europe and the Americas, where the tradition of freedom of press is often valorized over religious faith.

I am aware that by using these terms I risk "Orientalizing," reinforcing prejudices about the cultures comprehended under the term "East;" but that is not my intention. I cannot stress strongly enough that there are many liberal Muslim critics who have spoken out in support of Rushdie, and there are others who feel deep conflicts between their religion and their loyalty to free expression. There is a whole spectrum of attitudes in the "West" as well. For instance, some extremely conservative Christians reacted against Rushdie's work as "blasphemous" even though they reject the religion they say is being blasphemed.

But this debate has polarized discussion in many quarters. There are discernibly different operating assumptions between the two extremes which it is important to understand in order to be able to follow the debate. Attempts to mediate between the *fatwa*-issuers and the civil libertarians have been, by and large, abject failures because the fundamental assumptions of the two sides are incompatible. It is important to be clear about this incompatibility.

I needed some kind of easily comprehensible terms to use in this discussion. I tried various descriptive phrases, but they were all hopelessly cumbersome. If anyone has an alternative wording which could allow me to still express my thesis, I would welcome suggestions.

Chapter I: The Angel Gibreel

Plot Summary for Chapter I

This chapter is preceded by an epigraph from Book I, Chapter VI of Daniel Defoe's *The Political History of the Devil as well Ancient as Modern* (London: T. Warner, 1726), p. 81. Defoe's location of Satan's abode as the air is of course highly appropriate for this novel in which the demonic falls from the air. But more importantly, the Devil is a wanderer, an image of the rootless immigrant.¹

The novel opens with the two main characters, Gibreel Farishta and Saladin Chamcha, falling to earth because the plane they have been flying in has just been blown up by the terrorists who have hijacked it. We are then told a good deal of detail about their backgrounds, their occupations, their love affairs, and how they happened to find themselves together on the plane. Then the story of the hijacking is told, leading up to the moment of explosion which began the novel.

Page 3

Notes for Chapter I

Why do you think the novel begins the way it does?

Ta-taa! Takathun!

Syllables used in teaching traditional rhythms.

Baba

A common meaning is "old holy man," but Rushdie points out that in this context it "means 'young fellow,' or even in certain contexts "mister" or "sir." (Hindi, Urdu) (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

If you want to get born again . . .

. . . first you have to die. See note below, p. 85 [86], note on Gramsci

twenty-nine thousand and two feet

The height of Mount Everest, to which the height of the fall is compared on the next page. Falling is a major motif throughout the novel (Seminck 35). See, for instance, note below on p. 133 [137].

'I tell you, you must die, I tell you, I tell you,'

Refrain from "The Whisky Song" from Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's *The Decline and Fall of the City of Mahagonny* (1930) memorably recorded by Jim Morrison as "Alabama Song (Whisky Bar)" on the album *The Doors*.

gazel

A classical Persian poetic form. More commonly *ghazal* (also Urdu).

bhai

Brother (Hindi).

yaar

Friend (Hindi).

Dharraaamm

Sound of the impact of something that has fallen (Hindi).

Page 4

big bang

Refers to the explosion which astrophysicists posit began the universe.

Bostan

One of the traditional heavens of Islam, another being Gulistan (Farsi). Two famous 13th-century Persian didactic classics by Sadi are titled *Bostan* and *Gulistan* (Mojtabai 3). See pp. 31, 364 [376] & 512 [526].

Flight AI-420, blew apart without any warning

This incident seems to be a conflation of elements based on two different events. On June 14, 1985 a TWA flight was hijacked by a band of Shiite terrorists, from Athens to a series of airports, ending in Beirut, where the plane sat on the runway until July 1, with people being released at various intervals. On June 23, 1985, Air India (AI) Flight 182, en route from Canada via London to India, crashed into the ocean 120 miles southwest of Ireland, killing all on board. Sikh separatists were suspected of having planted a bomb (see Jiwa). After the publication of the novel, on December 21, 1988 Pan Am Flight 103 was blown up by a terrorist bomb over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing all on board in a manner strikingly reminiscent of the Flight A I-420 explosion. The flight number has negative associations discussed in the second note on p. 5, below. Some Indian readers saw a parallel of this scene to a scene in *An Evening in Paris (Paris Ki Ek Shyam, 1967, dir. Shakti Samanta)*, a Bombay film in which Shamma Kapoor descended from a helicopter singing to a water-skiing Sharmila Tagore, "*Asman se aya farishta*" ("An angel has descended from the sky") (Ali 295).

Mahagonny

See above, note for p. 3

Babylon

The capital of the Neobabylonian (Chaldean) Empire which conquered ancient Judea and took the Jews into exile; in prophetic writings and in the book of Revelation a synonym for decadent apocalyptic evil; in first century Christian thought a metaphor for Rome, later used as a label for any great power seen as evil; in Jamaican Rastafarian thought, the capitalist world and more specifically, The United States.

Alphaville

The weirdly dehumanized futuristic city of Jean-Luc Godard's 1965 film by the same name.

Vilayet

Literally "foreign country," used as a name for England (Hindi).

winked blinked nodded

Allusion to the childhood rhyme by Eugene Field, "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod."

a quantity of wives . . . a sufficiency of children

Rushdie would seem to have forgotten that on p. 79 [80] it is said that the women and children were all previously released by the hijackers.

What aspects of the immigrant experience are alluded to in the bottom paragraph on this page?

Page 5

English Sleeve

The French name for the English Channel is *La Manche*, which means “the sleeve.”

“Oh, my shoes are Japanese . . .”

The song is “Mera joota hai japaani” from the 1955 film *Shree 420* (*Mr. 420*), directed by Raj Kapoor, music by Shankar Jaikishen, lyrics by Shailendra and Hasrat Jaipuri:

ऊपर वाला जाने - (२)
बढ़ते जायें हम सैलानी, जैसे एक दरिया द
सर पे लाल ...

ऊपर नीचे नीचे ऊपर
लहर चले जीवन की - (२)
नादाँ हैं जो बैठ किनारे
पूछें राह वतन की - (२)
चलना जीवन की कहानी, रुकना मौत की
सर पे लाल ...

होंगे राजे राजकुँवर हम
बिगड़े दिल शहजादे - (२)
हम सिंहासन पर जा बैठे
जब जब करें इरादे - (२)
सूरत है जानी पहचानी, दुनिया वालों को
सर पे लाल ...

Translation of the song lyrics:

My shoes are Japanese,
These pants are English
The red hat on my head is Russian
Still my heart is Indian.

(walking)

I'm out on the open road, proud-chested
Only God knows where all I might go
I'll move onward like a raging flood.

My shoes are Japanese,
These pants are English
The red hat on my head is Russian
Still my heart is Indian.

(on camel)

Up and down, down and up moves the wave of life
Those who sit on the river bank and ask the way home are naïve
Moving on is the story of life, stopping is the mark of death.

My shoes are Japanese,
These pants are English
The red hat on my head is Russian
Still my heart is Indian.

(on elephant)

There may be kings, or princes, but I am a spoiled prince
And sit on the throne whenever I desire.
My face is renowned, and people are amazed.

My shoes are Japanese,
These pants are English
The red hat on my head is Russian
Still my heart is Indian.

Based on translations by Nandi Bhatia, by permission of Jennifer Wenzel, and Poorvi Vora.

Joel Kuortti points out that Rushdie had already discussed same song in his essay, “The Indian Writer in England.”

“420” has for several decades been a negative expression in India, suggesting corruption and other forms of political villainy, because it alludes the number of a statute forbidding corrupt practices. (Aravamudan: “Being God’s Postman is No Fun, Yaar” 7-8). In *Midnight’s Children* Rushdie says that the number symbolizes “fraud and deception” (193).

[6]

changes took place . . . that would have gladdened the heart of old Mr Lamarck

Jean Baptiste-Pierre Antoine de Lamarck (1744-1829) a French naturalist, developed the theory that characteristics acquired by living things during their lifetimes could be inherited by their offspring; an idea rejected by modern genetics.

flew too close to the sun

Refers to the classical myth of Daedalus, who tried to escape his island prison with his son Icarus using wings made of feathers fastened on with wax. But when Icarus flew too close to the sun, the wax melted and he plunged to his death in the sea. Daedalus is also the last name of the protagonist of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, a work often alluded to in *The Satanic Verses*.

What aspects of change are discussed in the paragraph beginning “Yessir?”

Page 6

What attitudes characteristic of the two men falling are expressed by the songs they choose to sing?

lyrics by Mr James Thomson “. . . at Heaven’s command
From the first verse of “Rule, Britannia!”

When Britain first, at heaven’s command,
Arose from out the azure main,
This was the charter of the land,
And guardian angels sing their strain--
Rule, Britannia, rule the waves;
Britons never will be slaves.

David Windsor points out that Thomson was a Scot (which explains why the title of his song refers to Great Britain rather than simply England). Thomson went to England in search of work and had to take lessons to change his accent; so he, like so many others in this novel, was a colonial immigrant.

[7]

Wonderland

See note below, on Wonderland, p. 55 [56].

cloudforms, ceaselessly metamorphosing

Alludes to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (1st century BC), which recounts many examples of people being transformed into other beings. Rushdie says of the *Metamorphoses*:

It’s one of my favourite books and after all this is a novel about metamorphosis. It’s a novel in which people change shape, and which addresses the great questions about a change of shape, about change, which were posed by Ovid: about whether a change in form was a change in kind. Whether there is an essence in us which survives transmutation, given that, even if we don’t change into, you know, cloven-hoofed creatures, there is a great deal of change in everybody’s life. The question is whether or not there is an essential centre. And whether we are just a collection of moments, or whether there is some kind of defining thread. The book discusses that, I think, it uses the idea of physical metamorphosis in order to discuss that. And so, of course, Ovid was important.

Also I thought the book itself was conceived as one which constantly metamorphosed. It keeps turning into another kind of book. Certainly, from my point of view, that was technically one of the biggest gambles. Because I couldn’t be sure that the readers would come along for the ride. It was something which could be irritating. Imagine that you’re reading a certain kind of book and you’re suddenly stuck with another kind of book. Rushdie: “Interview,” p. 58.

Page 7

woman of a certain age

Translation of a traditional French phrase used to describe a middle-aged woman.

Bokhara rug

Red rugs and carpets woven by Turkmen and Uzbeks (Kuortti).

for your eyes only

Security clearance marking for highly secret data, often abbreviated “eyes only,” also used as the title of a James Bond novel and film.

Why do you think no one can see Rekha but Gibreel?

sour nothings

The opposite of “sweet nothings:” affectionate comments; therefore these are probably curses.

saw nothing, heard nothing, said nothing

A formerly popular image consisted of three monkeys covering, respectively, their eyes, ears, and mouth. They were said to be Chinese, and called “see no evil,” “hear no evil,” and “speak no evil.”

[8]

It was you, O moon of my delight, who hid behind a cloud. And I in darkness, blinded, lost, for love.

This looks like the lyrics to a song, but the words are original with Rushdie (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

Page 8

Al-Lat

See p. 100 [102].

Page 10

who has the best tunes?

An allusion to a reply of John Wesley when he was reproached for setting his hymns to popular tunes to the effect that the Devil shouldn’t have all the best tunes.

Why do you think Rushdie has chosen the Devil as his narrator?

Page 11

the Phantom Bug

This incident is based on an actual incident in the life of actor Amitabh Bachchan. Says Rushdie:

He had an accident on set and almost died. Well, the whole country fell into a state of shock. It was the lead item on the news for weeks: bulletins from the hospital on the hour. Rajiv Gandhi cancelled a trip abroad, came home to sit by his bedside, and so on and so on. This extraordinary event struck me as being made for a novel. Something like the death of a god, almost.

D. W. Rama

Depicts a famous Indian film director under an alias composed of a typical Indian name and the first two initials of the famous Hollywood director of historical epics, D. W. Griffith (1875-1948).

In what sense is reincarnation important to Gibreel?

Page 12

ekdumjaldi

Suddenly, abruptly (Hindi).

Willingdon Club golf links

This Bombay golf club would seem to have been named after one in in Eastbourne, East Sussex.

maharaj

Great lord or prince. More commonly encountered in English as *Maharaja* (Hindi).

Pimple Billimoria

Billimoria is a familiar name in Indian film: D. and E. Bilimoria were popular stars beginning in the silent era and Fali Billimoria directed documentaries in the 1950s. However, her first name is probably a joking pun on the name of Bombay star Dimple Kapadia.

[13]

flibberti-gibberti

Derived from “flibbertigibbet,” a foolish or flighty woman. This sort of expression, with paired words differing only in their beginnings, is common in Urdu as well as in English (“higgledy-piggledy,” “mumbo-jumbo”) and is one of Rushdie’s favorite linguistic devices. He uses it throughout *Midnight’s Children*, but there are also other examples in *The Satanic Verses*: “glum chum,” “moochy pooch” (both on p. 249 [257]), and “tarty-farty” (p. 284). (Joel Kuortti)

temple-dancer

See below, note on temple-dancing, p. 37.

copulating Tantric figures from the Chandela period

Tantrism is a form of religion popular in Tibet and parts of northern India which sometimes involves extensive sexual imagery. Several temples at Khajuraho were built under the Chandela (or Candella) of Bundelkhand in the 10th and 11th centuries AD, covered with detailed carvings of gods, humans, and animals in all manner of sexual activities.

beedis

Hand-rolled cigarettes (Hindi).

ayah

Maid (Hindi).

Page 13

saturnine

Originally, like the god Saturn: heavy, gloomy, morose. Here, perhaps suggestive of *Satanic*. The irony is of course that the actor with the name of an angel has the breath of a devil.

We are creatures of air, Our roots in dreams And clouds, reborn in flight.

This note left behind by Gibreel is punctuated so that it suggests an excerpt from a poem, but it is an original composition by Rushdie (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

How does this note foreshadow what happens to Gibreel in the opening pages of the novel?

[14]

Everest Vilas skyscraper on Malabar Hill

Named after the world’s highest mountain, this is located at the highest point in the most elegant residential district in Bombay. The misspelling of “villas” may satirize the tendency for English names to be rendered with a quaint twist in India. The Rushdie family home in India is called “Anees Villa Estate.” See below, note on Solan, p. 514 [527].

Marine Drive

A coastal road running along the Back Beach of Bombay, from Malabar Hill to Nariman Point. (Kuortti).

Scandal Point

Scandal Point is located on Warden Road, now renamed Bhulabhai Desai Road (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

Blitz

CinéBlitz, a Bombay film magazine

Busybee

Nickname of Behram Contractor, editor of the Bombay *Afternoon Despatch and Courier*.

Page 14

Reza Pahlevi

The pretentious and tyrannical Shah of Iran who hosted a lavish celebration of 3,000 years of Persian history at the ancient capital of Persepolis shortly before he was overthrown in the Islamic revolution which is to loom large later in the novel.

Doordarshan

The Indian national government television network.

Colaba

The Colaba Causeway on the southern part of Bombay Island contains elegant hotels, restaurants, and shops. (Kuortti).

klims and kleens

Kilims are a flat woven carpets, thinner than the traditional knotted sort, whose Farsi name is usually rendered “gleem” in the carpet trade. The implication is that Rekha aspires to connoisseurship in using these technical terms, but mispronounces them, as she does “antiques” below.

How is Rekha characterised in the paragraph beginning, "Who was she?" What are her main traits, and how are they symbolized here?

[15]

Lalique crystal

RenÉ Lalique (1860-1945), French designer of elegant jewelry and other precious objects for the rich.

Chola Natraj

A priceless traditional Hindu sculpture from the period of the Chola dynasty which ruled Southern India in the 9th-12th Centuries, C.E. A Natraj or Nataraja is a traditional depiction of a six-armed Shiva dancing in a ring of fire. He bears a crescent moon on his brow, has serpents entwined around him, holds a flame in the open palm of one hand, dances on a dwarf symbolizing ignorance and beats out a rhythm on a drum. He both dances the world into creation and to destruction.

Page 15

Rekha Merchant's dive with her children from the Everest Vilas, imitating literally Gibreel's figurative "dive underground" on p. 13 [14], may allude to a moment in the life of Muhammad when he was tempted to throw himself down from Mount Hira (Haykal 79). See note below on Cone Mountain, p. 92 [94]. Compare with the similar temptation during Jesus' sojourn in the wilderness (Luke 4:9).

To be born again, first you have to

See above, note on p. 3. See p. 84 [86] for the complete phrase, and below, note on p. 85.

lala

Usually a male who cares for children, but it can also mean a clerk (Hindi).

Olympians

Ancient Greek Gods who dwelled on Mount Olympus, associated here with Mount Everest, one of the tallest mountains in the world, north of India in the Himalayas, after which the lavish Everest Vilas where Rekha Merchant lived was named, and which Alleluia Cone has climbed.

Page 16

a star gone supernova

When an old star explodes it creates a brilliant new point of light in the sky as viewed from earth; the largest are known as *supernovae*.

theologicals

Rushdie says of these films:

the kind of religious movies that Gibreel acts in are not really called "theologicals". They're actually called "mythologicals". But I just thought I'd make them more intellectual. Also, mythological movies have not really been a Bombay cinema form. They've, more or less exclusively, been a South Indian form and it's Tamil cinema that has particularly gone in for them. And they have created at least

one major political figure. The former Chief Minister for Tamil Nadu [*actually Andhra Pradesh, just north--PB*], N. T. Rama Rao started out as a person who played gods in the movies. He stood for election and he won.

For Gibreel I first transposed the South Indian form to Bombay. There are movies in Bombay where you get a *deus ex machina*: it is not uncommon for a god to arrive at an important moment in the plot and play a part. But, retelling the stories of the Indian tradition is not a Bombay form. So that's one, if you like, fictionalisation.

Rushdie: "Interview," p. 52.

Krishna

When a demon attempted to suckle the infant Krishna with her poisonous milk, he survived miraculously, but turned a deep blue color.

[17]

gopis

In Hindu myth, the lover-playmates of Krishna, wives of cowherds. Their devotion to him is expressed in highly sexual terms which are taken allegorically by Hindus.

Gautama

The historical name of the figure known as the Buddha. Protected by his parents from knowledge of death, aging and disease, he was shocked to discover at the age of seven that suffering existed and twenty-nine left his home to find a way to deal with this knowledge.

bodhi-tree

An Indian fig tree (from the Sanskrit), *ficus religiosa*, regarded as sacred by Buddhists because the Buddha achieved his enlightenment while meditating under one. A bodhi tree in Bodhgaya, Bihar (NE India) is said to be a descendent of the tree under which Buddha meditated (Westphal).

Grand Mughal . . . Akbar and Birbal

The Grand Mughal Akbar the Magnificent (ruler of 16th-century India), and his warrior chieftain/poet/minister who was famous for his wit. The Mughal Dynasty of Muslim rulers was founded when Babur invaded India in 1526 and governed much of northern India until the 18th Century. Much of the art and architecture we now associate with India, such as the Taj Mahal, actually consists of Persian-influenced Mughal-era creations. Many Hindus, especially those of lower castes, converted to Islam during this era, giving rise to families like that of Gibreel, and Rushdie himself.

Page 17

jackfruit

Large sweet fruit common in South and Southeast Asia.

Avatars

Reincarnations of a god (Sanskrit, Hindi, Bengali). Krishna, for instance, is the eighth avatar of Vishnu. Reincarnation is basic to Hinduism, both for gods and humans, as well as other living beings.

What is the meaning of the contrast made on this page between divine reincarnation and secular incarnation?

Pune of Rajneesh

A town in Maharashtra, the home and former operating base of Bhagwan Sri Rajneesh (later called "Osho") and his cult.

Vadodara

Gujarat town now renamed Baroda.

Mumbai

The name "Bombay" probably evolved from the name of a local earth goddess, Mumba Devi, or Mumbai. In 1995 the local government changed the name of the city to Mumbai.

Ismail after the child involved in the sacrifice of Ibrahim

Refers to the Islamic version of the story contained in Genesis 22 according to which God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac; in this version it is his brother Ishmael who is involved. See also p. 95 [97].

[18]

mummyji

Affectionate term for mother, combining British "Mummy" with honorific Hindi suffix "-ji."

Page 18

tiffins

Originally a mid-morning snack, now any sort of light meal or snack.

dabbas

Lunchboxes (Hindi), typically containing hot foods cooked at home, then delivered to the workplace by a *dabbawalla*, a lunch-delivery person (Kuortti).

the in-flight inevitability of Walter Matthau . . . Goldie Hawn

The movie is *Cactus Flower* (1969).

Gandhi cap

A soft cloth hat worn by members of the Congress party, notably Jawaharlal Nehru, as a symbol of nonsectarian support for a unified India.

Santacruz

"Santa Cruz" means "Holy Cross," Bombay was under Portuguese rule before it was given as a dowry to the British (in 1661)--but many Catholic place names remained. Both the name of the airport and the "triumphal arch" of the gateway mentioned on p. 39 are reminders of the colonial past.

Page 19

muqaddam

Leader (Hindi).

Page 20

buddha-fat

The Japanese paunchy figure often called a Buddha is actually Hotei (Chinese Pu-tai), and is a deity of good fortune. According to some beliefs, Maitreya, the Buddha of the future, will be incarnated in the form of Hotei, so that Hotei is often regarded as a Bodhisattva. See The Zany Zen: "Hakuin's Self-Portrait in the Image of Hotei."

BTCA

Bombay Tiffin Carriers Association (see above, p. 19 [19-20])

Page 22

green-tinged spectacles

In the original L. Frank Baum novel, *The Wizard of Oz*, all those who enter the Emerald City must wear green glasses, which turns out to be a ruse by the wizard to deceive people into thinking that the city is really all green. Here the spectacles reveal magic rather than replacing it. Rushdie is a serious Oz fan and authored a tribute to the film (*The Wizard of Oz*, London: British Film Institute, 1992). Rushdie has in common with Baum a taste for both fantasy and wordplay.

the Prophet at the time when, having been orphaned . . .

Refers to a period in the life of the Prophet Muhammed, implying that he married for money. The first of many references in the book which many Muslims find blasphemous, and which is labelled as such here by the author, though the thought is attributed to Gibreel, not Rushdie.

Page 21

the final grace

The ultimate goal of pious Hindus is not reincarnation, which is technically viewed as a curse; but stepping off the wheel of rebirth (*samsara*) to achieve liberation (*moksha*). However, people not ready for *moksha* often find the prospect of reincarnation appealing.

phutt, kaput

Fortuitously rhyming words in (respectively) Hindi and German implying that something has ceased. (Americans spell a similar expression "pfft.") "Phutt" originally suggested the sound of a candle-flame going out, but it can also mean "Gone!" For instance: "Oh yaar he is phut" (meaning that he has just suddenly, dramatically disappeared). . . (Hussain).

baprebap

A common exclamatory Hindi phrase, literally meaning "father of father," but used to express a sense of amazement and wonder, among many other feelings. A rough English equivalent would be "O my God!" Often spelled "bap-re-bap." (Hussain)

The account of his education into the supernatural is strikingly reminiscent of Gabriel García Márquez's accounts of his upbringing by a storytelling grandmother who made the miraculous seem ordinary. One of the defining characteristics of García Márquez's work is the introduction of fantastic elements into otherwise realistic narratives in such a way that they are taken for granted. Compare García Márquez's technique with Rushdie's.

Page 22

How does the young Gibreel learn about Muhammad, and how does this learning relate to the account of Mahound in the next chapter?

afreets

Arabic demons (also spelled "afrits").

djinns

In Muslim tradition, powerful spirits which can transform themselves into various shapes, also spelled "jinns," "jinees," and "genies" (Arabic).

sari-pallu

The loose end of a sari which is normally thrown over the shoulder (Hindi).

Gibreel is imagining himself as a new bride, with the "sari pallu" drawn over his face, about to be married off to Babasaheb Mhatre. When the new husband lifts the "sari pallu" off his new wife's face (theoretically seeing her for the first time), it is a very erotic moment (Windsor).

Page 23

four wilderness years he failed to kiss a single woman on the mouth.

Alludes to the forty days of wandering in the wilderness which Christ underwent before he started preaching (Matthew 4:1-11) and to the fact that until recently it was forbidden in India to depict kissing on the screen.

What do the items in the list which begins at the bottom of this page have to do with this novel?

[24]

avatars of Jupiter

In Greco-Roman mythology Jupiter (Greek "Zeus" takes on many different forms, primarily in order to mate with human women, using the Indian term "avatar" (see note above, p. 17). Several of the subjects that Gibreel studies are later to become elements in his dreams.

Page 24

the boy who became a flower

The beautiful but vain Narcissus.

the spider-woman

Arachne, who was turned into a spider for daring criticize the gods in a weaving contest with Athena. The title given her here is possibly also an allusion to Manuel Puig's novel *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*, or to the 1985 movie based on it.

Circe

the seductive witch in Homer's *Odyssey* who transforms the crew of Odysseus into pigs.

Annie Besant

(1836-1901) English spokeswoman for Theosophy, a mystical philosophy heavily influenced by Hinduism.

unified field theory

A definition from NASA: "Any theory which attempts to express gravitational theory and electromagnetic theory within a single unified framework; usually, an attempt to generalize Einstein's general theory of gravitation alone to a theory of gravitation and classical electromagnetism". Since no one has yet succeeded in developing such a theory, it remains as fantastic as the other elements mentioned in this list.

incident of the Satanic verses

The first mention of this theme. See below, Chapter II.

butterflies could fly into young girl's mouths

See below, note on p. 217 [223].

puranas

Ancient Hindu scriptures (400 BCE-1400 CE) derived from oral traditions surrounding the Vedas and the *Mahabharata*, concentrating on tales of Shiva and Vishnu (Kuortti) (Sanskrit).

Ganesh

The Hindu elephant god often associated with prosperity. Sometimes called *Ganeshha*.

[25]

Ganpati Baba

"Lord Ganesh" (Hindi).

Hanuman the monkey king

His adventures, based on tales in the *Ramayana*, are extremely popular in India and throughout much of the rest of Asia.

Hong Kong

A center of production for cheap, sensational movies shown all over Asia.

Page 26

Greta Garbo

Classic film beauty of the twenties and thirties.

Gracekali

Pun on "Grace Kelly," a fifties film beauty, later the Princess of Monaco, and "Kali," the destroyer goddess of Hindu mythology. Rushdie notes, however, that this is actually a three-way pun, alluding to another sense of "'kali," "a flower-bud . . . so 'Gracekali' could also mean 'Gracebud'" (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

Jaisalmer

A remote town in NW Rajasthan built from sandstone in 1156 by a Bhatti Rajput prince, Mahwarawal Jaisal, famous for its exquisite Jain temples and other historic buildings, from which these carved stone lattices were probably taken.

chhatri

Rounded dome (Hindi).

surely gods should not partake of alcohol

Strict Hindus abstain from alcohol, as do strict Muslims.

Aga Khan

Notorious playboy of the royal family of Egypt, fond of both drink and Hollywood stars.

Page 27

lafanga

No good bum, vagrant (Hindi).

haramzada

Literally “bastard,” a scoundrel: a common term of contempt (Jussawalla: “Post-Joycean” 228) (Hindi, Urdu).

salah

Literally “wife’s brother” (Hindi, Urdu) or “brother-in-law,” but typically used as an insult, implying “I sleep with your sister.” Not to be confused with *bhaenchud*.

[28]

Kanya Kumari . . . Cape Comorin

Cape Comorin is the southmost point of mainland India in Tamil Nadu; Kanyakumari (the more usual spelling) is named after an incarnation of Parvati; the place is the destination of pilgrimages by Hindus (Kuortti).

Page 28

Breach Candy Hospital

Located in the luxurious Breach Candy district of Bombay. Movie stars such as Amitabh Bachchan have often been treated here.

[29]

lathi-charges

Lathis are the long wooden sticks used as batons by Indian police.

The Prime Minister

Indira Gandhi.

Her son the airline pilot

Indira’s son, Rajiv Gandhi. Rajiv was at school (Doon) with Amitabh Bachchan, and went to the hospital when Amitabh was injured in the real-life incident that this part of Gibreel’s life-story is based upon. (David Windsor)

Page 29

lamb pasandas

Scallops of lamb cooked Mughal-style in a rich yogurt sauce.

[30]

forbidden foods

Pork is forbidden to Muslims. This scene has its roots in Rushdie’s life. He writes:

God, Satan, Paradise and Hell all vanished one day in my fifteenth year, when I quite abruptly lost my faith. I recall it vividly. I was at school in England by then. The moment of awakening happened, in fact, during a Latin lesson, and afterwards, to prove my new-found atheism, I bought myself a rather tasteless ham sandwich, and so partook for the first time of the forbidden flesh of the swine. No thunderbolt arrived to strike me down. I remember feeling that my survival confirmed the correctness of my new position. I did slightly regret the loss of Paradise, though. The Islamic heaven, at least as I had come to conceive it, had seemed very appealing to my adolescent self. I expected to be provided, for my personal pleasure, with four beautiful female spirits, or *houris*, untouched by man or djinn. The joys of the perfumed garden; it seemed a shame to have to give them up.

From that day to this, I have thought of myself as a wholly secular person, and have been drawn towards the great traditions of secular radicalism--in politics, socialism; in the arts, modernism and its offspring--that have been the driving forces behind much of the history of the twentieth century. But perhaps I write, in part to fill up that emptied God-chamber with other dreams. Because it is, after all, a room for dreaming in.

(Rushdie: “In God We Trust” 377)

Page 30

How did Gibreel lose his faith?

Page 31

yahudan

Jew (Arabic).

brief encounter

Title of a 1945 movie about a frustrated love affair that develops when two commuters meet on a train.

ships that pass

An allusion to the common expression “ships that pass in the night,” meaning people who just barely miss meeting each other or have only the most fleeting of encounters. From Longfellow’s “Tales of a Wayside Inn” (1877).

[32]

Bostan

See above, note on Bostan.

Page 33

What characteristics do Saladin and Gibreel have in common?

[34]

a man with a glass skin

First reference to a repeated image, which may have been suggested by a passage in one of Rushdie's favorite novels, Laurence Stern's *Tristram Shandy* (1760, Vol.1, Chapter 23). See also below, p. 169 [174].²

Page 34

Achha, means what?

Bombay-talk for "Okay, what do you want?" (Hindi)

[35]

'les acteurs ne sont pas des gens'

"Actors aren't [real] people." Quotation from *Les enfants du paradis* (*The Children of Paradise*), a famous French film about the theater, directed by Marcel Carné (1945). Contrary to what Saladin thinks, it's not Frederick who says the lines "les acteurs ne sont pas des gens," but Lacenaire. The complete speech is: "Des gens. Les acteurs ne sont pas des gens. Toute le monde et personne à la fois"--"People. Actors aren't people. They're everyone and no one at the same time."

Page 35

Why does Saladin react the way he does to the migrant laborer's refusal to fasten his seat belt?

Scandal Point

See above, p. 13 [14].

Page 36

Changez Chamchawala

His first name suggests that of one of the greatest plunderers in history: the early 13th century Mongol Genghiz (or Chingis) Khan.

Richard Burton

English adventurer and orientalist (in both the traditional and new senses of the term), responsible for the most popular translation the *Arabian Nights* into English as well as for other translations conveying a sense of the "exotic" (that is to say, erotic) East, such as the *Kama Sutra* of Vatsyayana and *The Perfumed Garden* of Sheikh al-Nefzawi. The original edition of his translation of the *Arabian Nights* (Benares, 1885-1888) was in 16 volumes, but there have been several subsequent editions in various formats.

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Grant Road

Now renamed "M. Shuakat Ali Road." In the Kamathipura red light district.

Yellamma cult

Worship of a goddess similar to Kali. In the south Indian state of Karnataka, hundreds of young women are given away as "godly slave girls" in the Bharata Poornima festival. They become temple prostitutes or servants of the prostitute cult called "Servants of the Goddess Yellamma." Many young women have been sold into Bombay brothels under the belief that they were serving the Goddess Yellamma.

dancers in the more prosaic temples of the flesh

There was a historical connection of temple dancing with prostitution, so that temple dancing was eventually forbidden by the government.

Page 38

folly

A term used to describe an elaborate structure, often meant to imitate some ancient architectural style.

triumphal arch of Septimus Severus

Dated 203 CE. In Saladin Chamcha's paternal home in Bombay there's a reproduction of the triumphal arch of this Roman Emperor. It draws together two themes: one, the conquest of England (Severus put down a rebellion in the colony), and two, the battle between father and son--Severus' son Bassianus Caracalla Antonius plotted to kill him, Severus accusing him of "want of filial tenderness." When Severus eventually died, Caracalla married his mother, and then murdered thousands of the citizens of Alexandria when they started making Oedipus jokes about him. (David Windsor) See also note on Septimus Severus, below, p. 292 [301].

dhoti

Typical garment made of folded cloth, worn by men below the waist (Hindi).

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[40]

tinkas

Straws, slivers (Hindi).

Op Art

An art movement of the sixties characterized by geometric abstraction involving carefully chosen colors which have powerful optical effects when used together.

Page 40

[41]

Asimov's Foundation

The first volume in Isaac Asimov's extremely popular and influential series of novels depicting the decline and fall of a future galactic empire modelled on ancient Rome. Rushdie has a well-known interest in science fiction: his first published novel, *Grimus*, is science fiction.

One of the best-selling of all SF novels, published first in 1950, and depicting the pollution and genocide brought to Mars by human immigrants from Earth.

brave new world

Refers to the title of Aldous Huxley's famous dystopian novel.

Page 41

Tyburn tree

The gallows where executions were formerly carried out, an ominous geographical reference for Saladin's first experience in London. The story of Changez' surly treatment of his son in the city reflects Rushdie's own experience with his father when he was first taken to London to school (Hamilton 94) when they stayed at the Cumberland Hotel, at Marble Arch.

Describe how Changez treats his son while they are in London and try to explain why he behaves as he does.

Page 42

The Pure Hell of St Trinians

One of a series of popular comic films about fiendishly mischievous young girls wreaking havoc in an English public school, based on the cartoons of Ronald Searle.

Chanakya

Vishnugupta (his personal name) Chaanakya (son of Chaanak) Kautilya (of the kutila gotra, a descendent of Kutila). He is reputedly the author of the *Arthashastra*, and a legendary advisor to princes, including Chandragupta (the first emperor of that name). In the *Kathasaritsagar*, an 11th-century work by Somadev, the first story in the "Madanamancuka" section, tells how the Buddhist king of Taxila, Kalingadatta, makes Ratnadatta perform a deed similar to the one described here. Ratnadatta is the Hindu son of a Buddhist father. Ratnadatta criticizes his father for renouncing the Vedas and hanging out with low-caste people; the father complains to Kalingadatta; Kalingadatta threatens to kill Ratnadatta in two months time; Ratnadatta discovers fear, and requests Kalingadatta to teach him how to attain liberation from fear, and Kalingadatta then gets him to carry round the bowl of oil, to teach him the proper concentration one should give to religion (David Windsor).

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Chicken-breasted

This is a pun on "pigeon-breasted," since the phrase usually refers to a man with a small or underdeveloped chest.

a boulder pressing down upon his chest

A repeated motif in the novel, derived originally from the torment imposed on the slave Bilal by his master, trying to get him to renounce Islam. When he continued to recite "God is one, God is one" under this torture, Abu Bakr bought and freed him (Haykal 91 and Armstrong 121). See Introduction, note on Bilal.

Page 44

kipper

This smoked herring is a standard part of a classic English breakfast. Rushdie claims that this story happened to him, and is "one of the very few stories I've used in fiction which needed no embellishment at all" (Hamilton 94; see also Lawson 58).

William the Conqueror

William the Conqueror was the leader of the Norman invasion which conquered England in 1066 at the Battle of Hastings. The French-speaking Normans became the new English nobility and imported much of their culture with them. Much that we think of as characteristically English, including the language itself, was shaped by this historical encounter. As a "post-colonial" immigrant Rushdie likes to remind the English that they also have been colonized in the past. See below, p. 129 [133].³

Page 45

flame of the forest

Botanical name: *Butea frondosa*, also known in India as *Dhak*, *Palas* or *Tesu*.

chhooi-mooi touch-me-not plants

"Chhooi-moi" is literally, in Hindi, "touch-die," or "touch-me-not," the plant *Mimosa pudica*; which is not the European "touch-me-not" (or *noli-me-tangere*), used as the name of two different plants, both of whose seed-pods burst when touched. The Indian "touch-me-not" is harmed when touched, and its symbolic meaning is "someone who is very frail and fragile, sensitive." The European ones (the most important is used for is the yellow balsam, *Imapatiens noli-tangere*) don't die; its symbolic meaning gives more of a sense of a certain pride and aloofness. (David Windsor)

[46]

fauntleroy

A pampered, sissified boy, somewhat unfairly derived from Frances Hodgson Burnett's 1886 novel, *Little Lord Fauntleroy* about a waif who discovers he is actually their heir to a British title.

grand panjandrum

Conceited fool. See note below, on "panjandrum," p. 435 [450].

war with Pakistan began

After a prolonged series of border skirmishes over Kashmir, full-blown war erupted in late August of 1965 and again in 1971.

Page 46

[47]

khali-pili khalaas

Literally "destroyed just like that, for no reason." Common Bombay slang expression (Hindi).

Rejoice . . . for what is lost is reborn.

A variation on Luke 15:9 in which an old woman who has lost a precious coin says, "Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost."

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[48]

he knows not what he does

Humorous reference to Christ's words on the cross as he is being tormented by his executioners: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Page 48

hoosh

"Hoosh" (sometimes spelled "hoos") is a wild, uncouth person (nothing demonic, just a very rural person). An interesting word, of unknown etymology in Hindi. It could be possibly linked to the "hush" (not pronounced as the English "hush," but rather with the short version of the vowel in "hoosh"), the word of command used to get a camel to stand up, or to scare away birds or other animals. In nineteenth-century Australian slang "hoosh" was used as a derogatory term for the Indian cameleers, based on this word. (David Windsor)

Shaitan

Muslim (Arabic) name for Satan, and amalgamated with the Jewish/Christian Satan in the novel, though the Islamic figure is considerably less imposing. See Armstrong, pp. 114-115.

Note that the description of Saladin's parents' attitude toward Islam matches that which Rushdie attributes to his own parents. See above, Introduction.

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Prospero Players

A theatrical troupe named after the magician-hero of Shakespeare's final play, *The Tempest*. Because the play is set on a Caribbean island and features a savage, beastly native, it is often referred to by writers from Britain's former colonies as reflecting imperialist prejudices.

The Millionairess

This Shaw play actually features an Egyptian doctor rather than an Indian one. Furthermore, according to Shaw, he "speaks English too well to be mistaken for a Native" (Shaw 922). However, in the 1960 movie adaptation, Peter Sellers played the doctor role with his patented Indian accent. See also note below, for p. 49 [50], on Peter Sellers. Rushdie would seem not have remembered the play accurately, though he makes a point of having Zeeny acknowledge, "Song is not in drama" (p. 51) Shaw's Egyptian doctor winds up engaged to the millionairess of the title, who is almost as fierce and destructive as Pamela Chamcha.

What is Rushdie saying about the nature of self-invention among immigrants?

[50]

wore bandannas

Seeking to identify with the peasant women they claimed to be supporting.

Trotskyist actresses

Leon Trotsky (Lev Davidovich Bronstein) (1879-1940), after helping Lenin lead the Russian Revolution, broke with him and advocated from exile a more radical and idealistic version of revolutionary politics than his old comrade was working out in the new Soviet Union. After he was assassinated in Mexico, his Fourth International continued to campaign for his ideas. Trotskyist organizations tend to present themselves as the purest of the pure revolutionaries. The most famous Trotskyist actress is Vanessa Redgrave, whose political activities have been the target of much criticism.

Peter Sellers

English comedian (1925-1980) perhaps best remembered now for his role as Inspector Clouseau in the Pink Panther movies, but also known for performing various roles as an Indian. "Goodness Gracious Me" was a nonsense-song hit from the film of *The Millionairess* featuring Sellers singing with Sophia Loren, but of course the song is not performed in the original G. B. Shaw version in which Gibreel is starring. Sophia Lyrics of the song.

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[52]

Zeeny Vakil

Her first name (Zeenat) may be a tribute to Bombay star Zeenat Aman, who got her start in films in 1973 in *Hare Rama Hare Krishna*, playing a character much like the younger Zeeny Saldin remembers on the next page.

wogs

Insulting British term for people of other races, used here defiantly as an assertive label for Indians who refuse to be assimilated to Britain.

Page 52

In what ways does Zeeny criticize Saladin's loss of Indian identity?

Quant hairstyle

Mary Quant was a leading fashion designer in London's swinging sixties, this refers to her cap-like hairstyle.

Bhopal

Site of the worst industrial accident in history. On December 3, 1984, the Union Carbide Plant there released clouds of methyl isocyanate into the air which killed 2,500 people and grievously harmed many others. Union Carbide's handling of the aftermath was widely viewed as cynical and grossly inadequate.

The Only Good Indian

General Philip H. Sheridan, speaking at Fort Cobb in 1869, commented "the only good Indians I ever saw were dead" usually

misquoted as “The only good Indian is a dead Indian.” Zeeny puns on the phrase in the title of her book to argue that rigid stereotypes—even good ones—of Indians should be avoided, rejecting the strictures of Hindu fundamentalists who seek to censure (and censor) “bad” Indians like Rushdie. As Margareta Petersson points out, “She looks upon Indian history as based on the principle of borrowing the clothes that fit, Aryan, Mughal and British. . . . It appears that she functions here as a spokeswoman for Rushdie, since he brings forth her ideas and examples in his own name in an essay where he asserts that he always has understood Indian culture as consisting of a rich mixture of traditions” (“Minority Literatures in a Multi-Cultural Society,” Petersson 298)

[53]

long pork

Reputed South Pacific cannibal term for human flesh.

Page 53

Angrez

English (Hindi).

[54]

Binaca smile

Advertising slogan of a popular breath freshener.

kurta

Traditional long shirt worn by Indian men (Hindi, Urdu).

George Miranda

Perhaps named after the character in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, a favorite play for deconstruction by writers from formerly colonized nations who view it as an allegory of imperialism. Of course, Miranda’s most famous speech is “O brave new world/ That has such people in’t!” (Act V, Scene i, ll. 183-184) used ironically by Aldous Huxley for the title of his dystopian novel, *Brave New World*. Thus Miranda’s idealistic Marxism may be alluded to in his name. The name also reminds us of Bombay’s Portuguese heritage.

Bhupen Gandhi

His name may be a tribute to the famous Indian painter, Bhupen Khakhar, who painted Rushdie’s portrait which is now in London, at the National Portrait Gallery. The story of both these paintings is told in the 1995 BBC film “Salman Rushdie and the Lost Portrait” (Kuortti).

Asians

Zeeny ironically uses the careless generalized label by which British speakers refer to all manner of people from Asia.

like a bloody lettuce

To Zeeny the name “Saladin” suggests “salad.”

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Dalda

Clarified butter (Hindi, Urdu), ghee, widely used as a cooking oil in India.

wogs

See note above, on p. 51 [52].

tinkers

Pot-menders.

our heads end up in Idi Amin’s fridge

The monstrous dictator of Uganda was known to store the body parts of some of his victims for cannibalistic dining. When he came to power, he targeted the many Indian residents of the country, especially those active in trade.

Columbus was right

Columbus mistakenly dubbed the people he met in the Caribbean “Indians” because he believed he had reached the Indies. The name stuck even after it was obvious that he had been mistaken, and the islands were named the West Indies.

[55]

Mister Toady

See note on Saladin Chamcha’s name above. A “toady” is an obsequious yes-man; but the term also puns on the name of Mister Toad, comic hero of *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame (1908). Farrukh Dhondy in his novel *Bombay Duck* writes, “The Moghul emperors had a man to feed them, to hold the spoon and bring it to their mouths. He stood to the left of the throne and was known as the ‘Chamcha,’ the spoon” (p. 74).

Hindustan

The Hindustan Ambassador is Indian-manufactured luxury car based on the British classic Morris Oxford Series II, little changed in style from the 50s original.

Amazonic hijra got up like an Indian Wonder Woman

Hijras are technically transsexuals whose male genitals have been transformed into female ones through a crude operation. The Amazons of myth were women who dressed and fought as men, the opposite sort of transsexual to the *hijras*. The comic book character of Wonder Woman is supposedly an Amazon, though she is extremely womanly in appearance.

Page 55

bustees

Slums (Hindi).

Shiv Sena

Right-wing nationalist political party, Maratha/Hindu supremacists, often responsible for “communal” violence. Its leader, Bal Thackeray, objected to what he took to be a satirical portrait of himself in Rushdie’s *The Moor’s Last Sigh* under the guise of “Raman Fielding.” William Thackeray and Henry Fielding were both famous English novelists.

Datta Samant

Militant Bombay labor leader.

[56]

Wonderland, Peristan, Never-Never, Oz

Note how the childhood home of Saladin is lumped in with fantasy lands by Lewis Carroll, James Barrie, and L. Frank

Baum.

According to Zeeny, what was the difference between the Bombay Saladin remembers from his childhood and the real Bombay?

the saints were in plastic bags

Jains do not worship gods, but they do venerate saints, and decorate temples with their images.

Page 56

crowded dhaba

A tiny hotel, almost a hut.

Thums Up Cola

An Indian imitation of Coke. It is appropriate that Zeeny is drinking it as she denounces the common taste for “goods from foreign;” but she wouldn’t have had any choice since India banned both Coca-Cola and Pepsi until very recently.

[57]

Mr. Rajiv G.

Rajiv Gandhi (1944-91). Indian politician, the eldest son of Indira Gandhi. After she was assassinated in 1984, he replaced her as Prime Minister until 1989. He was in his turn assassinated in 1991 during an election campaign. George seems to share Rushdie’s own low opinion of Gandhi.

Assam

In March of 1985, thousands of Islamic refugees from Bangladesh were massacred by Hindus in the Indian province of Assam. Most news reports focussed on the involvement of ignorant peasants, but in fact better-educated Hindus, including college students, were also involved.

What is the point of the argument between George and Bhupen?

Page 57

we cracked your shell

Combined with the phrase about stepping through the looking-glass on the top of the next page, this image relates to the theme of the glass-encased body which recurs throughout the novel.

Page 58

India’s Babel

In Genesis 11:1-9 God prevents the completion of the skyward-reaching Tower of Babel by multiplying the languages of the builders so that they can accomplish no more. India has scores of languages which have been the cause of much strife, often bloody. Rushdie had used the same metaphor in *Midnight’s Children*, pp. 191-192.

seven-tiles and kabbadi

Both street games. In Seven Tiles one team’s objective is to stack seven stones inside a small circle while the other team tries to prevent them by hitting them with a rubber ball (Sudhakar). Kabbadi (Hindi) is a sort of tag played by two teams of nine each.

a nikah ceremony

Muslim marriage ceremony (Hindi, Urdu).

[59]

Dark skin in north India.

The dark-skinned Dravidians who predominate in southern India are traditionally considered inferior by the lighter-skinned Aryans of the north. Matrimonial ads often specify “wheatish complexion;” but she acknowledges that Saladin is right in refusing to attribute her single state to her skin coloring.

Page 59

[60]

nawabs

Upper-class people, nabobs (Hindi, Urdu).

Why I shouldn’t employ?

A typical Indian expression of the sort Saladin has worked so hard to purge from his speech.

Page 60

the Man of a Thousand Voices and a Voice

Echoes the traditional title of *The Arabian Nights: The Tale of a Thousand Nights and a Night* and *The Man of a Thousand Faces*.

crisps

British for what Americans call “chips,” which is turn what the British call American “fries.”

[61]

Juliet

Shakespeare’s inexperienced thirteen-year-old heroine, naive though passionate. See note below on “balcony,” p. [384].

Mae West

Raunchy actress famous for her risqué jokes and bawdy, hard-living characters. Her classic film is perhaps *I’m No Angel* (1933).

we could be the United Nations

Margareta Petersson points out that Saladin is also compared to the United Nations on p. 192 [198](Petersson 273).

‘You’re the one who’s circumcised.’

Muslim men as well as Jewish ones are circumcised.

looked like a Michelin poster

Chubby, like the bulging Michelin man used by the French tire company as its symbol (see below, p. 271 [280]) His name is “Bibendum.”

Page 61

dark stars

Alludes to collapsed stars which emit no light, but have enormous gravitational fields. The largest become black holes.

Botticelli Venus

Sandro Botticelli's most famous painting is his "Birth of Venus" (c. 1482) depicting an idealized nude woman and imitating classical sculptures from ancient Greece.

Olympia

A famous 1863 painting by Edouard Manet of a nude woman of doubtful virtue, parodying the 1538 *Venus of Urbino* by Titian. She represents a later ideal of the feminine form.

Monroe

Marilyn Monroe is the most modern in this series of ideally-formed women.

upheavals of Armenian-Jewish history

The more familiar Jewish history of exile and genocide is here joined to that of the Armenians, who have seldom ruled over a homeland of their own, being overrun and subjected in turn by Iranians and Turks. The latter massacred them wholesale in the late 19th century and at the end of World War I. Mimi is the ultimate exile, seeking neurotically to buy the roots she did not inherit. But she plays in turn the part of an invading imperialist, as the protesting ghosts in the houses she buys make clear.

a sea-coast in Bohemia

A literary joke. Bohemia has no seacoast; but Shakespeare, ignorant of that fact, famously set Act 3, Scene 3 of *The Winter's Tale* in "Bohemia. A desert country near the sea."

[62]

the babu part

Literally a clerk; but usually derogatory for a "pidgin" English speaker (Hindi).

Page 62

Pygmalien

A pun on the name of Pygmalion, the classical Greek sculptor who fell in love with his own creation and brought her to life. Hence the name is appropriate for a piece of rock which has come to life. The myth is in turn the source for the title of George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* in which a professor transforms a cockney waif into the toast of London by teaching her how to speak like a lady, a theme closely related to the themes of *The Satanic Verses*. The play was transformed in 1956 by Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Lowe into the musical, *My Fair Lady*.

Matilda, the Australien

Pun on "Australian" and "alien," connected to the name "Matilda," of Australia's most famous song, *Waltzing Matilda*.

Alien Korns, maybe because you could lie down among them
From John Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale," stanza 7:

Perhaps the selfsame song that found a path
through the sad heart of Ruth when sick for love,
She stood in tears amid the alien corn.

"Corn" here means "grain," probably wheat. The original ties in with the theme of immigration (Ruth was a foreigner in Israel),

but Rushdie implies the Alien Korns derive their name from their propensity for sleeping with groupies.

[63]

Ridley

An allusion to the name of the director of *Alien* (1979) Ridley Scott.

Signourney Weaver

Star of *Alien*.

Francis Bacon

British painter famous for grotesque portraits.

Kermit and Miss Piggy

Hosts of *The Muppet Show*.

Maxim and Mamma Alien

Puns on "Maximilian," and "mammalian" as well as Mimi Mamouljian's name.

Page 63

once the video-computers had gone to work--made them look just like simulations

This accurately describes the technique used to create the 80s briefly famous satirical television character, Max Headroom.

[64]

Bachchan

Amitabh Bachchan, see note above, in Introduction.

Page 64

re-invented

Azfar Hussain on this word:

Rushdie's characterization of the Bombay film industry as endlessly reinventing Western films is a postmodernist kind of parodic-ironical-satirical play on words: "re-invention" does not so much imply "creativity" as it does "fetishizing," "stereotyping," or, as Baudrillard puts it, the "commodified re-production of images"--images of the folkloric, mythical pursuit; comic resolutions of apparent conflicts and confrontations through highly artificial compromises including the crossing of class boundaries and culturally and religiously sanctioned hierarchical gender roles. Other commonly reworked themes besides the dying heroine, are the misunderstood heroine, the sacred heroine, "pati-seba," (the husband-nursing/adoring his wife), the struggle against parents who oppose the relationship. But none of these forms of struggle confront the conflict between the base and superstructure of the semi-capitalist, semi-feudal, male-dominated society that these Bombay love-story films endlessly depict; understandably, these films endlessly erase the possibilities of class struggles.

The Magnificent Seven

Already an imitation, being a John Sturges remake of Akira Kurosawa's *The Seven Samurai*. So Indian filmmakers are imitating an American who was imitating a Japanese filmmaker. Both concern a band of fighters who join to clean up a town dominated by thugs. There were also three American sequels to the Sturges film.

Love Story

Hugely popular 1970 sentimental movie ending in the death of the heroine from leukemia. Several Bombay film titles allude directly to it, such as *Arek Prem Kahini (A New Love Story)*.

dacoits

Bandits.

crorepati penthoused wretch

Ten million equals one *crore*, hence millionaire, a very rich person (Hindi). Changez is being compared specifically to the eccentric millionaire Howard Hughes, who spent the latter part of his life secluded in a Las Vegas penthouse.

[65]

Gargoyles

Technically, the grotesque sculpted heads which serve as downspouts on the roofs of Gothic churches, but more generally any such grotesque decorative sculpture. Changez's tendency to transform his face in monstrous ways foreshadows his son's similarly monstrous transformations.

a high-walled compound nicknamed the Red Fort

Elaborate complex built in Delhi by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in the mid-17th century, *Lal Qual'ah*.

Page 65

Dresden ballerinas

Valuable figurines of the kind known as "Meissen porcelain" produced in the eastern German city of Dresden beginning in 1710. Both they and the glass bulls are frozen in time, like the room they occupy.

[66]

Vallabbhai

Using an intimate form of address to Vallabh (Hindi).

Pages 66-67

[67]

Popeye-forearms and Bluto belly

Cartoon characters with, respectively, enormous forearms and a swollen belly. Popeye's comic strip enemy was originally named Brutus, but he was renamed Bluto in the animated cartoons.

Page 68

[69]

pooja

A general term which comprises sacrificial offerings, prayers,

and many other reverential acts in Hinduism (Hindi). More commonly spelled "puja."

Page 69

Old Man of the Sea

Refers not to Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*, but to an episode in Sinbad's fifth travel (83-84 nights). Sinbad helps an old man cross a river. As he sits on Sinbad's shoulders, the old man nearly throttles him with his legs. Sinbad eventually shakes off his burden by getting the old man drunk. He smashes his head with a big stone. Sinbad learns from the sailors who rescue him that he has killed the Old Man of the Sea. The image recurs when Gibreel is forced to bear "the old man of the sea" (in this case, the 1) on his shoulders (212 [218]). (Note by Martine Dutheil)

I don't explain you any more.

What does this sentence mean? Why is it important? What does it tell us about this father/son relationship?

Hamza-nama cloths

Illustrating scenes from the 16th-century *Dastan-e-Amir Hamza* (Urdu). Hamza is the uncle of the Prophet; the *Dastan-e-Amir Hamzah* is a collection of stories of the life of this man, but is largely concerned with his adventures before he met the Prophet. The particular version of the romance that was executed at Akbar's court is now largely vanished; only a few hundred cloths remain of an original 14,000 (it would have been the greatest of all illuminated manuscripts). The particular cloth that is described on p. 70 [71], showing the giant trapped in a well, is in the holdings of the Victoria and Albert Museum. Their collection of these manuscripts is primarily made up of ones found covering windows in Srinagar. (Note by David Windsor.)

Page 70

Hind

See Introduction, note on "Hind."

Uhud

A battle in which Muhammad was defeated (March 21, 625 CE, 3 AH). After the battle "Hind carved open Hamza's breast, tore out the liver of the man who had killed her father at Badr, chewed it up and spat it out." (Rodinson 181 and Armstrong 186-189). See note in Introduction on Hind.

[71]

Chandela bronzes

See note above on Chandela period p. 12.

Ravi Varma

Raja Ravi Varma Koil Tampuran of Kilimanoor (1848-1906) came from an aristocratic family that had a strong interest in art. Raja Ravi Varma laid the foundations of oil painting in India; he was the first to follow European realistic styles, though he never studied overseas, being afraid of thereby losing caste. He was enormously popular, particularly for his paintings of religious subjects, but suffered the fate of other realistic painters throughout the world with the advent of modernism in art and

became sneered at. (David Windsor)

Jaisalmer lattices

See above, note on p. 26 [27].

Page 71

Nandi bulls

Nandi is the vehicle of Shiva: a white, humped bull. He is always portrayed in temples of Shiva, sometimes as anthropomorphic. His veneration is related to the general respect for cows in Hinduism.

Page 73 [74]

padyatra

Pilgrimage undertaken on foot (Hindi). See below, p. 488 [502].

to Assam

Where they may be massacred. See above, p. 56 [57].

M G R

Marudur G. Ramachandran, Tamil Nadu's Ronald Reagan, who made numerous Robin Hood movies in which he defended the common man from various villains. As a result, he was, even before Ronald Reagan became President of the U.S., elected Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in early 1980. He made "mythologicals" like the kind Gibreel Farishta stars in (note by Srinivas Aravamudan, see also Avramudan "Being God's Postman" 9).

N. T. Rama Rao

Starred in Hindu "mythologicals" (in the novel called "theologicals") and was elected head of Andhra Pradesh. (See Avramudan: "Being God's Postman" 9.)

Bachchan

Amitabh Bachchan, see note above, in Introduction.

Durga Khote

Brahmin film star whose appearance in *Ayodhyecha Raja* (1932) helped to legitimize respectable actresses performing in films. Before this time, female roles had been played by boys. Her politics were liberal, but anticommunist.⁴

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[76]

Fancy-a-Donald T-shirts

Warning: this is an "R-rated" note, minors and easily-offended persons should skip it. First a short lesson in Cockney rhyming slang. A word is rhymed with another word which is part of a word phrase, of which only the non-rhyming part is usually spoken. Clear? OK, here's a simple example: "head" rhymes with "bread," which is part of the phrase "loaf of bread;" so the word "loaf" comes to mean "head," as in the expression, "Use your loaf!" Another more racy example: "fart" becomes "rasberry tart" which leads to "razz." To "razz" people was originally to make

a farting sound at them. In the present instance, in the question, "Fancy a fuck?" (American equivalent: "Wanna fuck?") "fuck" has been linked to "Donald Duck" and "Donald" substituted for the word. Print up a t-shirt with the words "Fancy a" followed by a picture of Donald Duck and a question mark, and you have a Fancy-a-Donald T-shirt of a cheerful vulgarity likely to appeal to the members of the Prospero Players who probably safely assume their fellow Indians at home will not get the joke.

natyam dancers

Traditional Indian temple dancers who make a characteristic movement of their heads from side to side without turning their faces (Sanskrit, Hindi).

Benarsi saris

Saris in the style of Benares, or Varanasi, in Uttar Pradesh.

Page 75

'rail roko' demonstration

A type of protest in which railroad lines are blocked by the demonstrators (Hindi).

[77]

Mr Charles Darwin

The founder of modern evolutionary theory, rejected by Biblical literalists like Dumsday. Joel Kuortti suggests Dumsday's first name, Eugene, may ironically refer to eugenics, systematic breeding which artificially imitates the process of evolution. See also note on Lamarck, above, p. 5.

Christian guard

Christian God: Dumsday (=doom, dumb) speaks with a thick Texas accent.

What characteristics of Dumsday do you think Rushdie considers peculiarly American?

Page 76

God-ridden

Haunted by thoughts of God. Darwin began his career as a theist, and wrestled for years with his doubts as the evidence against the existence of the Biblical Creator mounted. He was not, as fundamentalists like Dumsday often suppose, a dogmatic atheist whose evolutionary beliefs were designed to reinforce his skepticism; rather he tried repeatedly to accommodate religious sensibilities in his work.

Beelzebub

A traditional name for the devil (see, for instance, Matthew 10:25) (Hebrew). See note below on "Baal," p. 97 [100] and p. 167 [173], where the manticore calls Saladin "Beelzebub".

Asmodeus

A Hebrew demon featured in the deuterocanonical book of Tobit (3:8), associated in Jewish tradition as well with Solomon.

Lucifer

Isaiah 14:12 addresses the conquered king of Babylon as Lucifer “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!” This verse was interpreted by early Christians as referring to Satan. The name originally refers to the planet we call Venus (see p. 131 [135]); but because of its use in this verse has come to be connected with the tradition of Satan’s fall from Heaven.

Rotary Club

International businessmen’s organization founded in Chicago in 1905, promotes peace and community work. Generally viewed as a conservative organization which Rushdie presumes might welcome a speaker such as Dumsday.

[78]

Vasco da Gama

Portuguese navigator, first European to sail around Cape Horn to find a sea route to Asia in 1498, was appointed Viceroy to India in 1524, but died and was buried only three months after he arrived, in Cochin, where Dumsday has just been speaking.

hashish

A drug made, like marijuana, of hemp.

Page 77

one hundred and eleven days

This prolonged ordeal is modeled on 1985 TWA hijacking discussed above in the note on p. 4.

What effect does it have on the novel that the hijackers are Indians? Discuss.

Shelley Long and Chevy Chase

The film is “Foul Play,” a 1978 preposterous detective caper film involving a plot to assassinate the Pope set in San Francisco.

Page 78 [79]

Dara Singh Buta Singh Man Singh

Sikhs are traditionally named “Singh.” Several notorious incidents involving Sikh separatists had happened in the period preceding the publication of the novel, including the assassination of Indira Gandhi. The bandits’ pseudonyms are taken from the following celebrities: Dara Singh is a wrestler turned movie star; Buta Singh is a prominent politician; Man Singh was a bandit who joined forces with Phoolan Devi (see note on Phoolan Devi, below, p. 263 [272]).

Tavleen

Tavleen Singh is a well-known journalist who writes about political issues.

the oasis of Al-Zamzam

Named after a famous spring; see note below on p. 91 [94].

Page 80 [82]

Hijras! Chootias!

Eunuchs! Fuckers! See note on “Amazonic Hijra,” above, p. 54 [55] (Hindi, Urdu).

Page 81 [83]

funtoosh

Done (Hindi).

single unified force

See note on “unified field theory” above, on p. 24.

djellabah

A loose hooded gown, worn especially in North Africa (Arabic).

Page 82 [84]

Xixabangma Feng

Also known as Kao-seng-tsan-Feng (Gosainthan) and Shisha Pangma, located in Tibet. Most of the heights of these mountains recited by Chamcha differ slightly from later measurements, the last two are listed in the wrong order, and two are omitted from the sequence: Cho Oyu, 8153 meters and Lhotse, 8,501 meters (Kuortti).

Annapurna

This Nepalese mountain has several peaks, the highest of which is now believed to be slightly higher than the figure Gibreel recites.

Chomolungma

Tibetan name of Mt. Everest, located in Nepal and Tibet.

K2

Also known as Mt. Godwin Austen, Dapsang, and Chogori, located in Pakistan.

Kanchenjunga

Also called Kangchenjunga and Kinchinjunga, or (in Nepali) Kumbhkaran or Lungur. Located in Nepal-Sikkim.

Makalu

Also known as Kangshungtse. Located in Nepal and Tibet.

Dhaulagiri

In Nepal.

Manaslu

In Nepal.

Nanga Parbat

Located in the Indian part of Jammu & Kashmir.

Page 84 [86]

Dalai Lama

In Tibetan religious belief he is an incarnation of Avalokitesvara, the guardian bodhisattva of Tibet. When the current Dalai Lama dies, a new one is sought among recently born babies. The 14th

one is Tenzin Gyatso (1937-), who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989; after the 1959 Chinese occupation of Tibet he was exiled in Dharamsala, Punjab, India, where he created an alternative democratic government (Kuortti).

Page 85 [86]

the Old Gramsci chestnut

Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937). The closest thing to this quotation I have found is “The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born” (Gramsci 276). Rushdie comments, “So many variations of the phrase were common in the conversation of both Indian and British leftists that I felt free to describe it as an old chestnut. It may be less of a chestnut than I thought. . .” (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

Page 86 [87]

shorn Sirdarji

Devout Sikhs never trim their beards or hair (Hindi).

Page 87

albatross

[88]

Reminiscent of the albatross in Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s poem, “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,” which tells the story of a ship whose crew almost all died at sea, as the passengers of this jumbo jet are about to die.

and the walls came tumbling down

Refrain of an old African-American spiritual by H.T. Burleigh retelling the story of Joshua’s miraculous destruction of the city of Jericho (see Joshua 6). Since the story in the Bible is presented as a victory, the image is appropriate for the upbeat twist Rushdie gives the bombing.

(Notes for Chapter I)

¹ *Note by Martine Dutheil:*

Defoe contends that whereas Milton’s Satan, after falling through Chaos for nine days--which inspires the snide remark “a good poetical flight, but neither founded on Scripture or philosophy” (71)--is swallowed up and locked into Hell, the Devil is more likely to be set free in the atmosphere and wander among us. The image of a wandering Devil is found in Ephesians (ii. 2), I Peter (v. 8), and Job (i. 7):

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it.

Whereas Defoe claims to pit biblical authority against Milton’s mythopoetic universe, he actually misreads *Paradise Lost*,

since Milton’s Satan is far from being confined to hell. Defoe nevertheless substitutes for Milton’s “deficient, if not absurd” (72) scheme the suggestion that “he is more a vagrant than a prisoner; that he is a wanderer” (73). The next paragraph develops this idea, which Rushdie uses in a truncated form in the epigraph. Following the standard doctrine, Defoe’s unexpurgated text reads:

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 or air, yet this is certainly part of his punishment that he is [continually hovering over this inhabited globe of earth, swelling with the rage of envy at the felicity of his rival, man, and studying all the means possible to injure and ruin him; but extremely limited in his power, to his unspeakable mortification: this is his present state,] without any fixed abode, place, or space allowed him to rest the sole of his foot upon. (73-4)

(For a discussion of the relations between Defoe’s *The History of the Devil* and Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses*, see my “The Epigraph to *The Satanic Verses*: Defoe’s Devil and Rushdie’s Migrant”, forthcoming). Martine Dutheil. See Dutheil, pp. 53-61 for a much fuller discussion of this theme.

² The image of human bodies covered with a thin skin of glass which recurs in the novel in various contexts may have been inspired by a passage from one of Rushdie’s favorite novels: Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*. In Vol. 1, Chapter 23, the narrator speculates upon the existence of glass-covered beings. He begins by referring to a myth that Momus, the Greek god of satire, thought that humans should have windows into their hearts so that their secret feelings could be discerned. The reference to “window-money” refers to the fact that houses used to be taxed according to the number of windows they possessed.

If the fixture of *Momus*’s glass, in the human breast, according to the proposed emendation of that arch-critick, had taken place,--first, This foolish consequence would certainly have followed,--That the very wisest and the very gravest of us all, in one coin or other, must have paid window-money every day of our lives.

And, secondly, That had the said glass been there set up, nothing more would have been wanting, in order to have taken a man’s character, but to have taken a chair and gone softly, as you would to a dioptrical beehive, and look’d in--view’d the soul stark naked;--observ’d all her motions,--her machinations;--traced all her maggots from their first engendering to their crawling forth;--watched her loose in her frisks, her gambols, her capricious; and after some notice of her more solemn deportment, consequent upon such frisks, &c.--then taken your pen and ink and set down nothing but what you had seen, and could have sworn to:--But this is an advantage not to be had by the biographer in this planet,--in the planet *Mercury* (belike) it may be so, if not better still for him;--for there the intense heat of the country, which is proved by computators, from its vicinity to the sun, to be more than equal to that of red hot iron,--must, I think, long ago have vitrified the bodies of the inhabitants,

(as the efficient cause) to suit them for the climate (which is the final cause); so that, betwixt them both, all the tenements of their souls, from top to bottom, may be nothing else, for aught the soundest philosophy can shew to the contrary, but one fine transparent body of clear glass (bating [excepting] the umbilical knot);--so, that till the inhabitants grow old and tolerably wrinkled, whereby the rays of light, in passing through them, become so monstrously refracted,--or return reflected from their surfaces in such transverse lines to the eye, that a man cannot be seen thro';--his soul might as well, unless, for more ceremony,--or the trifling advantage which the umbilical point gave her,--might, upon all other accounts, I say, as well play the fool out o'doors as in her own house.

But this, as I said above, is not the case of the inhabitants of this earth;--our minds shine not through the body, but are wrapt up here in a dark covering of uncrystalized flesh and blood; so that if would come to the specifick characters of them, we must go some other way to work.

³ Feroza Jussawalla on Migration in *The Satanic Verses*:

In "Rushdie's *Dastan-e-Dilruba: The Satanic Verses* as Rushdie's Love Letter to Islam," Feroza Jussawalla makes an interesting argument for viewing the main characters of the novel not as rootless exiles, but as exhibiting characteristics typical of Muslims in India, both by history and by tradition. Their transplanted nature can be seen as part of their heritage rather than as a break with their heritage. She argues that the Persian conquest of India is at least as significant to Rushdie as was the English conquest, and that the Indian Muslim culture he explores in the novel is largely a Persian Mughal import which needs to be seen against a colonialism that goes back half a millenium.

Arguing against Gayatri Spivak's analysis of these characters, she comments:

this is a rather narrow, eurocentric view of postcoloniality, as it sees all colonization as stemming from Europe and in that it sees an individual like Rushdie as the effect of post-European colonization. Rushdie is the European metropolitan intellectual who does not dislodge metropolitan definitions but instead reinscribes them into his roots and his history, which are post--yet another colonization--Muslim colonization.

In contemporary academic criticism, the two main characters of *The Satanic Verses*, Gibreel Farishta and Salahuddin Chamcha, are seen as the essence of post-European coloniality--as hybrid migrants. But migration and hybridization are not just conditions of recent postcoloniality. They are in Rushdie's work metaphors for the Prophet, who himself was a migrant who took shelter in exile. Rushdie parallels their migration with Mohammed's emigration to Yathrib, where in exile he

rethinks his sense of idenity. Both these characters do so too as they find that their liberation from the monstrous states they have grown into (and here Rushdie literally depicts them as monsters), from their doubts and their distance from their faith, can be gained only through their own people, the family that owns the Shandaar cafe, actually the family with another Islamic metaphor, the family of Hind Sufayan. Though the Sufayans had originally been opposed to Mohammed, through a series of treaties, Abu Sufayan himself, a powerful campaign organizer, remained neutral in the battle against Medina. Mohammed had granted complete immunity to any Medinans who took shelter in the Sufayan's home. Thus it is that Rushdie's character, the contemporary *mohajir* (immigrant), Saladin Chamcha, takes shelter in the Sufayan home and is liberated only through them. Rushdie is in fact saying that liberation from this "subaltern" status can only be achieved by turning to one's roots and one's religious/national group/family.

Thus, Gibreel Farishta and Salahuddin Chamcha reject their categorization as half-breed bowler-hatted Englishmen and stretch backward into their Islamic history which they reclaim in a celebration of their heritage--a celebration that has been misunderstood largely by contemporary critics such as Homi Bhabha, who classifies these fictional characters and their real-world counterparts as subalterns in a marginalized space. It is this interpretation of the work that those who actually occupy the marginal spaces in metropolitan London--the Muslims of Bradford and Brick Lane--have been deceived by. They have been led by all the Western press's interpretations, which are largely dependent on academic interpretations, to see Rushdie's fictional characters as caricatures of themselves. They therefore attempt to reject this caricature of themselves as violently as they can through book burnings and so on.

"Rushdie's *Dastan-e-Dilruba*," pp. 60-61.

⁴ Durga Khote (*A note by Salil Tripathi and David Windsor*)

Despite what might be inferred from this passage, Durga Khote was not a political conservative; she was in fact a radical for her times, choosing to act in an industry where young boys acted as women, since acting was considered a "bad" profession. That was truly remarkable, since "girls from good homes" did not perform in public. (That problem is depicted accurately by Shyam Benegal in his 1978 film, *Bhumika (The Role)*, based on the tragic life of another Marathi heroine, Hansa Wadkar.)

Khote was an active participant of the Indian People's Theater Association (IPTA), a progressive, left-leaning movement of artists, writers and playwrights with links with the Communist Party and the Progressive Writers' Association (PWA), and which was incorporated as an all-Indian movement in 1943. The IPTA and the PWA can be seen as part of a remarkable cultural flowering just prior to independence, and many of those involved would define Indian literature and cinema, and to a large extent define its concerns, in the period immediately following Independence. Khote was committed to "democracy" as she understood it. Her family opposed and campaigned against Indira Gandhi's emergency (1977-1979) which suspended civil rights.

Khote came from an enlightened family, and had enlightened children who married beyond their caste--also remarkable, considering that most must have married in 1940s/1950s. Her daughter-in-law is the renowned stage director, Vijaya Mehta, whose credits include reviving great Sanskrit plays like *Mrichhakatika* and *Hayavadana* (reinterpreted by Girish Karnad into Hindi and Marathi); performing Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle* in Marathi (as *Ajab Nyay Vartulacha*); and getting a German team to perform Kalidasa's *Shakuntala* in Germany. She also acts in films, and is at present the director of the National Center for the Performing Arts at Nariman Point in Bombay. Other relations married into the princely Holkar family. One of the grand-daughters, Tina Khote, made a film on Durga Khote's life.

Durgabai, as she was known, lived her autumn years at Alibag, the waterfront beach area which, in a very crude way, can be likened to Martha's Vineyard (summer homes and all that, for the super-rich). Her grandson, Ravi, makes movies; another grandson, Deven, works with TV, and another relation formed a company called Durga Khote Productions, which produced *Wagle Ki Duniya*, a TV program created by the noted cartoonist, R.K. Laxman.

Rushdie's intellectual, aesthetic and political debts to the PWA and the IPTA are hinted at in a number of his novels. In *Midnight's Children*, there are Saleem's Mumani and Mama, Pia, an actress, and Hanif, a scriptwriter trying to bring social realism to Bombay films, "writing about ordinary people and social problems" (p. 242). At artistic gatherings at their flat on Marine Drive, "the air was thick with political, and other, chatter" (p. 246). Among others described as turning up are members of Uday Shankar's dance group--whose involvement was crucial to the initial success of the IPTA. Given that so much of *Midnight's Children* is based on Rushdie's own life--in an interview with the principal of the school Rushdie attended he says that the school-based incidents in the novel all actually took place--it'd be interesting to know who were the artists, musicians and writers who were part of his parents' social group. M. F. Hussain and Bhupen Khakkar obviously knew them pretty well, otherwise we wouldn't have had the story that set off *The Moor's Last Sigh*. Rushdie pays homage to three writers in the latter novel: Ismat Chughtai, Sadat Hasan Manto and Mulk Raj Anand. The last named was of course crucial to the setting up of the PWA (it is interesting that the PWA was an example of a writers association in India that managed to overcome some of the language barriers, including English and Urdu language writers), as well as being

a supporter of modernist painting in India. The other two writers were also members of the amazing milieu of Urdu writers in Bombay, though Manto did run into trouble with the PWA (or at least, with the more communist members of it) who found his works too pornographic and pessimistic.

It is unfortunate that more attention hasn't been drawn to this part of Rushdie's heritage - the progressive writers' and artists of Bombay.

Chapter II: Mahound

Plot outline for Chapter II

Gibreel falls asleep and “dreams” the beginning of the other main plot of the novel, the story of Mahound, more or less closely based on the traditions surrounding Muhammad and the founding of Islam in the seventh century. It is this plot that resulted in the attacks on Rushdie by Muslim critics. We see Mahound surveying the city of Jahilia and are introduced to various significant locales. The period corresponds historically to the early days of Muhammad’s preaching in Mecca, where he was not widely accepted, and the Ka’ba was still filled with pagan idols, including those of the three goddesses who are the focus of the “satanic verses.” Mahound’s preaching has earned the hatred of the ruler of Jahilia, Abu Simbel, whose fortune is derived from worshippers at their temples. Abu Simbel, aware that Baal is his wife Hind’s lover, blackmails the poet Baal to satirize the Mahound and his companions.

But then he tries a more effective alternative to render the prophet harmless by offering him toleration if he in turn will acknowledge the three goddesses whose temples he and his wife receive their income from. Mahound horrifies his followers by seeming to be willing to deviate from his message of strict monotheism. He consults with the Angel Gibreel, who has up to this point been dictating holy scripture to him, and becomes convinced that the “satanic verses” quoted at the bottom of p. 114 [top of p. 117], acknowledging the three goddesses, should be proclaimed as inspired, though the narrator hints on p. 112 [114] that they have been inspired not by God, but by the devil.

Mahound’s decision produces an orgy of celebration which results in death for some, and he himself wakes up in Hind’s bedroom. Mahound realizes the “satanic verses” are indeed satanic, and goes to the Ka’ba to repudiate them. A fierce persecution of Mahound’s followers is unleashed, and he has to flee to Yathrib. Gibreel dreams that he is being attacked by the goddesses, for in his dream-role as the archangel/devil he has been responsible both for suggesting the verses and repudiating them.

Note on the “Satanic Verses”

by Joel Kuortti

One of the most controversial topics in the *Satanic Verses* “affair” is the question of the “satanic verses” themselves. The title of the novel refers to an incident which is on the disputed terrain between fiction and fact. The “satanic verses” are, in transliteration from Arabic, *tilk al-gharaniq al-’ula wa inna shafa’ata-hunna la-turtaja*, and translate into English as “these are exalted females whose intercession is to be desired” (*Satanic Verses* p. 340). (See the note on the translation of these verses, below.) The verses comprising this sentence are said to have been added to the 53rd sura of the Qur’an entitled *Surat-annajm*, *The Star* (53:19ff) in order to acknowledge the validity of the goddesses Lat, Manat, and ‘Uzza. The tradition goes on to say that the verses were later withdrawn and denounced as “satanic.”

But the historicity of the incident is disputed by some of the early Muslim historians, especially (Muhammad ben Yasar)

Ibn Ishaq (d. 768 CE), (Muhammad Abu ‘Abdullah Ibn Umar) al-Waqidi (747-822 CE), (Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Shihab) al-Zuhri (d.741 CE), Muhammad Ibn Sa’d (d. 845 CE), al-Tabari (c. 839-923 CE), Ibrahi. Ibn Hisham, Ibn Ishaq’s editor, omits the passage, but it is preserved as a quotation from al-Tabari, in Guillaume’s translation of Ibn Ishaq (Ishaq 165-166. See Muir, pp.lxxix-lxxx).

Some Islamic and most non-Muslim Western commentators on the Qur’an have accepted this story of Muhammad’s momentary acceptance of the verses; others have repudiated it. But the prevailing Muslim view of what is called the “*Gharaniq*” incident is that it is a fabrication created by the unbelievers of Mecca in the early days of Islam, and, Haykal comments, afterwards the “story arrested the attention of the western Orientalists who took it as true and repeated it *ad nauseam*.” (Haykal 105) The main argument against the authenticity of the two verses in Haykal and elsewhere is that “its incoherence is evident upon the least scrutiny. It contradicts the infallibility of every prophet in conveying the message of His Lord.” (Haykal 107) In other words, since Muslims believe Muhammad to have faithfully reported God’s word, it is surprising that Muslim scholars have accepted such a discreditable story, and not at all surprising that it might have been invented by Islam’s enemies. In his analysis of the passage, Haykal comes to the conclusion that “this story of the goddesses is a fabrication and a forgery, authored by the enemies of Islam after the first century of Hijrah” (Haykal 144). Zakaria Bashier shares this view, though he further argues that even if the verses were to be regarded as being genuine, they would not impugn the Prophet’s infallibility because they were in fact uttered by Satan. (Bashier 175). He also refers to similar observations by al-Suhayili (see Bashier 173).

The argument that W.M. Watt, for his part, provides for the inarguable authenticity of the verses is that “it is inconceivable that any Muslim would invent such a story, and it is inconceivable that a Muslim scholar would accept such a story from a non-Muslim.” (Watt xxxiv). Similarly, in his highly controversial book *Twenty-Three Years*, the Iranian ‘Ali Dashti concludes that “the evidence given in well-attested reports and in the interpretations of certain commentators makes it likely that the incident occurred.” (Dashti 32). As evidence for the possibility of such a recitation and its subsequent withdrawal, the following passage from the Qur’an is often cited: “And We did not send before you any apostle or prophet, but when he desired, the Shaitan made a suggestion respecting his desire; but Allah annuls that which is cast” (22:52). As the suras of the Qur’an are traditionally not presented in chronological order (and just what that order might be is generally under dispute), it could be possible that this passage is referring to such a withdrawal.

The verses were perhaps first named “satanic verses” by Sir William Muir, as Ahsan notes (Ahsan 139, footnote 2). Later the term was widely adopted, for example by Watt in his book *Muhammad at Mecca*. Daniel Pipes explains that as the term “satanic verses” does not occur anywhere else than in Western Orientalists’ works, and states that Rushdie “unwittingly adopted a part of the orientalist tradition.” (Pipes 116) Rushdie maintains that the term “comes from al-Tabari, one of the canonical Islamic sources.” (Rushdie: “Choice between Light and Dark“ 11)

A list of references to the “satanic verses” in the novel.

Page 24

the incident of the Satanic verses in the early career of the Prophet

Page 114

The Star ... At this point, without any trace of hesitation or doubt, he recites two further verses.

Have you thought upon Lat and Uzza, and Manat, the third, the other? . . . ‘They are the exalted birds, and their intercession is desired indeed.’

Page 123 the three winged creatures, looking like herons or swans or just women

‘It was the Devil . . .’

Page 124

He stands in front of the statues . . .

After the repudiation of the Satanic verses . . .

Page 340

he would still speak, at nights, verses in Arabic . . .

Page 366

What finally finished Salman with Mahound: the question of the women; and of the Satanic verses.

Page 368

I went on with my devilement, changing verses . . .

Page 373

Have you heard of Lat, and Manat, and Uzza . . .

There are allusions in the London plot from time to time which connect the verses to Gibreel:

Page 285

it proved impossible to identify the verses

Page 445

the return of the little, satanic verses that made him mad

Page 459

What does a poet write? Verses. What jingle-jangles in Gibreel’s brain? Verses. What broke his heart? Verses and again verses

Page 544

But I heard verses/You get me Spoono/V e r s e s

Note:

The transliteration is given without diacritical marks. The translation in *The Satanic Verses* here is closest to the one in William Muir, *The Life of Mohammad from Original Sources* 81). Another translation can be found in M. M. Ahsan: “These are the high-soaring ones (deities) whose intercession is to be hoped for!” (Ahsan 132). Arabic variants appear on pp.132 & 141 of the same source, and there are variant transliterations in Muhammad Husayn Haykal, p.111.

Rushdie’s own most extended discussion of this issue appears in his *Critical Quarterly* interview, pp. 59-62.

Karen Armstrong, in her *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*, speculates about what truth might lurk behind this tale without necessarily alleging that Muhammad recognized the three goddesses as in any way comparable to God himself:

The *gharaniq* were probably Numidian cranes which were thought to fly higher than any other bird. Muhammad, who

may have believed in the existence of the *banat al-Llah* as he believed in the existence of angels and *jinn*, was giving the “goddesses” a delicate compliment, without compromising his message. The *gharaniq* were not on the same level as al-Llah—not that anybody had suggested that they were—but, hovering as it were between heaven and earth, they could be valid intermediaries between God and man, like the angels, whose intercession is approved in the very next section of Sura 53. The Quraysh spread the good news throughout the city: “Muhammad has spoken of our gods in splendid fashion. He alleged in what he recited that they are the exalted *gharaniq* whose intercession is approved.

Notes for Chapter II

Page 91 [93]

How is “falling asleep” made literal in this opening paragraph?

lote-tree of the uttermost end that stands beneath the Throne.

In Sura 53, verses 14-16 of the *Qur’an*, entitled “The Star,” It is said that a lote tree stands at the boundary of the garden of paradise. According to W. M. Thackston, “This tree, said to stand in the seventh heaven on the right hand of the Throne of God, is called *al-muntaha*, ‘of the limit,’ because it is the boundary beyond which even the angels do not pass” (al-Kisa’i 347; see also Haykal 141-142). It is the passage just following this into which the “satanic” verses are said to have been inserted and then withdrawn.

[94]

revealing the spring of Zamzam to Hagar the Egyptian

Refers to a famous story according to which Muslims believe that Hagar (Arabic Hajar), mother of all future Arabs, finds water in a well miraculously provided by Gibreel (Cornwell 195). Her quest is ritually reenacted by all those who go on the Hejira to Mecca, where the well is now enclosed by the *Haram*, the grand mosque. Her son Ismail (Ishmael) is considered the ancestor of all Arabs. See above, p. 17. (Side note: There is an Iranian brand of soda pop called “Zamzam.”)

the Jurhum filled up Zamzam with mud and golden gazelles

The Jurhum, a tribe of Arabs, a daughter of which had married Ismail (Ishmael), filled the well of Zamzam in when they left Mecca. They had come to Mecca from the Yaman, and settled there before Hajar and Ismail arrived. They became the rulers of the temples and judges in Mecca. But it is said that they became “high-handed and made lawful what was taboo;” and other tribes rose against them and cast them out of the city, sending them into exile. Before they left, one of the Jurhum brought out two carved gazelles of the Ka’ba and the corner-stone, threw them into Zamzam, and covered the well over. Generations later, the tribe of the Quraysh gained control of the Ka’ba, and it was to one of them, ‘Abdu’l-Muttalib b. Hashim, who had responsibility for watering and feeding the pilgrims, that the vision came ordering him to dig up Zamzam. He was the grandfather of Muhammad. Speaking symbolically, the filling in of the well stands as part of the slide into ignorance (Jahiliya) and polytheism by the

Meccans; along with the introduction of idols into the Ka'ba. (David Windsor). See Haykal, pp. 33 & 38.

Page 92

Muttalib of the scarlet tents

Muhammad's grandfather's name Abdul Muttalib. He like his father, was a merchant.. What is the reference to the scarlet tents? and the silver hair?

I've had my bloody chips

British slang for to be finished, done for.

Cone Mountain

Note the pun on Alleluia Cone's name. Plays a role in the novel similar to to Mount Hira where Muhammad received his first revelation (Netton: *Text* 27). For more on Mount Hira, see Haykal, pp. 70, 406.

Allahgod

The word for God in Arabic is "Allah."

homosap

Homo sapiens ("wise human") considered as a "sap" (fool).

Freedom, the old antiquest.

Pun on "Anti-Christ;" suggests that religion opposes freedom.

[95]

harpy

Vicious winged creatures in Greek mythology, implements of vengeance, most unangelic; but here the pun is on "harp," the instrument traditionally played by angels.

What is said about the will versus submission in the last paragraph on this page?

Page 93

The businessman

Muhammed. The description that follows resembles the description of The Prophet in Haykal, p. 63.

opobalsam trees

These trees produce myrrh. Latin name Myroxylon samum.

Jahilia

A term used by Muslims to refer to the period of history preceding the revelation of the *Qur'anto* Muhammad, meaning "ignorance," or "barbarism." Commonly used as a term of contempt today meaning "unislamic" (Easterman 34). Rushdie uses it as a name for Mecca or Makkah.

Mahomet

A common misspelling of Muhammad's name in Europe from the Middle Ages through the 19th century.

farangis

Foreigners, Europeans (Hindi).

whigs, tories, Blacks

Each of these is a term originally used by its enemies to denigrate the designated group, but later adopted with pride by that very group. Compare *Yankee*, originally a British term of contempt for Americans.

Mahound

See note on Mahound, above, in Introduction.

What is your reaction to Rushdie's explanation for choosing this name for his prophetic character?

Hijaz

The area in which Mecca is located.

Page 94 [97]

Zamzam

See note above, on p. 91 [94].

House of the Black Stone

The Kaaba, the temple enclosing the *al-hadjar al-aswad*, the mysterious rock said to have fallen from heaven, the center of Muslim worship in Mecca, a focus of religious observances from before Islamic times.

Given the fact that most Middle-Eastern cities introduce pools and fountains wherever they can, what do you think is the significance of the symbolism of a city made of sand which abhors water?

Page 95

Khalid Khalid ibn al-Walid (d. 642) was converted to Islam in the year before Muhammad conquered Mecca and became early Islam's most famous military leader apart from the Prophet himself. He is referred to again on p. 381 [385] as "General Khalid."

Shark

See note in Introduction. Rushdie is stressing the appropriateness of the name for a tribe of businessmen.

Ismail

The Qur'anic spelling for character called Ishmael in the Bible. Gibreel was partly named after him. See note on "Ismail," above, p. 17.

He moves in mysterious ways.

Alluding to the first lines of the *Olney Hymn* no. 35, "Light Shining Out of Darkness" by William Cowper (1731-1800): "God moves in a mysterious way / His wonders to perform."

first Safa then Marwah

Two mounds between which pilgrims to Mecca still run in imitation of Hagar.

Arabia Odorifera

Latin for "fragrant Arabia." The region was associated with spices in ancient and medieval times and it was said that one

could smell them in the air. See, for instance, Rabanus Maurus's *De rerum naturis*, Book 19: on aromatic herbs and trees in the Middle East (842-846).

balsam, cassia, cinnamon, frankincense, myrrh

Fragrant substances; it is probably not a coincidence that the last two were often described as being given to the Christ child by the Magi.

Page 96 [98]

Monophysite

The belief that Christ had only one nature.

Nabataean

An ancient Arabian people; but the term is used in Arabic to label Syrian and Iraqi Aramaeans.

Basra

In southeastern Iraq.

hashish

See above, note on p. 76 [78].

afeem

Opium.

Page 98 [100]

Anatolian slaves

Anatolia (modern Turkey) was a source of slaves from ancient times.

[99]

a series of rough circles

According to Rushdie, this feature of Jahilia is modelled on Delhi ("In Good Faith" 409).

Page 97

onager

A wild ass (*Equus hemionus*) of southwestern Asia.

[100]

the satirist

Muhammad was much troubled by satirical poets who attacked him and had one, named Ka'b, assassinated (Armstrong 185).

Baal.

Originally the name of a Middle Eastern sky-god worshipped by the original inhabitants of Israel, much denounced but occasionally worshipped by Jews. In the Bible his worship is fiercely denounced, and his name eventually became synonymous with "Devil." He is also often referred to as "Baalzebul" ("Lord of Lords"), although these were evidently originally separate gods.

Why do you think Rushdie has chosen this as the name of his satirist?

Page 99 [101]

Hubal . . . Kain

The Arabic spellings of "Abel" and "Cain."

Amalekites

A Semitic people who figure as enemies of the Israelites in the Bible, and whose descent are traced from Esau. See Exodus 17:8-16, I Samuel 15:1-33. Arabic scholars identify them with the ancient Arab tribe of Abulfeda, ruling for a long period over Mecca.

Uzza . . . Manat . . . Al-Lat . . .

Not only were these three pre-Islamic goddesses worshipped in Mecca, but at temples of their own in, respectively Taif, Qudayd, and Naklah.

Page 101 [103]

Bilal

Bilal b. Rabah, was a freed Abyssinian slave and appointed by Muhammad as his first muezzin (Netton: *Text*, p. 28). See note on "Bilal X", below, p. 207 [213].

some sort of bum from Persia by the outlandish name of Salman
Salman al-Farisi was an early Persian convert to Islam, but this is also a sly reference to the author's first name (Netton: *Text*, p. 28). David Windsor adds, "he was one of the actual companions of the Prophet (though not one of the scribes of the Recitation, as he is in the novel) and is credited with the idea of digging the trench (in the battle that gets its name from it) which defeated the Meccan cavalry. (See Haykal 303 and Armstrong 203).

Why does Abu Simbel oppose Mahound so fiercely?

Page 102 [104]

They stretched him out in the fairground with a boulder on his chest.

See note above on p. 43.

What does Abu Simbel mean by his answer to the question, "What kind of idea am I?"

manticore

See "manticorps," below, p. 361 [373].

Page 103 [105]

Zafar

A city in Yemen, founded in the 13th century. Rushdie undoubtedly mentioned this city partly because its name is also that of his son by his first wife, and to whom *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* is dedicated.

Sheba

The kingdom also known as Saba, in southern Arabia, considered by many scholars to be the Biblical Sheba.

Yathrib

The original name of Medina before Muhammad moved there in 622, the second most sacred city of Islam, object of the Hejira or Hijrah.

Midian

The area bordering the Gulf of Aqaba opposite the Sinai Peninsula.

Aqabah

Or Aqaba, the port city at the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba.

Petra

Ancient city in southwest Jordan, capital of the Nabataeans.

Palmyra

Ancient city in Central Syria, northeast of Damascus. Legend says it was built by Solomon. Although the Bible does not indicate that Solomon and Sheba were lovers, legend linked them romantically.

[106]

gangs of young Sharks

The Tribe of Mahound (see above, Introduction) but very likely also a reference to the Puerto Rican gang called “The Sharks” in Leonard Bernstein’s *West Side Story*, which, like this novel, has a theme of interracial strife.

Page 104 [106]

Ablutions

Muslims must ceremoniously wash certain parts of their body before prayers.

[107]

Hamza

The name of the uncle of the historical Muhammad. (See Netton: *Dictionary*. 95.)

Page 105 [107]

When you come down from Coney there’s a brightness on you.

Compare with the Biblical tradition that when Moses descended from Mount Ararat after receiving the Law from God, his face shone (Exodus 34:35).

[108]

There is no god but God.

The central statement of faith of Islam, the *qalimah*: “La ilaha ilallah! La ilaha!” A fuller translation is: “There is no God but God, the God”.

Page 108 [110]

pee oh vee

POV: point of view.

steadicam

A camera on an ingenious mechanical mounting that allows it to compensate for the movements of the person carrying it, so that a hand-held shot looks steady.

bazooms

Old-fashioned slang for “bosoms.”

[111]

travelling mat

A special effect in film which allows the insertion of a person into a scene where he/she has actually never been.

Page 109

bhaenchud

Literally means “one who sleeps with his sister;” but used very commonly as a very insulting expletive like “fucking” (Hindi, Urdu).

Page 110 [112]

flew me to Jerusalem

Refers to a miraculous journey taken by Muhammad, the ‘isra (“Night Flight”). See Armstrong pp. 138-142.

Page 111 [113]

Allah Ishvar God

Listing in order Muslim, Hindu and Christian terms for the deity.

What do you think the repeated refrain “What kind of an idea are you/am I” is meant to indicate? Keep track of the various uses to which this phrase is put throughout the novel.

Page 112 [114]

epileptic fit

In some early Western commentaries on Islam, Muhammad’s visions were ascribed to epileptic fits (Kuortti).

Page 113 [116]

that famous Grecian profile . . .

Compare with the description of Ayesha below, p. 206 [212].

kahin

Muhammad was accused of being a seer or *kahin* (Arabic) by the inhabitants of Mecca early in his career, one of several accusations against him made previous to his recognition as the Prophet (Götje. 9, Bader 69). When the angel Gibreel first ordered Muhammad to recite, he protested that he could not, that he was not a *kahin* (Armstrong 46).

Page 114

The Star

Each *sura*, or chapter in the Qur’an has a title, in this case “The Star” (Sura 53). The added verses are, of course, the “Satanic” verses of the title, and there is indeed a rather obscure Muslim tradition which tells how these verses were at first included, then rejected. See also above, p. 24, and below, p. 123 [125-126]. See also Haykal, pp. 105-114.

Note the seeming results of Mahound's new "revelation" on the following pages and discuss them.

Page 115 [117]

Allahu Akbar

"God is Great," part of the traditional Islamic call to prayer (Arabic).

Page 117 [119]

gryphons

Monsters combining the forequarters of eagles and the hindquarters of lions. Also spelled "Griffins."

salamanders

Because salamanders were often found basking in the still-warm ashes of extinct fires they were thought to be able to live in flames and were attributed all sorts of miraculous properties.

rocs

The roc was the gigantic bird that carried off Sinbad in *The Thousand and One Nights*.

amphisbaenae

Two-headed serpents of Greek myth.

Assyrian Sphinx

The Assyrian figures of winged bulls with bearded human heads have sometimes been called by this name by analogy with the Egyptian sphinx, which has the body of a lion and head of a man.

Djinns

See note above, on p. 22.

houris

Beautiful, virginal maidens provided for the pleasure of the saved (men) in the Muslim paradise (Arabic). See Introduction.

Page 118 [121]

Isa . . . Maryam

Jesus and Mary. Jesus is a miraculously born prophet of God in Islam, but not God's son.

Page 120 [122]

simurgh

In Persian mythology, a gigantic bird. Rushdie called his first novel *Grimus*, a near-anagram of "simurgh."

hippogriffs

Mythical monster combining the forequarters of a griffin and the hindquarters of a horse. See above, note on "gryphon," on p. 117 [119].

[123]

He knows I take lovers

According to tradition, Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan (after whom Abu Simbel is patterned), had many lovers (Haykal 319).

Page 123 [125]

wrestling match with the Archangel Gibreel

Refers to Jacob's wrestling match with an angel (or God himself, depending on how you read Genesis 32:24-32).

[126]

Why does the narrator say "it was me both times"? What is the significance of this statement?

Page 124 [127]

These are but names you have dreamed of, you and your fathers. Allah vests no authority in them.'

Verses from the chapter called "The Star" in the Qur'an.

Page 125

Submission

"Islam" literally means "submission."

Yathrib

See note above, on p. 103 [127].

Chapter III: Ellowen Deeowen

Plot outline for Chapter III

Rosa Diamond, an old woman who spends much of her time dreaming about the past (the Norman Invasion and her own, in Argentina), witnesses Gibreel and Saladin's descent to earth and rescues them; but Saladin is arrested as an illegal immigrant, while Rosa dies. The police strip and humiliate Saladin, who discovers that he is turning into a hairy, goatlike creature. In a bizarre secret hospital where animal/human experiments reminiscent of H. G. Wells' *The Island of Doctor Moreau* are being carried out he is befriended by a physiotherapist and escapes.

The scene shifts to Saladin's home where his wife Pamela, rather than grieving for him, has started an affair with Jumpy Joshi, and does not welcome the news that he is still alive. The two lovers flee and engage in an orgy of lovemaking until Saladin finds them in his goatlike form.

On the train to London Gibreel is bored by an American fundamentalist with the same name as a "false prophet" in Islamic tradition: Maslama. Various signs convey to Gibreel that he is evolving into an angel. This scene shifts to introduce Alleluia Cone, former lover of Gibreel, speaking to a class of schoolgirls about her career as a mountain-climber. Gibreel, entering London, haunted by the ghost of another lover—Rekha Merchant—runs into her on the street.

Notes for Chapter III

Page 129 [133]

Rosa Diamond

Her story and its sources are studied in detail by Daniel Balderston.

Willie-the-Conk

William the Conqueror. See above, note on p. 44.

It is appropriate that Rosa Diamond be the person who first encounters Gibreel and Saladin after their fall because, she, William the Conqueror, and they are all immigrants.

Page 130 [134]

Battle Hill

Near the traditional site of the Battle of Hastings; its name commemorates the battle.

Harold Arroweye

Although this epithet might suggest a sharp-eyed leader, it is in fact a mocking reference to the means of King Harold's death. In the Bayeux Tapestry the Saxon leader is depicted as having been

shot through the eye with an arrow.

William with his mouth full of sand

One tradition says that when William landed, he bent down and ate a mouthful of English soil.

Page 131 [135]

Lucifer

One traditional name for the planet Venus, also a name for the Devil. See note above on p. 76 [.

old Chumch

A pun on "old chum."

cased in a fine skin of ice

See notes on pp. 33-34, 169.

Page 132 [136]

Charlton Heston

In one of the more spectacular Academy Award-winning special effects from the 1956 film *The Ten Commandments*, Heston, playing Moses, parts the Red Sea with his staff so the captive Hebrews can leave Egypt.

the tall, bony figure of Death

Margareta Petersson points out that both Gibreel and Chamcha "meet, almost in a faint, a woman with a cane, which they believe is Death: for Saladin it is Rosa Diamond, for Gibreel Allie Cone" (Petersson 273).

Page 133 [137]

almost a wanton attitude to tumbling flies

See Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Act IV, Scene 1: "As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods."

I yield pride of place to no personage in the matter of tumbles

Satan (Satan) is said to have been an Angel, cast down from Heaven for rebelling against God. (See Qur'an 38:78 and Revelation 12:9). Note also the suicidal plunges of various characters in the novel.

Page 134 [138]

like a wolf on the fold

From Byron's "The Destruction of Sennacherib," stanza 1, line 1: "The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold."

shingle

Shoreline gravel.

Page 135 [139]

Japonaiserie

Imitating Japanese style (French).

Page 136 [140]

Here I am, in Grandmother's house. Her big eyes, hands, teeth.

Allusion to "Little Red Riding Hood."

Tennyson

The play described might be a dramatization of Alfred Lord Tennyson's *Enoch Arden* (1864), with the incident of the toy added by the dramatist (or by Rushdie).

Page 137 [141]

Harrods

A popular London department store.

sod

An obscene verb derived from *sodomize*, commonly used as a curse.

Page 138

vibora, de la Cruz

"Viper of the cross," the popular Spanish name of the snake scientifically called *Bothrops Alternatus*, also called the *urutu*. The paradoxical association of the holy cross with the demonic snake fits the divine/demonic themes of the novel. The historical Martin de la Cruz from whom this character's name is derived was a 16th-century doctor who wrote the first medical book written in Colonial America, the *Libellus de Medicinalibus Indorum Herbis* (1552).

I'm not having it

I won't accept/allow this.

Jerry

German soldier. Rosa Diamond is remembering the coastal blackouts imposed during World War II.

Page 139 [143]

illegals

Illegal immigrants.

Page 140 [144]

ugando-kenyattas

Jomo Kenyatta was the leader of the Mau Mau liberation movement in Kenya, which had nothing to do with another

British African colony, Uganda. Here the two are linked as a way of mocking the tendency of the British to lump all dark-skinned people together

Page 142 [146]

pull the other one

An expression of incredulity, meaning "Try another outrageous lie on me, I don't believe this one." Derived from the expression "You're pulling my leg," meaning "You're kidding me."

Black Maria

Traditional slang term for a police van.

Page 143 [147]

Argentina

The most thorough discussion of the Argentina allusions in the Rosa Diamond section is by Daniel Balderston

Page 144 [148]

men with horned helmets

Alludes to ancient invasions of England by Norse raiders.

[149]

Some ancient Morgan Le Fay singing a young Merlin into her crystal cave

In most versions of the Arthurian legends it is the young Vivien (also known as Nimue, one of the "ladies of the lake"), who traps the aged Merlin in a cave or tree. Rushdie was probably influenced by John Boorman's 1981 film, *Excalibur*, in substituting the better-known Morgan (called "Morgana" in the film) for Vivien. Rosa is old and Gibreel is young; so that although she enchants him as did her predecessor, the difference in their ages is reversed. Back on p. 135, Saladin had dreamed of Zeeny Vakil luring him into an iceberg with her song, clearly a foreshadowing of this image.

Page 145 [150]

Babington

Rushdie has given this anti-English Argentinian a quintessentially English name, the middle name of poet Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859), infamous in India for his 1835 "Minute on Indian Education" which prescribed a system of Western-oriented education designed to keep Indians subordinate to the English within the British Empire.

Page 147 [151]

the Perón people

Followers of Argentine dictator Juan Perón, who rose to power during the period 1943-1946. As Daniel Balderston points out (304-305) Rosa Diamond would seem to have left Argentina considerably before he became known, one of several anachronisms in this story.

the Hurlingham

Probably the members of the Hurlingham Golf Club, near Buneos Aires, founded in 1888 by a group of English citizens.

trop fatale

French for “too fatal;” but alluding to the expression “*femme fatale*” (“fatal woman”) which describes a woman whose beauty lures men to destruction. [152]

Aurora del Sol

Spanish for “dawn of the sun.”

Page 148 [152]

Martello tower

A kind of circular coastal fort built along the English coastline in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, named after the first one at Cape Martello in Corsica. A series of them was also built 1803-1806 along the Irish coast as protection against a Napoleonic invasion; the one at Sandycove was inhabited by James Joyce for a week in September 1904 and is now a Joyce museum (Fargnoli). Stephen Dedalus lives there in *Ulysses*. Hence this may be one of several Joyce allusions in *The Satanic Verses*.¹ In both Rushdie’s work and Joyce’s the towers are associated with characters alienated from their homelands; but here they also

remind us that England has been subject to threats of invasion, a major theme in the novel.

Photos of Joyce’s Martello tower by K. Gwan Go

ostrich

Since Rosa sees it as well, this is probably a South American rhea rather than a true ostrich, suggests Steven F. Walker. It marks the beginnings of Gibreel’s hallucinations (Walker 349).

Page 149 [153]

fancy dress

Party costume.

Page 150 [154]

Amerigo Vespucci’s account of his voyages

This 15th-century Italian navigator made exaggerated claims for his discoveries in the Western hemisphere and managed to have the “New World” named after himself: “America.” Some more recent scholars have tried to rehabilitate Vespucci’s reputation.

Page 151 [156]

Hispano-Suiza

A deluxe early make of sports car whose name reflects the theme of intercultural hybridity, since it means “Spanish-Swiss.”

Page 152

estancia

Argentinian ranch.

As white as snow . . .

Her body forms the Nazi flag, as described in the previous paragraph.

Page 153 [157]

As if a boulder had been placed upon his chest

See note above on p. 43.

Page 156 [160}

London shareef

The term *sharif* or *shareef* means “noble, exalted” (Arabic). Here the term parodies the more usual term *Mecca Sharif* (see below, p. 235, where the terms *Quran Sharif* and *Haram Sharif* are also used.)

younger

Since Rosa has just died, this sexual encounter with her younger image seems to be a delusion in Gibreel’s mind. On p. 334, the ghost of Rekha Merchant claims that this younger Rosa was a shape taken by herself.



Page 157 [163]

Fancy
Desire.

Saladin's transformation into a beast functions allegorically to reflect how the British regard South Asian immigrants as not quite human.

Page 158

Joe Bruno, Novak, Jock Stein

The "distinctly un-Anglo-Saxon" names of the immigration officers drive home the absurdity of their rabid xenophobia.

Joe Bruno is the long-time New York Senate Republican leader who has been outspoken in his criticism of minorities and immigrants.

Jock Stein was the renowned manager of the Scottish soccer team, the Glasgow Celtic, in the 1960s and early 1970s. "Mack" is a plausibly Scottish nickname for this person with a Jewish last name. Stein was, however famously a Protestant leading a Catholic team—another outsider (David Windsor).

On p.160 Novak is called "Kim," presumably a nickname derived from that of the very female American movie star of *Vertigo* and other popular films. Novak is a Polish surname, but it may have amused Rushdie to refer to Kim because that is the name of one of Rudyard Kipling's most famous protagonists, born English, but living as an Indian.

that Sussex of rewards and fairies which every schoolboy knew
Rudyard Kipling's *Rewards and Fairies* (1910) continued the historical/fantastical adventures of Dan and Una, whom most readers met for the first time in *Puck of Pook's Hill* (Suzanne Keen). Both volumes deal in part with "colonial" periods in English history, including the Roman and Norman invasions, and are set in the same general area as the Rosa Diamond episode.

Page 159 [164]

Sylhet
A rural district in Bangladesh. Information on Sylhet.

Gujranwala
An agricultural center in Pakistan.

[165]

primus inter pares
First among equals (Latin).

Page 161 [166]

Danny Blanchflower
Famous footballer (soccer player) for the Tottenham Hotspurs during 1960 and 1961 seasons when they were champions, hence the reference to the "double" team (Kuortti).

Pansy . . . bum boys
Both insulting terms for gay men.

football hooligans
Violent soccer fans.

Page 162 [167]

Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty
Although this slogan is commonly attributed to Thomas Jefferson, it was apparently first delivered in this form by Wendell Phillips in 1852, speaking to the Massachusetts Antislavery Society; but an earlier version—"The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance"—was uttered by John Philpot Curran in Ireland in 1790.

Page 163 [168]

matchoftheday
Broadcast football (soccer) match of the day, here sports talk generally.

the penny dropped
Refers to someone belatedly catching on to what is being talked about; derived from a slow-working coin-operated machine.

Packy billy
Pakistani goat. All South Asians tend to be labelled "Pakys" in London.

Garrick Club
Prestigious actors' club, named after the famous actor David Garrick (1717-1779).

Page 164 [169]

The fact that the Police National Computer identifies Saladin as an English citizen places him in greater danger than before because the police now have to cover up an assault on a citizen and not a mere illegal alien; they are likely to do so by killing him.

[170]

Hyacinth Phillips
In Greek mythology, Hyacinth was a beloved friend of Apollo. Supposedly when Apollo's tears blended with the dying Hyacinth's blood as the god embraced him they created the flower we now call Hyacinth, so the name may be plausibly linked to caring for the sick, as in the case of an AIDS service organization with that name (Kuortti). She shares her last name with another Black woman, Orphia Phillips, whom Gibreel will meet later, on p. 328 [338] (Petersson 273).

Page 166 [171]

The image of the woman repeatedly giving birth powerfully suggests the monsters being created in this "hospital."

exotic spices sizzling in clarified butter—coriander, turmeric, cinnamon, cardamoms, cloves
Indian recipes often begin by "roasting" (frying) whole spices such as these (the *masala*) in clarified butter (*ghee*).

[172]

Cheshire-Cat-like

In Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* the Cheshire Cat can make parts of his body—such as his head—appear and disappear in isolation.

Page 167

that sick

British equivalent of American “so sick.”

burd

Bird, British slang for “woman.”

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Beelzebub

See note above, on p. 98 [100].

manticore

A mythical Indian beast with the head of a man, body of a tiger or lion, and feet and tail of a scorpion or of a dragon; from Persian *mandhara*: “man-eater.” From Rushdie's acknowledgements: “For the description of the Manticore, I'm indebted to Jorge Luis Borges's *Book of Imaginary Beings*.” The manticore is a *chimera*, see note on p. 301 [311].²

For more about the manticore. See Appendix C.

Moaner Lisa

Pun on the *Mona Lisa* of Leonardo da Vinci.

Page 169 [174]

Her skin turned to glass.

As in Saladin's dream, pp. 33-34.; see note on p. 131 [135].

[175]

he found himself dreaming of the Queen, of making tender love to the Monarch

Like Gibreel with Babasaheb, p. 22 or Mahound with Hind, p. 119 [121].

Page 170 [176]

great escape

Probably an allusion to *The Great Escape*, a 1963 film about an escape from a World War II prison camp.

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detenus

French for “prisoners.”

Page 172 [178]

the two-backed beast

In Shakespeare's *Othello* Iago tries to stimulate Brabantio's horror at the news that his daughter has married the African Othello by telling him that the couple is now “making the beast with two backs,” that is, making love (Act I, scene 1, l. 116).

breather

Obscene phone-caller who gets his kicks by saying nothing (just breathing) while listening to the agitated party on the other end of the line.

Page 173 [179]

Partido Socialista

Socialist Party (Spanish).

even the last of the elms, a survivor of the plague years

Most elms in Europe have been killed by Dutch elm disease. The final phrase echoes the title of Daniel Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year* (1722).

Page 174 [180]

patchouli

The most commonly imported Indian scent, worn widely by hippies in the sixties seeking to associate themselves with India, which explains why Saladin has doused himself with it to attract Pamela.

kurta

See above, p. 53.

read-your-palm

The first in a list of other stereotypically but inauthentically Indian images which might attract an exoticism-seeking young woman like Pamela. Palm reading is traditionally more associated with gypsies, though they are Indian in origin.

bedspread-jacket

A cheap cloth jacket made of an Indian-print bedspread.

Hare-Krishna

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, very conspicuous in the West in the seventies.

dharma bum

Refers to the title of Jack Kerouac's 1958 novel, *Dharma Bums*,

which incorporates the Hindu concept of duty: *dharma*. A *dharma bum* is either someone who finds his *dharma* in being a bum, or, more likely, someone who avoids performing his *dharma*.

Eros

The Greek god of love.

Page 175 [181]

a real Saladin . . . a man with a holy land to conquer

In the 12th century, the Sultan Saladin led a successful attempt to dislodge the Europeans from Jerusalem, which the latter had seized in the First Crusade.

the Falklands War

The British forced Argentina to abandon the Falkland Islands off its coast, which the latter had seized in 1982. The conflict was widely interpreted as a flareup of old British imperialism.

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the one hundred and thirty-seventh psalm, 'Super flumina.'
Psalm 137 is the lament of the Jews taken into exile in Babylon in the early sixth century BC and begins "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof." The exiles refuse to sing their songs in this foreign land (*How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land*, p. 176). The attribution to King David is traditional, but unsupported by modern scholarship. On their 1978 album *Nightflight to Venus* the group Boney M set this psalm to music as "Rivers of Babylon." Boney M was a Euro-Disco group of black American soldiers who had stayed on in Germany after serving hitchhikes there, assembled by a German record producer in the mid-seventies; so not only is the theme of immigration and exile present in the song but in its singers.

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Sher Khan

Saladin evidently named his dog after the tiger in Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, set in India. Kipling was probably alluding to the Medieval Kashmiri leader 'Alam Sher Khan, whose deeds are recounted in the *Baharistan-i-Shahi*.

Page 177

Harold Wilson

Prime Minister of Great Britain 1964-1970 and 1974-76. Leader of the British Labour Party.

students disguised as Russian assassins

The description that follows reflects an old newspaper-cartoon stereotype of the communist terrorist, which the students here are self-consciously mocking.

fedoras

Felt hats with curled brims traditionally associated with cartoon terrorists.

[184]

bonnet

American "hood."

long live Ho Chi Minh

Many radical anti-Vietnam War protesters, far from being pacifists, aligned themselves with the communist forces in Vietnam led by Chairman Ho.

Page 179 [185]

Finn MacCool

This legendary Medieval Irish warrior-poet had only to suck his magical thumb of knowledge to foresee things to come. Also known as Finn Mac Cumhail.

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

President Kennedy's widow appalled many of her admirers when she married the conservative shipping magnate Aristotle Onassis who lived on the Greek island of Skorpios.

Page 180 [187]

ass. Arse. Ass.

Alternating the American spelling with the British one.

Page 181

ack-ack

World War II bomber crew slang for aerial machine gun fire.

to the top of a tall building

Jumping or falling to one's death is a constant motif in this novel. Compare for instance, Rekha Merchant and her children (pp.14-15).

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Château Talbot

One of the finest of red Bordeaux wines, named after an English general who was killed in the final battle of the Hundred Years War at Castillon, near where the wine is made. Hence this is another cross-cultural reference: a French wine named after an Englishman.

Matthew Hopkins, the Witchfinder-General

A 17th-century British "Witch Finder General" responsible during 1645-1647 for the deaths of perhaps 230 people, finally himself hanged as a witch in 1647 (Robbins 249-253). He was particularly obsessed by the consorting of witches with imps and familiars: demonic creatures in the form of possessed animals, as depicted in the frontispiece of his pamphlet entitled *The Discovery of Witches*. Rushdie might have been made aware of Hopkins by the fame a 1982-1983 heavy metal rock called Witchfinder General.

Gremlins

In World War II, pilots invented mythical creatures called "gremlins" which were responsible for various mechanical malfunctions in their planes; but Rushdie may be referring to the demonic little creatures featured in the 1984 movie, *Gremlins*.

[189]

I am I am that I am

God's definition of himself, or his name, in Exodus 3:14.

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Chin-Chin . . . Skol

British and Swedish expressions for "Drink up!"

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killing old women

See below, p. 361.

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cannibal and Christian

Cannibals and Christians is the title of a 1966 collection of essays by Norman Mailer in which he opposes what he calls "the Right Wing" ("cannibals") to all who believe in the potential goodness of humanity ("Christians").

pista barfi and jalebis

Indian sweets (Hindi). Pista barfi would be a sort of fudge made with pistachios. Jalebi are deep fried swirls of saffron-flavored yellow dough. A thick batter is poured in a stream into hot oil to make jalebis, which are then soaked in a sugar syrup.

chaloo chai

Sweetened spiced tea with milk (Hindi).

[191]

samosas

Pockets of bread filled with spiced meat or vegetable (Hindi).

Page 185 [192]

pice

Tiny coin, 100th of a rupee (Hindi).

rishi

Ancient Hindu sage (Sanskrit).

pir

A Muslim saint, wise man (Farsi).

Page 186

Like the Roman, the ferrety Enoch Powell had said, I seem to see the river Tiber foaming with much blood.

On April 20, 1968, the racist British politician Enoch Powell, recently returned from observing the riotous aftermath of the assassination of Martin Luther King in the U.S., gave in Birmingham an inflammatory diatribe against a proposed race relations measure which vaulted him to instant prominence. He warned of a coming race war, stating: “like the Roman, I seem to see the River Tiber foaming with much blood.” The allusion is to a prophecy of war uttered by the Sibyl in Book VI of Virgil’s *Aeneid*.

Page 188 [194]

beastly dead

In the first chapter of James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus tells his friend Buck Mulligan that the day after his mother’s death, he had overheard Buck say to a visitor, “O, it’s only Dedalus, whose mother is beastly dead” (Booker 206, footnote 3). Here the “dead” man has been literally transformed into a beast.

Page 190 [196]

Maslama

The name alludes to the Arabian “false prophet” known as “Musaylima the Liar” (Al-’Azm 284 & Simawe 186), linked to Akbar by his unorthodox beliefs.

La-ilaha . . . illallah

The *qalmah*. See note above, on p. 105 [108].

universal faith invented by the Emperor Akbar

Akbar the Magnificent ruled over the Mughal Empire in India (1556-1605), repudiated orthodox Islam, and was deeply

interested in the major beliefs of the world’s religions, including Islam, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity. He finally claimed theological infallibility and promulgated a blended religion of his own invention called “Teen Ilahi,” Arabic for “the religion (Din) of God” or “Divine Faith” (Windsor).

music of the spheres

Influenced by the ancient Greek thinker Pythagoras, many Renaissance thinkers speculated about harmonies inaudible to mortals produced by the turning of the spheres of the heavens.

Page 191 [197]

bespoke tailoring

Hand-made clothing (very expensive).

milord

French term for an English gentleman.

producing advertising jingles

Like Rushdie himself.

Page 192 [198]

rainbow coalition of the celestial

Borrows Jessie Jackson’s term for his multi-racial coalition.

a walking United Nations of Gods

Margareta Petersson points out that Gibreel is also compared to the United Nations on p. 60 (Petersson 273).

Page 193 [199]

Bartica on the Essequibo

Bartica is a city at the mouth of the Essequibo River in Guyana.

Page 194 [200]

Handel’s Messiah

George Frederick Handel’s most popular composition is the “Hallelujah Chorus” from the oratorio *Messiah*.

Page 195 [202]

bibi

Usually wife, but here, woman (Hindi).

Kachori

Spiced chickpea.

Hi ho, it’s off to work.

From the song “Hi Ho” in the Disney film of *Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs*. See the reference to Snow White earlier in this paragraph.

Page 196

the old mantra: om mani padmè hum

A mantra is a formula repeated ritually in Buddhist meditation. The one quoted here in Sanskrit is the most famous, and means “The jewel in the lotus,” which refers to the Buddha.

[203]

yeti

The “abominable snowman,” a gigantic deadly monster believed by people in the Himalayas to seek human beings.

Page 198 [204]

Sherpa Pemba

Pemba Sherpa is one of the founders of Asian Trekking, the main organization that provides guides for Everest expeditions.

Page 200 [206]

dressed in white, like a mourner at a funeral

In Muslim countries, mourners wear white, not black. It has snowed.

Note the plays on words in the last sentence of this chapter.

(Notes for Chapter 3)

¹ Every year there is in the Netherlands a special week, called the *Week of the Book*, in which-- to promote the new titles-- anyone spending more than \$10 in a book store receives an extra book, which is specially written for the occasion. In 2001 it was Salman Rushdie who was invited to write the book, and his *Woede* (i.e. *Fury in English*) became the year's present. He was also invited to the Gala of authors with which the *Week of the Book* started. This year the party was held in a wing of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam.) It was here that Margot Dijkgraaf, literary critic of the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*, interviewed Salman Rushdie for the series *The Crucial Book*, in which writers expound their views on the book that has most influenced their ideas. [K.G.]

THE CRUCIAL BOOK OF: SALMAN RUSHDIE

“Joyce built a whole universe out of a grain of sand”

Salman Rushdie, the author of the “Week of the Book” present, was carried along by James Joyce’s *Ulysses* as though the book was rocket fuel.

The wing of the Rijksmuseum looks like a fort. His bodyguards (beside his own there are three other of the city of Amsterdam) have left for a cup of coffee, and the one walking along Salman Rushdie watches me with a slightly disturbed and slightly concerned expression. Many images must haunt the head of the man who wrote this year’s “Week of the Book” present: frightening images, images of the future, images of old myths and modern internet legends. Somewhere in that hyperactive brain also roams the spirit of the Irish-born writer James Joyce (1882-1941). Rushdie: “Joyce is always in my mind, I carry him everywhere with me”.

Who it was who called his attention to *Ulysses* (published in Paris in 1922) Rushdie does not remember, but he knows that it was in the first year of his study of history.. “Everyone said that it was such a sealed book, hard to penetrate, but I did not think so at all. You never hear people say that there is so much humor in the book, that the characters are so lively or that the theme - Stephen

Daedalus in search of his lost father and Bloom looking for his lost child - is so moving. People talk about the cleverness of *Ulysses* and about the literary innovation. To me it was moving, in the first place”

Stephen and Bloom, those were the characters which touched him immediately. He quotes from memory: “Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls”. Those were the first lines of the second chapter. “I am myself disgusted by that kind of organs”, he grinned. “There are still so many little things I always have to smile about when I think of them. That commercial, for example: “What is home/without Plumtree’s Potted Meat?/ Incomplete”. That is still funny. Joyce used many stylistic means which were novel in his time, newspaper headlines for instance. Is it not moving that he makes *Ulysses* happen on the day that he met his wife! He kept that newspaper, carried it always with him and used all of its details, including the names of the horses in the races. In short, he built a universe out of a grain of sand. That was a revelation to me: so that is the way one could also write! To somebody who wanted to be a writer, like me, it was so perfect, so inspiring, that it made one need to recover. I have thought for some time: I quit writing, I become a lawyer. Later I thought that there may be some little things still worth doing.”

Such as in the field of linguistic innovation? “Joyce spoke against the politisizing of literature, but his language is a purposeful attempt to create an English which was just not a property of the English. He employs a lot of borrowed words from other European languages and creates an un-English kind of English”. Was that not also the goal of Rushdie himself? “Certainly. The Irish did it, so did the American and the Caribbean writers. While English traveled around like that, the people felt the need to innovate it. So I did. But the Joycean innovation was the greatest of all. It is an example that deserves to be followed”.

And what about Joyce’s famous *monologue intérieur* ? “That *stream of consciousness* was not an invention of Joyce, but he used it more subtly than anyone else. Bloom’s inner voices were about very common things, about a hungry feeling or so. Joyce demonstrates that the material of daily life can be as majestic as any great epic. The lives of ordinary people are also worthy of great art. One can create *grandeur* out of banality. That was precisely the criticism Virginia Woolf had on Joyce. Woolf was a bit too snobbish for it”.

As the best example of the *stream of consciousness* Rushdie “of course” considers Molly Blooms monologue at the end of the book. “In the past I could recite whole parts of it: “and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.” That conclusion is *absolutely rocket fuel at the end*. You have a book behind you in which the behavior of people is not strictly transparent and then suddenly you feel not only the skin of that woman, but her whole body, all her flesh and blood, that is a baffling climax. Of course also very erotic, although as yet the novel was not erotic at all. At that time literature did not extend to erotics, to the sexual fantasies of women. Impossible to imagine Virginia Woolf doing something like that”.

Ulysses is in fact a national epic about Ireland. “It is a grand homage to the country that has never understood him” says Rushdie. “He was regarded there as a pornographer and blasphemer. Now he is viewed as Ireland’s national monument. Well, that’s easy. I do understand how Joyce felt. I am close to him. I feel a kinship, not so much between our types of authorship, but rather between his eye and ear, his mind and mine. The way one looks at things”.

Nevertheless, they would not have become friends, he believes. “Joyce was not very good at friendship. There is a story about his put-down of Samuel Beckett, who adored him and often came along his place. He plainly told him that he only loved two people in the world: the first being his wife, the second his daughter. His only encounter with Proust was also very comical. Joyce and Proust met each other when leaving a party. Proust had his coach standing at the door and was wrapped up from head to foot, afraid as he was to catch a cold. Joyce jumps into the coach uninvitedly, lights a cigar and opens the window widely. Proust says nothing, neither does Joyce. It is like a silent movie. Two masters of the word, who say nothing to each other and yet disclose themselves. Fantastic!”

In *Portrait of the artist as a young man* Joyce mentions the weapons with which a writer can defend himself against the outer world: silence, exile, and cunning. Are those the weapons Rushdie recognizes? “Well, that was a very good stratagem in the time of Joyce. Like Voltaire, Joyce believed that a writer should live near a border, so that he could leave immediately if problems arose. At present that does not work anymore: I have experienced it personally. And silence is an overrated artform, which people now too often impose upon you”.

But are writers not regarded more and more as intellectuals and are they not continually asked for an opinion? “I believe that worldwide there are more and more efforts to impose silence upon writers - and that not only applies to me. It is easy to point to the Arab world, or to China, but even in the United States there are people who want to ban Harry Potter books from schools, because they contain something about witchcraft. Even something harmless like that provokes an attack. We live in a time with an increasing urge to censorship. Various interest groups--including antiracist or feminist movements-- demand it. When Kurt Vonnegut is banned from public libraries and not everywhere it is allowed to teach about Huckleberry Finn, then you just cannot assume straight-away that there is something like freedom. Against silence it is that now we have to fight. And exile does not work. Therefore, cunning is the only thing that remains”.

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² It is interesting to note that while Chamcha embodies the demonization process which victimizes the immigrant, the Manticore illuminates the purpose of Rushdie’s appropriative strategies with even greater subtlety. As Rushdie himself informs us, the Manticore is a man-tiger with three rows of teeth escaped from Jorge Luis Borges and Margarita Guerrero’s *Manual de Zoología Fantástica*. The entry cites Pliny’s original description, followed by Flaubert’s reworking of it in the last pages of *La*

tentation de Saint Antoine. In his monumental *Historia Naturalis*, Pliny the Elder devotes a number of books to the cataloguing and description of animals world-wide. Drawing on Aristotle and Ctesias among others, Pliny’s inventory happily mixes fantastic beings and wild, exotic animals such as elephants or lions. The Manticore is mentioned “*multaque alia monstri similia*” roaming the wilderness of Ethiopia. Characteristically, the fabulous beast is a hybrid, half-human half-animal, with “three rows of teeth which intertwine like the teeth of a comb, the face and the ears of a human being, blue eyes, the purplish body of a lion and a tail which ends with a sting, like a scorpio. It runs very fast and human flesh is its favourite dish; its voice sounds like the flute and the trumpet mixed together.” Pliny’s description strikingly reveals the nature of the collective fantasies which the center projects onto the confines of the Roman Empire. Like most imaginary creatures in the *Historia Naturalis*, the Manticore crystallizes the mixture of fear and fascination the Ethiopians and other “barbaros” inspire to the Romans. What is more, the association of difference with monstrosity takes place in the naturalizing context of Pliny’s “scientific” enterprise. Through his allusion to Pliny’s Manticore, Rushdie not only draws the reader’s attention to how knowledge is constructed and what kinds of fantasies are invested in it, but it also points to a long tradition of travel writing starting with Herodotus (on whom Ctesias heavily depends) which, by imaginatively mapping out unfamiliar places, will inspire colonial expeditions.

Martine Dutheil.

Chapter IV: Ayesha

Plot outline for Chapter IV

Gibreel's dreams resume with a narrative imitation of a long zoom shot focussing in on the fanatical Imam, in exile in London. This figure is clearly based on the Iranian Muslim fundamentalist leader, the Ayatollah Khomeini. His companions are named after prominent companions of Muhammad, and his enemy in his homeland of Desh is named after Muhammad's favorite wife. Gibreel as angel carries the Imam to the capital city of Desh, as the Islamic Gibreel had carried Muhammad to Jerusalem. They witness a popular revolution in which the evil Ayesha dies. From her dead body springs the spirit of Al-lat, one of the three goddesses of the "satanic verses," but she is defeated by Gibreel. The Imam triumphs and tries to freeze time by destroying all the clocks in the land. Rushdie provides his own commentary on this image in discussing the Iranian revolution: ". . . the revolution sets out quite literally to turn back the clock. Time must be reversed" ("In God We Trust" 383).

A separate plot now begins, involving Mirza Saeed Akhtar, his wife Mishal, and the mystical, mysterious and beautiful Ayesha (a quite different figure from the Ayesha of the Desh plot, but in the long run equally destructive). As Mirza watches the butterfly-clad Ayesha, he longs for her. A long flashback tells of Ayesha's girlhood and introduces us to several characters from the village of Titlipur. Mirza Saeed tries to transmute his lust for the girl into passion for his wife, but it is Mishal who becomes close to Ayesha. This intimacy is a disaster, for the seemingly insane girl claims to have been told by the Angel Gibreel that Mishal has breast cancer. The only cure, she pronounces, is to make a foot-pilgrimage to Mecca. Unfortunately, this involves walking across the Arabian Sea. The skeptical and furious Mirza Saeed cannot stop his wife from going, but decides to accompany them in hopes of somehow saving her.

Notes on Chapter IV

Page 205 [211]

a mansion block built in the Dutch style

Note how many foreign, immigrant-related associations are made in this paragraph. Kensington is viewed not as a quintessentially English locale, but as the product of the mixing of a number of national cultures, a refuge for exiles. It has long been noted for its wealthy inhabitants; but many of them are now immigrants, especially from the Middle East.

Barkers department store

A famous luxury store at 63 Kensington High Street.

where Thackeray wrote Vanity Fair

Near Kensington Gardens, at 13 Young Street. William Makepeace Thackeray wrote most of his novel after he moved there with his daughters in June, 1856 having previously lived for some time in France. Rushdie may have become interested in *Vanity Fair* because it features two characters recently returned from India and because Thackeray himself, like Rushdie, was born in India.

the square with the convent where the little girls in uniform are always going in, but never come out

Although this looks like an allusion, Rushdie says "The square I had in mind was a (somewhat fictionalized) Kensington Square; the allusion to the convent girls is all mine" (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

Talleyrand

Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord (1754-1838), opportunistic and skillful French bishop/diplomat.

[212]

silence, cunning. Exile

At the end of James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus enunciates his manifesto: "I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use--silence, exile, and cunning." Joyce became an exile, living in Paris for most of his life. *Why do you think Rushdie has isolated the term "exile?" to the end of the list?*

Elba, not St Helena

Napoleon was exiled to the Mediterranean island of Elba during 1814-15, but managed to escape to rule France for 100 days, after which he was finally and definitively exiled to Saint Helena, 1,200 miles west of the African Coast, where he died in 1821.

The Imam

A title of high respect in Islam, here clearly meant to depict someone very like the Ayatollah Khomeini. Oddly lacking from most commentary about Khomeini's denunciation of *The Satanic Verses* is any mention of the character of the Imam. See below, p. 450.

Page 206

enemy of images

Not only are idols forbidden in Islam, pictorial art of any kind is suspect in varying degrees for many Muslims.

her profile of a Grecian statue . . .

Compare with the description of Hind above, p. 113 [116].

What characteristics do the various Ayeshas in this novel share? In what ways are they different?

Desh

An Indian place-name, meaning "land of," but here used as a substitute for Iran (Hindi, originally Sanskrit).

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Bilal X

"Bilal" was the name of the muezzin appointed by Muhammad to call the faithful to prayer, hence a suitable name for a singer (Fischer 134). The custom of substituting an X for one's final name was at one time widely followed by American Black Muslims. Bilal X is a caricature of singer Cat Stevens, who became a convert to Islam, denounced his earlier recording career, and endorsed the *fatwa* sentencing Rushdie to death for writing *The Satanic Verses*. Compare with Mr X, p. 413 [427].

gori

Literally, a “light-skinned woman,” used here to mean an “English” woman as opposed to an Indian (Hindi).

SAVAK

The notorious secret police of the late Shah of Iran, one of the main targets of the Islamic revolution.

Page 208

[214]

no alcohol

Wine is specifically forbidden to Muslims and the prohibition is usually understood and extending to all alcoholic beverages; but some equivocation goes on among certain Muslims.

once and future land

This phrase not only suggests that the Imam will return to his old homeland, but alludes to King Arthur’s Camelot as depicted in T. H. White’s *The Once and Future King*.

chapati

Indian unleavened flat bread (Hindi).

Page 209

[215]

Aga Khan

See above, p. 26 [27].

Page 210

[216]

Salman Farsi

Salman the Persian, the second minor character to bear Rushdie’s first name. See above, p. 101 [103].

certain surreptitious radio waves

Khomeini created his revolutionary movement via clandestine addresses delivered via audio cassettes recorded from exile in Paris.

[217]

the great Shaitan

The great Satan.

*What seem to be the main reasons the Imam hates Ayesha?
Judging by his speech, what are his values?*

Page 211

calendars

Reza Pahlevi, Shah of Iran, had attempted to replace the traditional Islamic calendar with one commemorating the supposed 2500 years of continuous monarchy in Iran/Persia (Fischer 134).

Page 212

[218]

fly me to Jerusalem

See above, p. 110 [112].

[219]

the Babylonian whore

See Revelation 17, where the decadence of Rome (here called “Babylon” is depicted through the metaphor of a whore riding on the back of a seven-headed beast. See note on Babylon for p. 4.

Page 213

a high mountain of almost perfectly conical dimensions

Compare with Mount Cone in Jahilia, allusion to Allie Cone (who climbs mountains).

Page 215

How is the victory of the Imam similar to the victory of Mahound?

Page 216

[222]

zamindar

Landlord (Hindi) (Spivak 44).

Mirza Saeed Akhtar

A rearrangement of the name of Indian film director Saeed Akhtar Mirza.

[223]

had been reading Nietzsche the night before-- 'the pitiless end of that small, overextended species called Man' Source?

Page 217

butterflies

The image of a girl constantly accompanied by butterflies is reminiscent of the character of Mauricio Babilonia in García Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. But Rushdie may have been influenced even more by the 1983 film version of García Márquez’s short story, “Innocent Eréndira and Her Heartless Grandmother.” In Ruy Guerra’s *Eréndira* (though not in the original story) the heroine encounters a butterfly made out of torn paper which has come to life, lands on a wall, and metamorphoses into a painted image. The heroine of the short story also embarks on a lengthy foot-pilgrimage to the sea, like Ayesha.

familiar spirits

Medieval European term for animals possessed by demons which accompanied witches. See below, Matthew Hopkins.

Bibiji

The word for “woman” with the honorific suffix “ji,” usually means “wife,” but here probably just a term of respect (Hindi).

[224]

Peristan

Fairyland.

Titlipur

“Town of butterflies” (Suleri 233). Perhaps inspired by the song “Titli Udi” from the film *Suraj* (Fischer 134).

Pandora's imps

According to the myth of Pandora, when her curiosity led her to open the box into which had been sealed all the troubles of the world they flew out like a horde of insects and created the flawed world we know today.

Page 218

zenana

Women's quarters in a Muslim home (Urdu).

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King Charles I

Beheaded in 1649. See note below, on his son, Charles II, on p 340.

What point is Rushdie making by alluding to the king's having lost his head after using this staircase?

[227]

small enamel animals

Reminiscent of the small candy animals made by Ursula Buendía in Gabriel Garcia Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

What might it mean to be too poor to dream?

Page 222 [228]

panchayat

Traditional village council (Hindi, derived from Sanskrit).

[229]

untouchables were renamed 'children of God'

Mahatma Gandhi attempted to remove the stigma from untouchables by renaming them *harijans*: children of God. Hindu untouchables have traditionally been drawn to Islam, with its anti-caste tendencies.

Page 224 [230]

Hand

In countries where much of the population is illiterate, voters often identify the party they wish to vote for on ballots by its symbol. In this case the Congress Party which governed India until recently uses an open hand as its symbol.

CP(M)

The Communist Party (Marxist), very much opposed to the Congress Party.

Page 225 [232]

Sarpanch

Head of a village council or Panchayat.

Muhammad Din

This is the name of a spoiled little boy who dies in childhood in Rudyard Kipling's "The Story of Muhammad Din" in *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888).

Khadija

Also the name of the Prophet Muhammad's first wife.

Page 228 [235]

Hamlet

Considered as perennially indecisive.

Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1841) was an outstanding poet who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1913 for his collection of love poems entitled *Gitanjali*.

Ghare-Baire

A 1905 Bengali novel about the Swadeshi movement translated as *The Home and the World* (1915) in which a progressive young Zamindar persuades his wife to enter modern life, with results to their relationship as disastrous in their way as in this story. Tagore's novel was made into a film by Satyajit Ray in 1985, which may have reminded Rushdie of it.

Page 229

What is the zamindar's real motive for persuading his wife to enter purdah?

swadeshi

A campaign led by Gandhi to boycott foreign (especially British) goods in preference of Indian-made ones (Hindi, Bengali).

Some coast . . . some clear

This phrase is modeled on a famous passage in one of Winston Churchill's speeches, made to the Canadian Senate and House of Commons in Ottawa December 30, 1941: "When I warned [the French] that Britain would fight on alone whatever they did, their generals told their Prime Minister and his divided cabinet, 'In three weeks England will have her neck wrung like a chicken.' Some chicken; some neck" (Ina Westphal).

Percy Westerman

A prolific writer of boy's adventure stories, popular in the 1930s.

G. A. Henty

American author of numerous inspirational boy's novels in which virtue is rewarded with prosperity.

Dornford Yates

British author of light fiction, humor, romance, and thrillers (1885-1960).

paan

Areca or other nut rolled in betel leaf, a mild stimulant commonly used throughout India (often incorrectly called "betel nut") which turns the saliva bright red (Hindi).

Page 230 [237]

the action of the Meerut soldiers

Refers to an 1857 revolt called by Indians as "The First Indian Revolution," and by the British "the Sepoy Mutiny" which began by the soldiers killing British officers and their families as they emerged from church services.

Perownistan

Citizens of former imperial nations often obscure history by referring to their former colonies as tropical “paradises”; thus Perowne’s old estate has become “Fairyland.”

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punkahs

Large swinging fans made of cloth stretched over a rectangular frame (Hindi).

punkah-wallah

Servant who operates the punkahs.

Page 234 [241]

kahin

A soothsayer of a type abhorred by orthodox Muslims (see above, note on p. 113) [116]. One early revolt against Islam was led by such a woman, called the *Kahinah*.

a pir

See above, note on p. 185 [192].

Page 235 [242]

I have flown with the angel into the highest heights

Like the Prophet Muhammad, who was flown to Heaven, an event called the *miraj* (Qur’an 17:1).

to the lote-tree of the uttermost end

See note above on p. 91 [93].

Black Stone

A stone said to have fallen from heaven, embedded in the wall of the Ka’aba.

pilgrimage . . . to Mecca Sharif

All pious Muslims are required at least once during their lifetimes to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, to go on the Hajj. A person who has performed this pilgrimage is called a “hajji.” Part of the traditional ceremony involves kissing the black stone embedded in the wall of the temple called the Ka’aba. For Sharif, see note above on p. 156 [160].

Page 236

umra

“Lesser pilgrimage,” a rite performed in Mecca (Arabic). This ritual can be performed at any time, but it is usually a part of the better-known “greater pilgrimage” (*al-hajj*) which is much more complex and can only be performed at specified times.

[243]

The waves shall be parted

A miracle modelled on the parting of the Red Sea (or, as some translate it, the Sea of Reeds) when the Hebrews left Egypt led by Moses (Exodus 14).

Page 239 [246]

There is no God but God, and Muhammad is His Prophet.

The *qalmah*. See note above, on p. 105 [108]. Strictly speaking, the only act necessary to become a Muslim is to sincerely affirm this belief.

Page 239 [247]

What does Osman’s final speech mean?

Chapter V: A City Visible but Unseen

Plot outline for Chapter V

Back in contemporary London, the guilt-ridden Jumpy Joshi takes the goatlike Saladin Chamcha back to his apartment above the Shaandaar Café, dominated by Hind, the wife of Muhammad Sufyan. (The name of the cafe means something like “splendid” or “glorious.”) This Hind is not as lascivious as the one in the “satanic verses” plot, but she is almost as fierce. She has two teenaged daughters--Mishal and Anahita--who will become fascinated with the strange man/devil that Saladin has become. We pause in the plot to learn more about the family and its interrelationships. Hind muses on the disgusting weirdness that is London.

A dream provides details of Saladin’s escape from the “hospital.” He phones his old work partner, Mimi Mamoulian, only to find that he has lost his job. He briefly encounters the name of Billy Battuta, who will figure prominently in the novel later. His old boss, Hal Valance, explains why his television series has been cancelled. He is enraged to learn that Gibreel is alive, and--far from helping him out in any way--is claiming he missed Flight 420 and seems to be engaged into making his “satanic verses” dreams into a movie. Meanwhile his wife has become pregnant by Jumpy. Everything seems to be conspiring against Saladin; and, battered into submission by fate, he loses his supernatural qualities after a visit to the bizarre Hot Wax nightclub. A subplot involves a series of gruesome murders of old women for which the black militant leader Uhuru Simba is arrested.

The next section returns to the story of Allie Cone, detailing her childhood and young adulthood. Her reunion with Gibreel is passionate, but it will be spoiled by his insane jealousy. Again haunted by Rekha Merchant, a deranged Gibreel tries to confront London in his angelic persona, but he is instead knocked down by the car of film producer S. S. Sisodia, who returns him to Allie and signs him up to make a series of films as the archangel of his dreams. Again he tries to leave Allie, but a riot during a public appearance lands him back again, defeated, at Allie’s doorstep. At the end of the chapter we learn that a most uncharacteristic heat wave has broken out in London.

Notes to Chapter V

Page 241 [249]

A City Visible but Unseen

Rushdie says of this chapter title:

it seemed to me at that point that [the London Indian community] really was unseen. It was there and nobody knew it was there. And I was very struck by how often, when one would talk to white English people about what was going on, you could actually take them to these streets and point to these phenomena, and they would somehow still reject this information.

Rushdie: “Interview,” p. 68.

Page 243 [251] *Once I’m an owl*

A quotation from Apuleius’ *The Golden Ass*, Book III, Chapter 16 in which the main character, trying to persuade a sorceress to transform him into an owl seeks reassurance that he can resume his own shape. He is instead changed into an ass, and can only be changed back into his human form again by praying to the goddess Isis.

hajis

People who have gone on the Hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca (Arabic). See above, note on p. 235 [242].

VCR addicts

Rushdie, like many Indians and Pakistanis calls videotapes “VCRs” instead of “videos.” Videotapes of Indian films, particularly musicals, are a staple of emigre entertainment.

in Dhaka . . . when Bangladesh was merely an East Wing

Before it seceded in the bloody war of 1971, the territory now known as Bangladesh constituted the isolated East Wing of Pakistan. Its capital is more commonly spelled “Dacca.”

Why does Mr. Sufyan refer to himself as an emigrant rather than as an immigrant?

Lucius Apuleius of Madaura

Author of the famous Latin 2nd century satirical classic, *The Golden Ass*. Apuleius was in fact not from Morocco (Verstraete 328-329). See above, note on p. 243 [251].

Page 244 [252]

satyrs

Proverbially lustful half-men, half goats.

Isis

Originally an Egyptian fertility goddess, she had been transformed in Apuleius’ time into the center of a mystery cult and was usually called “Sarapis.”

begum sahiba

Honored wife/lady (Hindi, Urdu). [253]

Wing Chun

The name of a Chinese Kung Fu style associated with a woman named Yim Wing Chun. It is traditionally considered a woman’s form of fighting though it is very popular among men as well.

Bruce Lee

Bruce Lee (1940-1973) was the star of many kung fu movies. Note how cross-cultural this reference is: an Indian immigrant emulating a Chinese hero using the skills taught her by an Indian ructor. Lee himself was an immigrant, having been born in San Francisco, moved to Hong Kong, educated at the University of Washington and moved back to the U.S. His early death stimulated a cult surrounding his memory which is reflected in the girls’ pajamas.

Page 245

the new Madonna

The singer Madonna Louise Veronica Ciccone, born 1958.

the Perfumed Garden

A title for Heaven: orig. *Gulistan*.

[254]

Bibhutibhushan Banerji

Distinguished author of the *Apu Trilogy*, memorably made into films by Satyajit Ray (see below, p. 440 [454]).

Tagore

See above, note on p. 228 [235].

Rig-Veda

One of the oldest Sanskrit Hindu devotional texts.

Quran-Sharif

The *Noble Qur'an*. See *Mecca sharif*, above, p. 235 [242].

military accounts of Julius Caesar

Caesar's *De Bello Gallico (Gallic Wars)* are an account of his own campaigns in what is now France and Germany, and were the beginning text for generations of Latin students.

Revelations of St. John the Divine

The apocalyptic last book of the Christian Bible.

Page 246

dosas

Lentil crepes (Hindi). Also called "dosais."

uttapams

Thick pancakes of lentil and rice flours containing onions and chilies.

tola

A very small unit of weight: .035 ounces or 180 grams (Hindi).

Page 248 [256]

Yukè

A pun on U.K. (United Kingdom) and some other word?

Gitanjali

A book of Bengali songs by Tagore (see above, p. 228 [235]), published in 1914?

Eclogues

Poems idealizing country life, by the Roman 1st century BC poet, Virgil.

Othello

Shakespeare's play, named after the Moor who is its leading character.

[257]

chaat

Narrowly, a combination of diced fruit and vegetables in a hot and sour dressing, sometimes including meat or shrimp; more broadly, any sort of snack food.

gulab jamans

Fried cheese pastry balls soaked in syrup, a classic Indian sweet, more often spelled "gulab jamun."

Jalebis

See above, note on p. 184 [190].

Page 249

barfi

See above, note on p. 184 [190].

Page 250 [258]

genuine McCoy

The usual expression is "the real McCoy," said of anything genuine and derived from the whiskey smuggled into the U.S. during Prohibition by Captain Bill McCoy.

sharif

See note on *London shareef* above, p. 156 [160].

haramzadi

Female bastard.

girls killed for dowry

In recent years there has been widespread publicity about cases in which young brides were killed because their families did not deliver large enough doweries. Some Indians consider the phenomenon rare and unduly exaggerated in the press, but others maintain it is a serious problem.

Page 251 [259]

accepted the notion of mutation in extremis

Citing an obscure passage in Charles Darwin's writings which would lead him to agree in at least some cases with his opponent Lamarck (see above, p. 5 [6]).

What is the point of Sufyan's musings of Darwin?

Page 252 [260]

Omens, shinings, ghoulies, nightmares on Elm Street

These refer to horror film titles (The Omen [1976], The Shining [1980], Ghoulies [1985] and Nightmare on Elm Street [1984] and its sequels).

Der Steppenwolf

This 1927 novel by Hermann Hesse, first translated into English in 1965 has been a favorite of mystics and bohemians.

[261]

unauthorized intra-vaginal inspections

Carried out by immigration officials in Britain, looking for smuggled contraband.

Depo-Provera scandals

In 1973 it was revealed in Congressional hearings that numerous poor African-American women had been injected with the experimental contraceptive Depo-Provera despite the fact that the Food and Drug Administration had not approved its use, citing concerns about possible side-effects, including cancer. The women were not warned that there was any risk. The drug was

approved for use in Great Britain and in many poor countries. Its advocates argued that this simple-to-use contraceptive which could be injected once every three months was ideal for controlling the population explosion among poor, uneducated women. This argument was widely viewed as racist.

unauthorized post-partum sterilizations

Instances of sterilizing minority women without their permission immediately after they had given birth are well documented.

Third World drug-dumping

Medicines considered unsafe in their own countries are exported from the industrialized nations to poorer countries where they are freely sold.

Page 253

p

Pence, penny, cent.

yakhni

A kind of spicy stew.

[262]

the complex unpredictability of tabla improvisations

Performances on the classical Indian drum involve improvisations based on extremely complex rhythms.

Page 254 [262]

Jahannum

The Muslim Hell.

Gehenna

The Jewish Hell.

Muspellheim

The Norse Hell.

juggernauts

Though the word now means any unstoppable monstrous thing, the name has Indian origins, being the cart bearing the image of Lord Jagannath, an incarnation of Krishna, beneath whose wheels fervent worshippers used to throw themselves to be crushed to death. By extension, any large, unstoppable movement or thing.

Page 255 [264]

Hubshees

Blacks.

Page 256

bloody but unbowed

From William Ernest Henley's "Invictus" (1888):

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud:
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

(lines 5-8).

What sorts of thoughts are troubling Saladin?

Page 258 [267]

masala dosa

Spicy stuffed pancakes made of lentil flour.

bangers

Traditional British breakfast sausage.

Page 259

Bangladesh

Seceded in a bloody war from Pakistan in 1971. See above, p. 243 [251].

as the pips went

In the British telephone system, when one is phoning from a pay phone and the time paid for in advance expires, a number of warning beeps ("pips") are sounded to alert the user to insert more coins or be cut off.

Page 260 [269]

Battuta's Travels

Ibn Battuta was a Medieval Muslim traveler to Asia and Africa whose wanderings took him much farther afield than Europe's Marco Polo.

Page 261

love of brown sugar

White men's erotic attraction toward brown-skinned women, seen as exotic. [270] *Yassir Arafat meets the Begins*

An unlikely meeting at the time this novel was written: Arafat was leader of the Palestinian Liberation Front, devoted foe of Menachem Begin, former Premier of Israel, intransigently opposed to the Palestinians.

Finnegan's Wake

James Joyce's last novel, written in a densely punning dialect of his own creation, drawing on many mythologies. Joyce's fondness for puns and other wordplay is clearly influential on Rushdie's style.

Flatland

Refers to Edwin Abbott's geometrical fantasy novel: *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* (1884), which depicts a two-dimensional world.

Page 262

she was still protesting too much

When Hamlet has a group of traveling actors portray a scene rather like the murder of his father, the Queen comments on the protestations of loyalty expressed by the wife in the play, ironically (and revealingly): "The lady doth protest too much, methinks" (Act III, scene 2, l. 221).

Vinod Khanna

Vinod Khanna, muscular Bollywood action hero, born 1947. Mentioned again on p. 350 [361].

Sri Devi

Female Indian movie star.

Bradford

A city with a large Muslim population. It was here that *The Satanic Verses* was burned by protesters in one of the seminal acts of the “Rushdie affair.”

Page 263 [272]

Dick Turpin

Famous British highwayman.

Ned Kelly

Famous Australian outlaw.

Phoolan Devi

A woman bandit-leader who, after years of violence and 23 murders, was much romanticized in the Indian press; but when she surrendered to the police, she was revealed to be more militant and less glamorous than had been supposed. A film based on her life, entitled *Bandit Queen*, was made by Shekhar Kapoor, over her vehement objections. She ran unsuccessfully for office in 1991 and successfully in 1996. She was assassinated in 2001.

William Bonney

American outlaw, Billy the Kid.

also a Kid

Baby goats are called kids too, of course.

bob's your uncle.

A common British expression of uncertain derivation used at the end of a list meaning something like “and there you are.”

This place makes a packet, dunnit?

This place makes a bundle, doesn't it?

Page 264 [273]

La lutte continue

“The struggle continues:” slogan of several revolutionary movements.

Hal Valance

A valance is a decorative flounce over a window which performs no particular function but looks pretty. The name indicates Hal's superficial and useless contributions to the world as an advertising executive: mere window-dressing.

Page 265 [274]

advice given by Deep Throat to Bob Woodward: Follow the money

“Deep Throat” (referring to the notorious pornographic film by that name) was the code name assigned to the main informant of the *Washington Post* reporters who uncovered much of the Watergate scandal by tracking the handling of money used by Nixon's staff to buy silence. The part was played in the film version by Hal Holbrook. The Bob Woodward/Carl Bernstein book on the scandal, and the movie based on it, was called *All the President's Men*.

wasted

Excessively thin.

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White Tower

A fashionable Franco-Greek restaurant at 1 Percy Street in London's West End.

Orson Welles

The famous actor/director who became enormously fat in later years.

Maurice Chevalier

French musical performer and actor in both French and American films.

[275]

Mrs Torture

A satire on Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Commentators have noted that it is ironic that after Rushdie far more pointedly satirized British racism than Muhammad's preaching it was the British government which protected him from Islamic extremists.

midatlantic-accented

An accent calculated to be neither precisely British nor precisely American, but somewhere in between.

Mary Wells

Mary Wells made her reputation in advertising in 1965 by creating a highly-successful image makeover for Braniff Airlines which involved painting its airplanes in seven different colors (yellow, orange, turquoise, beige, ochre and two shades of blue—but not pink). See “Braniff Refuels on Razzle-Dazzle,” p. 110. For more on Wells' campaign see Loomis 114-117.

David Ogilvy for his eyepatch

In the sixties the David Ogilvy agency (for which Rushdie briefly worked) created a highly successful advertising campaign promoting Hathaway shirts worn by a male model with a black patch over one eye.

Jerry della Femina

When della Femina was asked by executives at the Bates advertising agency to suggest ideas for an ad campaign for Panasonic he jokingly suggested “From those wonderful folks who gave you Pearl Harbor.” He thought highly enough of this anti-Asian crack to make it the title of his 1970 volume of humorous reflections on the ad business (della Femina 103). Since the slogan was never really a part of della Femina's “work” in advertising, one may assume that Rushdie is recalling it for its xenophobic thrust.

bums

American “asses.”

Valance in the Blofeld role and 007 nowhere on the scene

Refers to a James Bond villain.

Page 267 [276]

Dr Uhuru Simba

Ironically combines the African slogan “Uhuru!” (freedom) with a word for “lion” associated with Tarzan films.

Brown Uncle Tom

A complex reference to the legendarily submissive slave in Harriet Beecher Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and Thomas Hughes’ *Tom Brown’s School Days* (1857) set at Rugby, the British public (private) school which Rushdie himself attended. See also below, p. 292 [301].

Page 268

Teuton

German.

quiff

A tuft of hair standing up in front.

Schwarzenegger

Arnold Schwarzenegger, the Austrian-born body-builder and action-movie star. Another immigrant.

quantel

A computer-imaging firm. The new figure is a latex model whose image is computer processed.

Rutger Hauer

This Dutch-born actor played the menacing Roy Batty in *Blade Runner*.

shiksa

Insulting Yiddish term for a gentile woman. Often spelled *shikse*.

How have the Black protests against the Aliens Show backfired?

Page 269 [278]

rosbif, boudin Yorkshire, choux de bruxelles

Ironically French labels for typically boring English foods: roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, brussels sprouts.

nymphet

Term invented by Vladimir Nabakov in *Lolita* to describe a highly attractive preadolescent girl.

Page 270 [279]

like a goat to the slaughter

The usual phrase is “like a lamb to the slaughter,” from Isaiah 53:7 or “as a lamb to the slaughter” from Jeremiah 53:7.

Page 271

Tini bénché achén! . . . Farishta bénché achén

He’s alive. Farishta (Gibreel) is alive.

Ciné-Blitz

See above, note on Blitz, p. 13.

[280]

Michelins sticking out between her sari and her choli

See above, p. 60. Traditional Indian dress for women includes a short bodice called a *choli* which leaves some bare flesh below the breasts and above the waist.

Lambrakis . . . Z

Dr. Gregory Lambrakis was a popular leftist parliamentary deputy in the Greek government who was assassinated on May 22, 1963 in a plot by extreme right terrorists (who eventually seized power in 1967 and began a reign of repression and terror). He was widely viewed as a martyr, and protestors wrote the letter “Z” on walls, meaning *zei*, “he lives.” His story was told in a novel entitled *Z* by Vassilis Vassilikos in 1966; and the novel was in turn made into a major film by Constantine Costa Gavras in 1969.

Page 272

Billy Battuta

See note above, p. 260 on Battuta’s travels.

[281]

The Message

A reverent but inept 1976 film, originally released as *Al-Risalah* (English, *Mohammed, the Messenger of God*,) depicting the life of Muhammad, fiercely attacked by devout Muslims, who object to any pictorial depiction of the Prophet. As Rushdie notes, the film avoided ever actually putting the Prophet on the screen. This passage clearly reflects Rushdie’s consciousness that the story he was about to tell would strike some as blasphemous.

Page 273

Why is Saladin so furious with Gibreel?

Page 274 [283] *Struwelpeter*

Struwelpeter (the usual spelling) is a wildly naughty boy who features in verse stories by nineteenth-century German children’s author Heinrich Hoffmann. Mimi has presumably taken on the name as a joke.

Page 275

It was so, it was not

A standard opening phrase in Indian fantastic stories, often used by Rushdie; equivalent in function to the European “Once upon a time” but emphasizing the equivocal nature of the narrative it introduces. [284]

baggy salwar pantaloons

Typically voluminous women’s trousers.

bottled djinn

This pun on the Arabic word for “genie” and “gin” (both found in bottles) is also repeatedly used in *Midnight’s Children*.

Elephant Man illness

Neurofibromatosis, from the circus name of its most famous victim, Joseph Carey (John) Merrick (1862-1850). A 1974 play about Merrick called *The Elephant Man* was produced in 1979, and a movie by the same title appeared in 1980.

Page 276

Big Eid

Muslim holiday commemorating Abraham's near-sacrifice of Ishmael (in Jewish and Christian traditions, Isaac), called "big" to distinguish it from the "little" Eid which ends Ramadan.

[285]

mullah

In Islam, the spiritual head of a mosque.

Lucretius . . . Ovid

In a passage from *De Rerum Natura (On the Nature of Things, Book V, lines 670-671)* (See Verstraete 231-232). the first century BC philosopher poet Lucretius suggests that life may have evolved. His contemporary Ovid's *Metamorphoses* retell the classic Greco-Roman myths focusing on the magical transformations that people and gods undergo into new forms. The passage quoted is from Book 15, lines 169-172 (Verstraete 331).

Page 277 [286]

cuckold's horns

In the Renaissance and later cuckolds--men whose wives are unfaithful to them--were said to wear horns.

passionate intensity

Alludes to Yeats' 1920 poem "The Second Coming," lines 6-8:

The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Page 278

pot and kettle

An old expression applied to those who criticize people when they are guilty of the same fault to a greater degree compares them to a pot calling a kettle black.

mote and beam

In Matthew 7:3 Jesus similarly criticizes those who judge others by saying that they object to the "mote" (dust speck) in another person's eye when they have a "beam" (plank) in their own.

the David Carradine character in the old Kung Fu programmes

Refers to a popular but odd 1970s television series (revived in 1992) featuring a Zen Buddhist monk wandering the Wild West, seeking peace but forever forced to do battle with evil.

Notting Hill

Where Rushdie himself used to live.

lower thumb

Penis.

Page 280 [289]

Freemasonry

The Freemasons is a fraternal organization that in its early years combined rationalism with mysticism.

obeah

Caribbean name for a kind of black magic rooted in African tradition.

witchfinding . . . Matthew Hopkins

See note above on p. 182, on Matthew Hopkins. Martine Dutheil points out that Rushdie is deliberately associating with the English superstitious practices which they normally attribute scornfully only to their former colonial subjects (Dutheil 107, fn. 24).

Gloriana

Name used by Renaissance poets to refer to Queen Elizabeth I. When she spoke, people listened.

New Broomstick Needed to Sweep Out Witches

This would seem to be the title of an article written by or about Pamela rather than a real book.

Page 281 [290]

her hair had gone snow-white

Like Ayesha in the Titlipur plot (see p. 225).

Page 282 [291]

mutey

Monstrous mutant, usually the result of exposure to radiation; more commonly "mute."

yellowbrick lane

Alludes to the Yellow Brick Road in *The Wizard of Oz*, which leads to the Emerald City, and Brick Lane in London, where many Asians live, and which is transformed into Brickhall in the novel (see below, note on Brickhall, p. 283.)

Page 283 [292]

he pronounced no sentences

Pun: didn't announce sentences of criminals/didn't speak.

Kurus and Pandavas

The two families (cousins) whose war is the principal subject of the *Mahabharata*

Mahabharata

The classic epic which is a central text of Hinduism.

Mahavilayet

Great foreign country. See *Vilayet*, above, p. 4.

National Front

A racist, anti-immigrant British political organization.

murder of the Jamaican, Ulysses E. Lee

(perhaps incongruously combining the names of the opposing chief generals in the American Civil War: Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee.)

The Brickhall Three

"Brickhall" is a blending of the names of two Asian neighborhoods in London, Brick Lane and Southhall (Seminck 8). Protests against the trial of groups of defendants often refer

to them by number, i. e. “The Chicago Seven.” The example Rushdie probably had in mind was the “Guildford Four,” imprisoned by the British for a series of 1974 pub bombings after one Gerry Conlon was tortured into confessing. After many appeals, the four were finally vindicated and released. The case was a long-running scandal, described in Gerry Conlon’s *Proved Innocent* (London: Penguin, 1990). The book was made into a successful film entitled *In the Name of the Father* (1993).

Page 284

Jatinder Singh Mehta

This allusion to a tavern murder is meant to be typical but is not based on an event involving anyone by this specific name (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

[293]

bhangra beat

The popular dance music of London’s Indian and Pakistani youth, derived from traditional Punjabi dances originally performed at weddings and other celebrations.

Page 285 [294]

Jamme Masjid

A mosque in Brick Lane, formerly a Jewish synagogue and a Christian church, reflecting the changing population in the neighborhood. Named after the famous 17th-century Jama, Jami or Juma Masjid in Delhi which is mentioned on p. 519.

Huguenots’ Calvinist church

Calvinism was founded in Switzerland and the Huguenots were French, so even this earliest incarnation of the building was doubly immigrant-based.

Page 286 [295]

Sympathy for the Devil

A classically apocalyptic rock song by the Rolling Stones, from their *Beggars’ Banquet* album.

Eat the Heinz Fifty-Seven.

For years the Heinz Foods Company advertised that it made 57 varieties of canned foods. This parodies the various slogans calling for freeing a certain number of prisoners.

Pleasechu meechu . . . hopeyu guessma nayym

Phonetic rendering of Mick Jagger’s refrain in *Sympathy for the Devil*: “Pleased to meet you . . . Hope you guess my name.”

[296]

CRC

Community Relations Council.

What social tensions are reflected in the transformations that London is undergoing?

Page 287

‘This isn’t what I wanted. This is not what I meant, at all.’

From T. S. Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” (Note by Martine Duthheil.)

Page 288 [297]

the heart, for obvious reasons, in the mouth

“To have one’s heart in one’s mouth” is a common expression for being terrified.

das Ich

The self, the term which is rendered as “ego” in English translations of Freud.

Page 289 [298]

I am . . . that I am.

See above, p. 182.

Submission

See note above, on p. 125.

What does Saladin mean by these two lines?

baron-samedi

In voodoo, Baron Samedi is host of the dead.

Page 291 [300]

Club Hot Wax

A three-way pun: hot wax means currently popular music (records were formerly made from molded wax masters), a common method of removing body hair, and the custom of literally melting wax figurines depicted below. Rushdie may well have been inspired by reading in Antonia Fraser’s life of Charles II (a person whose life we know he was interested in--see p. 340) of an anti-Catholic celebration held in London on November 17, 1679. In a self-conscious replacement of the traditional Guy Fawkes’ Day ceremony (see below, note on p. 293), wax figures of the pope, attendant devils and nuns (the latter labelled as courtesans) were displayed and the figure of the pope was ceremoniously burned in a huge bonfire (Fraser 384-385).

Blak-An-Tan

Aside from its obvious racial associations, the name is the term assigned by the Irish independence movement to the occupying British soldiers based on their uniforms: “the Black and Tans.”

Page 292 [301]

Hamza-nama cloth

See above, p. 69.

Mary Seacole

A black woman who also cared for the troops in the Crimean War, but didn’t gain the same fame as Florence Nightingale, popularly known as “The lady with the lamp.”

Abdul Karim, aka The Munshi, whom Queen Victoria sought to

promote, but who was done down by colour-barring ministers
Abdul Karim served as Victoria's tutor ("munshi") in Hindi and personal confidante for many years; but many of her advisors considered him a security risk and tried to discourage the relationship (Moorhouse, pp. 120-121).

black clown of Septimius Severus

According to the highly unreliable *Historia Augusta* (written in late antiquity), when Severus (born in North Africa and Emperor of Rome 146-211 AD) encountered a black man widely reputed to be a buffoon, he was not amused, but considered the meeting an ill omen. He urged his priests to consult the organs of a sacrificial animal, which they also found to be black. Not long after, he died. There are some grounds for believing that Severus himself may have been black. See also note on the Triumphal Arch of Septimius Severus, on p. 38.



Bust of Septimius Severus in the Granet Museum, Aix-en-Provence. Photo by Paul Brians.

Grace Jones

Black model and singer popular in the eighties.

Ukawsaw Groniosaw

He wrote an account of his life in slavery, published in 1731, entitled *A Narrative of the Most Remarkable Particulars in the Life of James Albert Ukawsaw Gronniosaw, an African Prince, Written by Himself.*

how-we-make-contribution-since-de-Rome-Occupation

The claim is being made that immigrants have been making contributions to English civilization since the Romans colonized it in the 1st century CE.

Mosley, Powell, Edward Long, all the local avatars of Legree
Racist British politicians. For Enoch Powell, see above, p. 186. "Avatar" is the Hindu term for an incarnation. Simon Legree is the slave-owning villain of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. See above, p. 267 [276].

Page 293 [302]

hells kitchen

Alluding to the popular name of an area on the West Side of Manhattan dominated by gangs and crime in the later 19th century.

Maggie-maggie-maggie

Margaret Thatcher is melted in effigy.

the guy

On November 5 English children celebrate the discovery of the Gunpowder Plot to blow up the houses of Parliament by burning in effigy the chief criminal, Guy Fawkes. They go from house to house asking for "a penny for the Guy" to finance the creation of the effigy.

obeah

See above, note for p. 280 [289].

Page 294

Topsy and Legree

The innocent slave girl and the villainous slaveowner of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. See above, p. 267 [276] & 292 [301].

[304] *melted like tigers into butter*

Alluding to *Little Black Sambo*, a children's book extremely popular until objections against the racist associations aroused by the illustrations and character names led to its fall from favor. In it, the hero cleverly climbs a tree to escape two tigers and allows them to chase each other until they melt into butter which he proceeds to take home to his mother to serve on pancakes. Though most readers imagined the story as set in Africa, tigers do not live there, though they do live in India.

Page 295 [305] *Cho Oyu*

The name is Tibetan, probably meaning "Goddess of the Turquoise."

Shangri-La

A magical kingdom in the Himalayas where no one grows old, described in James Hilton's *Lost Horizons*.

Picabia

This artist experimented with cubism, dadaism, and surrealism; see p. 297 [307].

How does Otto Cone's philosophy reflect themes in the novel?

Page 296 [306]

Father Christmas

British name for Santa Claus.

Mao

Chinese Premier Mao Tse Tung. Under his rule the Chinese brutally invaded and occupied Tibet.

[307]

In the beginning was the word

The famous opening line of the book of John.

Page 297

kreplach

Jewish noodle dish.

pearl without price

Precious jewel worth sacrificing all else for, from Jesus' parable in Matthew 13:45-46; a strikingly Christian allusion from the assimilationist Jewish Otto.

“stuffed monkey”

In 1920 Picabia glued a toy monkey onto a piece of cardboard and labelled it “Portrait de Czanne, Portrait de Rembrandt, Portrait de Renoir, Natures mortes.” (Barràs 202, 229).

Jarry's Ubu Roi

Alfred Jarry wrote a series of plays, including this one (*Ubu the King*) about a vile-tempered, crude tyrant. He was hailed by the surrealists as a genius.

[308]

Polish literature . . . Herbert . . . Milosz . . . Baranczak
Zbigniew Herbert, Czeslaw Milosz, Stanislaw Baranczak.

mid-off

In cricket, the mid-off (short for mid-wicket off) stands on the off-side, at the other end of the pitch from the batter, near the bowler. He is there mainly to stop the off-drive from the batsman (a shot played straight down the wicket), as well as to assist in catching the throws from other fielders to the bowlers end in case of attempted runouts (David Windsor).

Widow of Windsor!

A term used by Rudyard Kipling to refer to Queen Victoria after the death of Prince Albert. British monarchs live in Windsor Castle. Victoria made something of a career out of being a widow.

pantomime member

British pantomimes are satirical dramatic productions, usually produced at Christmas. They are not pantomimes in the American sense at all, including as they do dialogue. The equivalent expression would be “cartoon member.”

Page 298

tsimmiss

Traditional Jewish stew.

London W-two

W2 is the postal code of Paddington, where they live.

Chanukah

The Jewish festival of lights, also spelled Hanukkah, celebrated in December.

imitation of life

The 1959 remake of a 1934 film based on a Fannie Hurst novel by the same name, in which the light-skinned daughter of a black woman “passes” for white. Lana Turner stars as an ambitious actress Gospel singer Mahalia Jackson performs in a bit part.

lift-shaft

British for “elevator shaft.” Yet another suicide by jumping.

survivor of the camps

The Nazi death camps.

[309]

Cecil Beaton

Famous British fashion photographer. He designed costumes for stage and film productions, winning an Oscar for his costume designs for the 1964 film of *My Fair Lady*.

Page 299

chimeran graft

Blend of two different plants.

puddings

Desserts.

Gurdjieffian mystics

Mystics influenced by the Russian Georgy S. Gurdjieff (1872?-1949), himself influenced by Indian thought.

[310]

gift of tongues

The miraculous ability to speak foreign languages (tongues), often manifested as the recitation of apparent nonsense syllables. The classic instance of this phenomenon is the first Pentecost (Acts 2:1-15).

p-a-c-h-y

Elephants are *pachyderms*.

Page 300

Moscow Road

A fashionable street northwest of Kensington Gardens.

elephant joke

There was a vogue for elephant jokes in the fifties. The most famous: “Where does an elephant sit down?” Answer: “Anywhere he wants.”

In what ways are both Gibreel and Allie made to feel they are outsiders in England?

Page 301 [311]

chimera

In mythology, a beast made up of the parts of various animals. The theme of hybridization and transplantation refers to Gibreel's own immigrant status, of course.

[312]

Singer Brothers dybbukery

Her mother interprets Allie's obsession with Gibreel in Jewish terms. Isaac Bashevis Singer featured a *dybbuk* (in Jewish folklore, a demonic spirit which can take possession of a human body) in his novel *Satan in Goray*, where it behaved much like an incubus, a creature which has wild sex with sleeping women. Visions of similar creatures haunt Jegor, a character in *The Family Carnovsky*, by I. B. Singer's older brother, Israel Joseph Singer.

Page 302

L'Argent du Poche

"Small Change," a 1976 François Truffaut film about a group of schoolboys.

Page 303 [313]

land's attempt to metamorphose into sky

Reflects the recurrent theme of metamorphosis.

they were there

When the New Zealand mountaineer Sir Edmund Hillary, who had been the first to climb Mount Everest in 1953 (with the Nepalese sherpa Tenzing Norgay), was asked why he climbed mountains, he replied, "Because they are there." The sherpas are a people who live in the Himalayas and who make much of their living from helping mountain climbers.

Namche Bazar

One of the last villages in Nepal in which mountain climbers stop for supplies before attempting to climb Mt. Everest.

Page 304 [315]

Blake's Marriage of Heaven and Hell

William Blake's mystical work combines traditional biblical elements with an enthusiastic celebration of eroticism as a vehicle of spiritual revelation. Like some other romantic poets, he considers the demonic realm depicted in Milton's *Paradise Lost* to be not a source of wickedness, but of creative and regenerative energy suppressed by Christianity's traditional obsession with virginity and chastity. He argues for a reunion of the polarities traditionally radically split off from each other by Christian dualism, as in this passage from p. 3: "Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence. From these contraries spring what the religious call Good & Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason. Evil is the active spring from Energy." Compare Blake's approach to good and evil with that of Rushdie, who blends demonic and angelic characteristics in his two protagonists.

The lust of the goat is the bounty of God

This saying is characteristic of the many unorthodox "Proverbs of Hell" (see p. 8 of *The Marriage of Heaven & Hell*) praising the whole-hearted enjoyment of life, such as "The road to excess leads to the palace of wisdom" and "He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence." Goats are traditionally associated with carefree natural sexuality through their connection with satyrs,

but are symbols of the damned in Christianity (See Matthew 25:32-33). This ambiguity is much played with throughout the novel.

Additional note by Martine Duteil:

Among the "Proverbs of Hell," some are strikingly relevant to Rushdie's artistic project, such as "Drive your cart and your plough over the bones of the dead" (as an image of postcolonial writing's relation to Western culture); "Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion" (which anticipates the "brothel" sections in Rushdie's novel); "You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough" and, even more significant for Blake and Rushdie's vision of art, "Every thing possible to be believ'd is an image of truth".

The ancient tradition that the world will be consumed in fire at the end of six thousand years is true

17th-Century Irish Archbishop James Ussher (here spelled "Usher") famously calculated the date of creation, based on biblical chronology, at 4004 BC, and predicted the end of the world in 1996, as referred to on p. 305 [315]. This passage occurs at the top of p. 14 of *The Marriage of Heaven & Hell*. This statement is followed by these words: "For the cherub with his flaming sword is hereby commanded to leave his guard at tree of life, and when he does, the whole creation will be consumed, and appear infinite and holy whereas it now appears finite & corrupt." There then follows the phrase quoted at the top of p. 305 [315]: "This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment."

What are the main themes of the section during which Gibreel examines Allie's copy of The Marriage of Heaven and Hell?

Page 305

I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception; but my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing.

This sentence is actually the second on p. 12 of *The Marriage of Heaven & Hell*, earlier than the preceding passage quoted by Rushdie. It occurs just before the passage quoted on p. 338 [348].

the Regenerated Man

The image described is on p. 21 of William Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.



I have always found that Angels have the vanity to speak of themselves as the only wise. . . .
This is the first line of p. 21 of *The Marriage of Heaven & Hell*.

golden chain-mail Rabanne
Alluding to one of the bizarre clothing designs of Paco Rabanne.

Page 306 [316] *crashpad*
“Crashpad” was a hippie term used in the sixties to refer to an apartment or house (“pad”) where homeless young people could live--”crash”--for free.

sugar-lump
LSD was commonly distributed in sugar cubes in its early days.

no shortage of brain cells
It was widely reported in the sixties that taking LSD destroyed brain cells.

trying, in the idiom of the day, to fly
Because being drugged was called “getting high,” there were many allusions to flying in hippie drug slang. Elena’s suicide is linked through this term to the other deaths by falling in the novel.

[317]

virgin queen
One of the titles of Queen Elizabeth I, who never married.

virgo intacta
Intact virgin.

Page 307
‘ACID BATH’ She drowned while high on LSD (“acid”), but in various industrial processes metals are dipped into a literal “acid bath.”

Page 308 [318]

parachute silk
Allie has bedsheets made of recycled parachutes, making an apt symbol of arrival for a man who has plummeted from the sky.

Page 309
What are the Allie’s main characteristics, and how do they sometimes cause conflict in her life?

Page 310 [320] *isn’t it?*
Typical Anglo-Indian expression, meaning “aren’t there?”

Page 311 [321]

Luzhin
Main character in Vladimir Nabokov’s novel dealing with chess, *Zashchita Luzhina (The Defense)*.

[322]

Marinetti
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876-1944), leader of the Italian Futurist art movement, attracted to machinery and speed, aligned with Fascism.

kathputli
Hindi for marionettes.

Page 312
one-off
Unique item, or here, event.

[323]

Guantanamera
Popular Cuban song by Jose Marti, associated with the Castro revolution.

best minds of my generation
(opening of Allen Ginsberg’s *Howl*. (1956). The poem begins:

I saw the best minds of my generation
destroyed by madness, starving hysterical
naked, dragging themselves through the
negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix,
angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient
heavenly connection to the starry dynamo in
the machinery of night. . . .

Allie is mocking the pretensions of young men who claim to be revolutionaries but exploit women.

Page 313
Discuss Allie’s contention that truth has fled to the mountains. What do you think she means? Note that her father explains a related theory on the next page. Do you agree with her? Explain.

Page 314 [324]

O but he’s dead, and at the bottom of the sea.
This sounds intriguingly like a line from an Elizabethan play, but is in fact entirely Rushdie’s own invention (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

locus classicus
Originally, classic passage in a literary work; here, classic place.

Page 315 [325]

the Angel of the Recitation
The Angel Gabriel is said to have dictated the Qur’an to Muhammad.

now that Shaitan had fallen
In Islam, Shaitan is a Jinn, cast down from heaven for refusing to fall down before Adam. In Jewish and Christian belief Satan is said to have been an Angel, cast down from Heaven for rebelling against God.

[326]

as Iago warned, doth mock the meat it feeds on
From Shakespeare’s *Othello* III: iii lines 165-167: O. beware, my lord of jealousy; / It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock / The meat it feeds on. . . .” The line suggests that jealousy destroys those who harbor it, devouring them.

Page 316

like Brutus, all murder and dignity. . . . The picture of an honourable man

Refers to Antony's funeral oration in Act III, Scene 2 of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, where he ironically calls the assassins including Marcus Junius Brutus, one of Caesar's closest associates "honourable men."

wpb

Wastepaper basket.

one day men shall fly

Leonardo da Vinci, now mainly famous for paintings like the *Mona Lisa*, spent a great deal of time and ingenuity trying to design a flying machine.

Page 317 [327]

Yoji Kuri

His darkly comic films are more influenced by Western cartoons than most Japanese animation. Titles in English include "Vanish" and "Manga."

Page 318 [328]

for Blake's Isaiah, God had simply been an immanence, an incorporeal indignation

Alluding to *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Plate 12:

The Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel dined with me, and I asked them how they dared so roundly to assert. that God spake to them; and whether they did not think at the time, that they would be misunderstood, & so be the cause of imposition.

Isaiah answer'd. I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception; but my senses discover'd the infinite in every thing, and as I was then perswaded, & remain confirm'd; that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences but wrote.

[329]

a man of about the same age as himself

Gayatri Spivak notes that the following description resembles Rushdie himself

(48).

Ooparvala . . . 'The Fellow Upstairs.'
God.

Neechayvala, the Guy from Underneath
The Devil.

Page 319 [330]

masala movie

Melodramatic Indian film, see note on "exotic spices" p. 166 [171].

Page 320

'Ad or Thamoud

Two tribes mentioned in the *Qur'an* as having rejected prophets from God; ancient mighty peoples who vanished through wickedness. For further information, see Haykal 31.

Page 321 [331]

the thirteenth-century German Monk Richalmus

This crochety monk was obsessed with demons, blaming them for all of the petty irritants that surrounded him in his *Liber Revelationum de Insidiis et Versutiis Daemonum Adversus Homines*, first printed by Bernard Pez in his *Thesaurus Anecdotorum Novissimus* (Wittenberg?: Philippi, Martini & Joannis Veith, 1721-29), vol. 1, part 2, columns 373-472.

Semjaza and Azazel

Identified in the pseudepigraphical *Book of Enoch*, Chapters 6-9, as wicked leaders of the angels ("sons of God") mentioned in the passage from Genesis 6:4 cited immediately below. Azazel is also identified in Leviticus 16:6-10 as a spirit to whom a sacrificial goat must be offered by driving it into the wilderness. This ritual sacrifice is part of the famous "scapegoat" ritual often alluded to but seldom understood. Azazel is sometimes interpreted as a demon who lives in the desert.

lusting after the daughters of men

Genesis 6: 4, tells of the *Nephilim*, mighty offspring of "the sons of God" mating with "the daughters of men."

the Prophet, on whose name be peace

The ritually orthodox way to refer to Muhammad.

In what way does Gibreel compare himself with Muhammad?

Page 322 [332]

a part of town once known . . .

London's Soho district.

[333]

ka

Sanskrit term often used to refer to an unnamed divine source of being, literally "who."

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Janab

Honorific title like "sahib."

[334]

O, children of Adam

This passage comes from the *Qur'an*, Sura 7, verse 27. The context insists on God's goodness as contrasted with Shaitan's wickedness.

Jahweh

One rendering of the sacred name of God in Judaism, also often spelled "Yahweh."

Deutero-Isaiah

“Second Isaiah,” the name assigned to the presumed author of Chapters 40-55 of Isaiah. He is said to have lived long after the writer of the first thirty-nine chapters. His work, completed toward the end of the exile of the Jews in Babylon, would have been added to the book in order to update it. The very use of this term reflects modern Biblical scholarship appealing to a skeptic like Rushdie.

Shall there be evil in a city and the Lord hath not done it?

Amos 3:6. This and the following citations make the point that God was depicted at first as a source of evil as well as good, and that Satan was only gradually differentiated from him. The dualism characteristic of later religions like Islam is seen as a “pretty recent fabrication.”

What relevance does this discussion of the relationship between good and evil have to the rest of the novel?

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Ithuriel

In Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, Ithuriel’s golden spear transformed Satan from his disguise as a toad back into his original form (Joel Kuortti).

Zephon had found the adversary *squat like a toad*
by Eve’s ear in Eden, using his wiles

to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams.

From John Milton: *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, lines 800-803, a passage which links demonic temptation and the imagination in a way that fits the context.

Lives there who loves his pain?

This and the following lines are from *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, lines 888-890, in which Satan replies to Gabriel, who has reproached him for rebelling against God, by saying anyone would want to escape from Hell.

felo de se
Suicide.

Page 326 [336]

seize the day
This traditional expression, meaning “do it now,” comes from the Latin *carpe diem* (Horace: *Odes*, I:21, line 8).

pukka
Racially pure. Bigoted British colonial slang derived from Hindi *pakka*, meaning “ripe.” [337]

Levantine
From the Levant: the Middle East.

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Wilderness
The Wilderness Golf Club is located in Sevenoaks, Kent, southwest of London.

Iblis

From Greek *diabolos*, “the slanderer;” name of the rebel angel/devil in the *Qur’an*.

Tchu Tché Tchín Tchow

Gibreel is trying to remember Chamcha’s name; but this succession of syllables may well be a veiled allusion to a British musical comedy entitled *Chu Chin Chow*, produced for the stage in 1916 (script by Oscar Ashe, music by Frederic Norton), and filmed twice (in 1923 and 1934). A great success in its original staging, the production was a spectacular musical based on a much older pantomime (see above, p. 297 [308]) telling the story of Ali Baba and Forty Thieves. The musical remained popular enough to receive a production on ice under the same title in 1953. Whichever version he encountered, the *Arabian Nights*’ setting of the tale would have attracted Rushdie’s attention; and the fact that the lead thief, named Abu Hassan in the play, was also called by the very Chinese-sounding name of “Chu Chin Chow” illustrates the kind of ignorant orientalizing that Europeans have long engaged in, and to which Rushdie frequently alludes in the novel. (Sources: Dimmitt 279, Sharp 179, 1136, Encyclopedia 170, Times 9, Variety, Wearing 656-657. See note on *thirty-nine stone urns* below, p. 377 [389]. [338]

Wren’s dome

The massive dome of London’s St. Paul’s Cathedral, designed by Christopher Wren.

Page 328

Underground
Subway.

the Council

Local British government body.

swing them by their necks

The French Revolutionaries hung the hated aristocrats from the Parisian lampposts.

Orphia Phillips

As the following lines make clear, she is the sister of Hyacinth Phillips, whom Saladin met on p. 169 [170]. [339]

I cyaan believe I doin this

Orphia, Uriah and Rochelle all speak Caribbean dialect.

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sure as eggsis

Abbreviation of a British colloquialism, “eggs is eggs,” perhaps a pun on the algebraic expression of equivalence: “X is X.”

obeah

See above, note for p. 280.

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mashin up

In Caribbean dialects “mash up” is used to describe the creation of all sorts of damage--here, for “crumpling,” and below, “mash up” means “wreck.” [342]

dabba . . . dabbawalla

See note above, on p. 18, on *dabbas*.

travelling mat

See above, note on p. 108 [111].

Page 332 [343]

pour encourager les autres

“To encourage the others,” a famous sarcastic remark from Voltaire’s *Candide*. At the end of Chapter 23 of that novel, the protagonist happens upon the execution of of an English admiral, accused of cowardice for not having approached the enemy sufficiently closely. *Candide* objects that his French opponent must have been equally guilty, but his informant casually remarks, “That’s undeniable, but in this country it’s a good thing to kill an admiral from time to time to encourage the others.” This is Voltaire’s satire on the execution of Admiral John Byng, which he had tried unsuccessfully to prevent in 1757.

something straaange in the neighbourhood

The children are playing at being Ghostbusters, quoting the refrain of the title song from the 1984 film by that name: “If there’s something strange in your neighborhood, who ya gonna call? Ghostbusters!”

gulag

Acronym for the prison camps of the Soviet Union.

fairy-queen

One of the many titles associated with Queen Elizabeth I, but here probably an anti-gay insult.

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Bachchas

Children (Hindi).

rude rhymes

“Rude” is a much stronger term in Britain than in the U.S. Do these count as Satanic Verses? [344]

redeeming the city like something left in a pawnshop

The Judeo-Christian tradition of a redeemer (Hebrew *go’el*) is a figure who pays the amount due in order to liberate whoever or whatever has been condemned. In Christian theology Christ is the sacrificial lamb who, echoing the Passover lamb of the Jews, dies to free his followers from sin and damnation. Thus the use of the term “redeem” to refer to liberating an item left at a pawnshop is historically accurate, if irreverent.

calm-calm

In Indian dialect, adjectives are sometimes repeated thus to emphasize them. Other examples are “big-big” (p. 68 [69]) and “bad-bad” (p. 334 [344]).

Page 334

three-little-words

“Three Little Words” is the title of a popular song written in 1930 for an Amos and Andy film, *Check and Double Check*, by Harry Ruby and Bert Kalmar. The words are, of course, “I love you.” Instead, Gibreel replies with another, very unsatisfactory, three words.

tamasha

Show, circus, celebration (from the name for a very popular form of bawdy Indian folk theater). [345]

harmonium

Box-like portable organ somewhat like an accordion introduced into India by Christian missionaries and widely adopted for the playing of traditional Indian music.

The gazals of Faiz Ahmed Faiz

Faiz (1914-1978), born in what is now Pakistan, was one of South Asia’s most distinguished and influential modern poets. Much of his Urdu poetry was Marxist-inspired political poetry in support of the poor. In his acknowledgements, Rushdie cites Mahmood Jamal as the source of this translation, slightly emended by himself. For gazals, see note on p. 3.

the fifties classic Mughal-e-Azam

(Dir. K. Asif, starring Prithviraj Kapoor, Dilip Kumar, & Madhubala, 1960) A spectacular historical fantasy in which the son of the Mughal emperor Akbar the Great falls in love with a dancing girl.

Cleopatra’s Needle

An Egyptian obelisk, now located on the Victoria Embankment by the Thames. It has nothing to do with Cleopatra, having been created about 1500 BC.

Page 335 [346]

There is no God but God.

See note above, on p. 105 [108].

Page 336 [347]

In the pages that follow, try to decide how literally we are to take Gibreel’s transformation. Does he actually change, or is the transformation only in his mind? Explain.

mala’ikah . . . malak

The former is the plural, the latter the singular term for “angel” in Arabic.

as the Quran clearly states

From the *Qur’an* Sura 18 (“The Cave”), verse 50. Iblis, a rebellious spirit, refuses the commandment to bow down to Adam and is damned, becoming *Shaitan*, or Satan. See also *Qur’an*, Sura 2 (“The Cow”), verse 34 and Sura 17 (“The Night Journey, Children of Israel”), verse 61.

Wilt thou place in the earth such as make mischief in it and shed blood?

Qu’ran Sura 2, verse 30. When God announces his intention of creating humanity, the angels reply with what the narrator implies is justified skepticism.

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colossus-style

One of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the Colossus of Rhodes, a hundred-foot-high statue of Helios, stood in the harbor of Rhodes.

[348]

I'm papa partial to a titi tippie; mamadam, my caca card
S. S. Sisodia's stammer produces a variety of obscene and fairly obvious puns.

to a degree

British colloquialism for "to a great degree."

iscreen

The British call auto windshields "windscreens," so Gibreel is literally "on the screen."

Page 338

What is the point of the story about the man who believed he was Napoleon?

Blake again, Allie thought.

The quotation that follows is taken from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*: p. 12. See notes on p. 304 [315]. The point of Blake's dialogue is that inspired revelation is genuine, though not limited to biblical prophets. Allie is mentally countering her mother's skepticism about Gibreel.

[349]

plug him in

Electroshock therapy, once widely used to treat schizophrenia, was accused of tranquilizing patients by destroying part of their brains and turning them into zombies.

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early bath

As opposed to an "early grave." "Taking an early bath" is a euphemism in British sport for being "sent-off," that is, dispatched from the playing arena for an act of foul play. It is a phrase associated with soccer and rugby (although more with working-class rugby league, than the middle-class, Rugby School associated, rugby union). As the players indulge in a communal bath post-match (ghastly as that sounds), a player sent-off before the end of the game takes a bath before everyone else. It was popularized (invented?) by the late BBC sports commentator Eddie Waring and, to be honest, Allie's mother would more probably have heard the phrase on television, rather than read it in the sports pages, as Allie believes (Paul Harmer).

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Charles II's terror after his Restoration, of being sent "on his travels" again

After Charles I was executed and the British monarchy was abolished on January 30, 1649 by Puritan revolutionaries, his son, Charles II, was forced to roam from court to court on the Continent, seeking refuge and income from various foreign governments. Although he was often portrayed as a careless playboy, there were many times of hardship and anxiety during this period. After Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell's death in 1658, Charles was invited home and the monarchy reestablished, an event known as "The Restoration." Although not all historians agree, Antonia Fraser maintains in her popular biography of the king that he was fearful and depressed at many points in his life, especially toward its end. She recounts that he told an

Englishman living in Brussels, "I am weary of travelling, and am resolved to go abroad no more. But when I am dead and gone, I know what my brother may do: I am much afraid that when he comes to wear the crown he will be obliged to travel again. And yet I will take care to leave my kingdoms to him in peace. . . . (Fraser 441) The theme of Charles II as an exile is one more example of the English being depicted in this novel as outsiders, foreigners, exiles.

Lives there who loves his pain?

See above, note to p. 324 [334].

the Beckettian formula, Not I. He.

The text of Samuel Beckett's 1972 play *Not I*, contains this passage: "...and she found herself in the--...what?...who?...no!.. she!" However, Rushdie probably meant only "Not I" to be the "Beckettian formula," in which case he is simply referring to the title of the play (Beckett 73).

[351]

'These are exalted females whose intercession is to be desired'
From the Satanic Verses.

Mr Hyde

The evil alter-ego in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jeckyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Page 341 [352]

bhel-puri

Deep-fried pancakes made of lentil noodles and puffed rice.

raitas

Vegetables cooked in milk curds or yogurt.

khir

Rice pudding.

sivayyan

Thin noodles, cooked with milk, sugar, raisins and almonds, especially by Muslims in Northern India and Pakistan.

Pavarotti

Luciano Pavarotti, the world's most popular operatic tenor.

lassi

Thick yogurt drink which can be made either sweet or salty.

Vanessa

[Redgrave], the British actress. See above, note on "Trotskyist actresses, p. 49 [50].

Amitabh

Amitabh Bacchan, the most famous male Indian movie star.

Dustin

[Hoffman], the American actor.

Sridevi

See note above, on p. 262 [270].

Christopher Reeve
Star of the *Superman* films.

soosoo

Childish term for “penis” (Hindi), just as “tata” is a childish name in English for breasts, and “pipi” for urination.

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he had made a string of ‘quality’ pictures on microscopic budgets
Sisodia is based on Ismail Merchant, who with his partner James Ivory and screenwriter Ruth Praver Jhabvala has made such films as *A Room With a View*, paying his actors more with prestige than cash.

Charulata

Not the name of an actress, but of the starring role in a film by the same name, directed in 1964 by Satyajit Ray, and better known in English as *The Lonely Wife*. The film starred Madhabi Mukherjee as Charulata, a neglected wife who falls in love with her brother-in-law.

Ocean of the Streams of Story

Compare with the title of Rushdie’s *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*. This is an allusion to the Kashmiri classic *Kathasaritsagara*, the “Ocean of Stories” by Somadeva. [353]

Hong Kong-based kung-phooey producer Run Run Shaw

The Shaw studio has been responsible for an immense number of low-budget kung fu movies. See note on p. 24 [25].

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The trouble with the Engenglish . . .

This is one of the most commonly quoted passages in the novel. Explain its meaning. [354]

Ché Ché Chamber of Horrors

Madame Tussaud’s “Chamber of Horrors” is a famous wax museum in London, featuring among other grisly scenes the crimes of Jack the Ripper, whose career “the Granny ripper’s” deeds are modeled on. Sisodia’s stammer alludes to the Cuban revolutionary and companion of Fidel Castro, Ché Guevara (1928-1967)

mad barbers

Refers to Sweeney Todd, the legendary barber who was said to have killed many of his customers and made them into meat pie filling. Todd is often compared to the real historical serial murderer, Jack the Ripper, whose name is alluded to in the character of the “Granny Ripper” in this novel. The Todd legend was made famous in modern times by Stephen Sondheim in his 1979 musical *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* by .

etc. etc. etera

“Etc.” is of course the conventional written abbreviation for “et cetera,” but Rushdie turns it into a stammer.

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crores

See note aboveabove, on p. 63 [64].

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Pagal Khana

Insane asylum.

A star is reborn.

Allusion to *A Star Is Born*, a classic 1937 film about a self-destructive movie star, remade in 1954 and 1976.

[357]

Christ-image on the Turin Shroud

A famous “miraculous” picture of Christ mysteriously impressed on a cloth said to have been wrapped around his dead body. The shroud’s reputation was severely damaged shortly before the publication of *The Satanic Verses* when traces of a typical Medieval paint were detected on it.

St. Lucia

A small island in the Caribbean chiefly known as the birthplace of poet Derek Walcott.

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That Berlin Wall . . . might well be more rapidly rebuilt.

The Berlin wall was torn down in September 1988, shortly after the publication of the novel.

Page 348 [359] *Boniek*

Probably an allusion to the name of Zbigniew Boniek, Czech-born player of the popular Turin soccer team, Juventus--another immigrant.

Frankenstein and geeeps

Dr. Frankenstein in Mary Shelly’s 1818 novel creates a monster out of parts from various bodies. Rushdie is here pairing his deed with an experiment carried about by Cambridge scientists in which they combined genetic material from a goat and a sheep embryo to produce a chimera which they called a “geep” (*Time* February 27, 1984, p. 71). For the scientific details, see Fehilly.

Page 349 [360]

Dark Star

Punning on the astronomical term explained in the note for p. 61.

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Filmmela

Film gala? Joel Kuortti suggests that perhaps the term puns on the name of Philomela, who in Greek mythology was raped by Tereus and had her tongue cut out in an attempt to prevent her reporting the crime.

[361]

burqa

All-enveloping veil worn by conservative Muslim women, reaching to the ground.

the ‘disco diwané set’

“Disco diwané” means literally “mad about disco,” and was the title of a Hindi disco record of the late 70s by the London-based singer Nazia Hasan. Used here to refer to “Westernized” Indians.

Mithun

Mithun Chakravarti, a popular male actor in both Hindi and Bengali films.

Kimi

Kimi Katkar, Bollywood actress.

Jayapradha

Another actress, sometimes spelled “Jayaprada” or “Jaya Pradha.” Elected to the Indian parliament in 1996.

Rekha

Major Bollywood star in the 80s.

Vinod

See note above, on p. 262.

Dharmendra

Another Bollywood action hero.

Sridevi

See note above, on p. 262 [270].

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a voice crying in the wilderness

Maslama is presenting himself as John the Baptist to Gibreel’s Jesus, quoting Matthew 3:2-3, which in turn quotes Isaiah 40:3-4. He is a sort of demonic prophet.

Page 352 [363]

Pandemonium

In Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, the capital of Hell; by extension any place in which evil is concentrated.

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I’m back!

Spoken first with a less ominous meaning on p. 351 [362]. This line was memorably uttered by the seemingly indestructible demonic Jack Nicholson character in *The Shining* (1980).

tcha

In Hindi, tea is called *chai*.

Shah

The former dictator of Iran, overthrown by the Islamic revolution, used the title. Gibreel is trying to remember Chamcha’s name.

Shatchacha

Popular dance, usually spelled either “cha-cha” or “cha-cha-cha.”

[364]

The native is an oppressed person whose permanent dream is to become the persecutor

Franz Fanon, Caribbean psychiatrist who worked in the Algerian revolution and radical theorist, from *The Wretched of the Earth*, Chapter 1 (“Concerning Violence”), p. 52 of the American translation.

Chichi? Sasa?

Nicknames for Chamcha and Saladin.

My other, my love . . .

(from a song, poem?) Suggested: “Mere Humdrum, mere dost,” a poem by Faiz Ahmad Faiz.

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that Tree

See Genesis 2:9.

a different Tree

Qur’an 7:20.

apples were not specified

The fruit hanging from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was not specified in Genesis either; but came to be considered apples in the Middle Ages, though the influence of a pun on *malum* meaning either “evil” or “apple.”

the Death-Tree

The tree of forbidden fruit which brought damnation (spiritual death) into the world is often compared by Medieval Christian thinkers to the cross, which bore the fruit of life in the form of Christ’s sacrifice. In Genesis 2:9 and 3:22 there is mention of a mysterious “tree of life,” which apparently could have overcome physical death had Adam and Eve eaten of it. Gibreel is arguing that the Qur’anic tree, though called “the Tree of Immortality,” comparing it to the second Biblical tree, functions more like the first, as “slayer of men’s souls.”

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morality-fearing God

Since in Genesis God forbade Adam and Eve to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, he may be thought of as fearing morality. Indeed, Genesis 3:11 can be interpreted as reflecting his displeasure in Adam’s having developed a sense of shame. The ambiguities present in this section of Genesis have fascinated many thinkers, and are naturally of great interest to Gibreel, who is out to invert many traditional religious beliefs.

Abracadabra! Hocus Pocus!

Although both of these are magician’s incantations, the first is associated with traditional alchemy and an attempt to perform actual magic, whereas the second is associated with fraud and deceit.

juggernaut

See note above, on “juggernauts,” p. 254 [262].

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coir

Fiber made from coconut husks, used for making rope.

Chapter VI: Return to Jahilia

Plot Summary for Chapter VI

This chapter, the most controversial in the novel, returns us to Jahilia, from which Mahound had fled (historically this corresponds to the Prophet Muhammad's flight from Mecca to Medina). Mahound is returning to his home city, having gained many followers while he was away. The monstrous Hind, miraculously unaged, continues her reign of terror over the city. The cynical Poet Baal encounters Salman, now disillusioned with Mahound. He says that in Yathrib the prophet has become obsessed with laying down various restrictive laws, some of which parallel parts of the *Sharia*, traditional Islamic law. This passage has been widely attacked by Muslim scholars as inaccurate and blasphemous, but clearly Rushdie was not attempting a scholarly discourse on Islamic law. It is, however, a satire on restrictive moral codes. He also describes what he takes to be the origins of the religion's restrictions on women.

Salman, noting that the revelations Mahound received were very convenient for the Prophet himself, has begun to test him by altering the revelations given to Mahound when they are dictated. He has realized that Mahound is far from infallible; and, terrified that his changes to the sacred text will be discovered, he has fled to Jahilia. Muslims who see this as a satire on the dictation of the Qur'an find it highly offensive, for the sacred scripture of Muslims is held to be the exact and perfectly preserved word of God in the most literal sense.

The aged Abu Simbel converts to the new faith and surrenders the city of Mahound. At first Hind resists, but after the House the Black Stone is cleansed of pagan idols (as the Ka'ba was similarly cleansed by Muhammad), she submits and embraces the new faith as well. Bilal manages to save Salman from execution; but Baal flees, hiding in a brothel named *Hijab*. The prostitutes there have blasphemously taken on the names of the Prophet's various wives. No scene in the novel has been more ferociously attacked, though as Rushdie points out it is quite inaccurate to say that the author has made the Prophet's wives into whores. Rather the scene is a commentary on the tendency of the profane to infiltrate the sacred. Nevertheless, the imagery and language of this section has offended readers mightily. Baal becomes a sort of pseudo-Mahound, by making love to each of the prostitutes in turn. Salman visits Baal and tells him a story that implies the real Ayesha may have been unfaithful to Mahound.

The brothel is raided, Baal sings serenades to the imprisoned whores and is himself arrested and condemned to death. Hind, meanwhile, retreats to her study, evidently practicing witchcraft. It is revealed that her "conversion" was a ruse to divert Mahound's attention while she trained herself in the magical powers necessary to defeat him. Ultimately she sends the goddess Al-Lat to destroy the Prophet who, with his dying breath thanks her for killing him.

Notes for Chapter 6

Page 359 [371]

House of the Black Stone

See above, note on p. 94 [97].

Page 360 [373]

How has Jahilia changed?

bulls

Official pronouncements of the Pope.

Page 361 [373]

four hundred and eighty-one pairs of ruby slippers

While the number of slippers is doubtless meant to recall the huge shoe collection of the infamous Imelda Marcos, wife of the deposed dictator of the Philippines, Ferdinand Marcos, their color is an allusion to Dorothy's magic shoes in the film version of *The Wizard of Oz*.

old women were being raped and ritually slaughtered

As in London by the "Granny Ripper."

the Manticorps

Pun on "manticore," a mythical Indian beast with the head of a man, body of a tiger or lion, and feet and tail of a scorpion or of a dragon; from Persian *mandchora*: "man-eater."

Page 362 [374]

hashashin

The word "assassin" is derived from this Arabic term meaning "eater of hashish," based on tales of such drugged men carrying out murders.

Page 363 [375]

The Persian. Sulaiman.

Salman is being treated as an immigrant, like Salman Rushdie. The Arabic "Sulaiman" is the same as English "Solomon," the wise king of ancient Israel. But Salman points out that his name, like other words containing "slm" like "Islam" and "Muslim" connotes "peaceful" in Arabic.

Page 364 [376]

What do the laws proclaimed by Mahound tell us about his attitudes and character? Why do you think Rushdie chose to relate these particular laws?

Page 365 [377]

Salman had persuaded the Prophet to have a huge trench dug
See above, note on p. 101 [103]. The telling of the story given here seems to question the high reputation for cleverness which Salman's tactic earned him.

Page 366 [378]

Oh, such a practical angel

Joel Kuortti presents the most plausible parallel in Muhammad's

career: "A similar tradition is recorded, where Muhammad employed 'Abd-Allah Ibn Abi Sarh as his scribe; but the latter began to make changes in the recitation and finally lost his faith as these verses were accepted by Muhammad. Later 'Abd-Allah was sentenced to death and pardoned in the same way as Salman Farsi. The most notable difference between Salman and 'Abd-Allah in this is that Salman makes the changes without Mahound's consent, or knowing about it" (Dashti 98, Muir xv & 410, Watt *Bell's Introduction* 37-38). See also Armstrong, pp. 244-245. Saadi A. Simawe notes that Salman's suspicions of the genuineness of Mahound's revelations may also be inspired by certain criticisms made by his wife Ayesha of the historical Muhammad: "When the Qur'an allowed Muhammad to marry as many women as he wished, she protested with cynicism, "Allah always responds immediately to your needs . . ." (185).¹ See also Armstrong, p. 196.

Page 368 [379]

Present arguments for and against the proposition that the story of Salman's distortion of the texts dictated to him by Mahound is an attack on the infallibility of the Qur'an.

Page 369 [382]

What kind of idea . . . does Submission seem today
Refers back to p. 335 [345]: "WHAT KIND OF AN IDEA ARE YOU?" One of the major motifs of the novel, dealing as it does with the problem of self-definition.

Page 370

chimeras
See note on p. 301 [311].

Page 371 [384]

balcony scene
Alluding to the famous scene in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, scene ii.

Dajjal
Literally "hypocrite," "liar," but referring to an anti-messianic figure in Islamic tradition comparable to the Christian Antichrist who is predicted to mislead many at the end of time by disseminating lies and half-truths. Also spelled *Dadjdjal* (Arabic).

Page 373 [385]

Exalted Birds
The three false goddesses, also known as the "banat al-Llah." In Arabic, the Qur'an calls them "gharaniq." See Karen Armstrong's comment on this point (p. 114).

[386]

colossus of Hubal
Al-Kalbi in his *Book of Idols* describes this statue depicting Hubal (Biblical Abel) as being made of as a red agate (Faris 23). See Al-Kalbi, p. 23.

How does Khalid's slaying of Uzza symbolize the triumph of the new faith? Note the traditional Islamic title given to the "Most High" (God).

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All who Submit are spared.
According to tradition, Muhammad forgave the historical Hind for her mutilation of his uncle (Haykal 411).

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takht
Throne (Farsi).

Page 375

Why is Mahound so angry with Khalid when he asks what is to be done to Baal?

Page 376 [388]

The Curtain, Hijab
Literally "veil," (Arabic) as in the facial covering worn by many Muslim women; but also the curtain behind which Muhammad's wives retreated from public view. At first the institution of the hijab was applied to Muhammad's wives only; but later it was adopted by many women. Karen Armstrong argues that veiling and the seclusion of women in general are not Qur'anic, but influenced by earlier Persian and Byzantine customs (197). In sufi metaphysics the term refers to the veil separating the divine and human realms. This episode has called down more wrathful denunciation than any other, with many Muslim critics stating that it portrays the wives of Muhammad as whores. Defenders of Rushdie point out that these are only whores *pretending* to be his wives, which is true, but somewhat beside the point, since the effect is almost equally blasphemous to a believer. Rushdie himself explains his intentions in creating this episode:

If you can remember, Jahilia is presented as being this debauched zone of licentiousness into which this new idea, which had all kinds of notions of purity and abstinence and so on, had just been introduced. So it's the first clash between those two very, very incompatible ways of looking at the world. The old debauched world creates for itself a kind of debauched image of the thing that's just arrived, and that image is eventually destroyed. That is simply my way of concentrating the reader's mind on what was really happening here and reminding them that after all the harem is also a place where women have been bought and sold. So it may not be a place where they are plying their sexual favours . . . but certainly the harem is a place to which women have been sent for reasons other than desire, so that there are two kinds of ways of locking up women, if you like. One for the pleasure of one man and the political good of many other men, whose families they came from. In the other case you lock up women in order to, as it were, make them available for the pleasure of many men. The two worlds just seem like strange positive-negative echoes of each other and a way of showing that was to make them physically mirror each other. The same number of women, this little degraded fellow, this poet, in one world and the Prophet in the other. That's why I thought of it. I suppose I

underestimated its explosive content.

Rushdie: "Interview," p. 64.

[389]

Circassian eunuchs

Circassians, inhabitants of the northern Caucasus on the border between the former Soviet Union and Turkey, were much prized as slaves in ancient times. Slaves used as harem guards were castrated to protect the women they guarded. Information on Circassians.

Page 377 [389]

thirty-nine stone urns

Of course, in *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* there was someone in each jar. See *Tchu Tché Tchín Tchow*: above, p. 327 [337].

[390]

butcher Ibrahim

Rushdie may have given this name to his butcher because the Qur'anic Ibrahim (Biblical "Abraham") slew a ram after having been prevented from slaying his son.

Page 378 [391]

great temple of Al-Lat at Taif

An object of pilgrimage, like Mecca, in pre-Islamic Arabia. The other goddesses also had their temples, Uzzah at Naklah, and Manat at Qudayd. All of them were overthrown by Muhammad. (Armstrong 64-65)

Page 380 [393]

Solomon's-horses

Muhammad's favorite wife, A'isha (Ayesha) was still a child when he married her. According to tradition, when he asked her what her toys were that she was playing with, she answered "Solomon's Horses" (Watt 323 & Armstrong 157).

Page 385 [398]

sweet wine made with uncrushed grapes

This alludes to a wine-growing technique developed by Arabs in Andalusia (personal communication from Salman Rushdie).

Page 387 [399]

Salman's story

This story of a potential scandal concerning Ayesha is retold by Haykal, emphasizing her innocence (332-332). More details are provided in Armstrong (pp. 200-201).

Page 388 [401]

a dead woman

When the Ayesha of H. Rider Haggard's *She* died, she similarly aged all at once after having miraculously preserved her youth for centuries.

Page 389

Umar

Probably alluding to the name of one of Muhammad's followers who became the second of the Caliphs who ruled after his death: 'Umar b. al-Khattab (c. 591-644) (Netton 35).

Page 392 [405] *the La-ilaha*

The *qalmah* (Arabic). See note above, on p. 105 [108].

Pages 393-394 [406]

the death of Mahound

This account closely follows the biographies of Muhammad. Mahound lies with his head on the lap of his favourite wife, Ayesha. In Islamic tradition, the words she utters at the end of the chapter are ascribed to Abu Bakr, Muhammad's bosom friend and Ayesha's father, who consoled the mourning believers with them after Muhammad's death. See Ibn Ishaq, p. 683. (Joel Kuortti) See also Armstrong, pp. 255-256.

Azrael

In Islam, the angel of death who will blow the last horn at the end of the world. In addition, when someone is fated to die, God causes a leaf inscribed with his or her name to fall from the lote tree beside the divine throne, and forty days later Azrael must separate his soul from his body. His Arabic name is more commonly rendered Izra'il (Gibb "Izra'il").

Notes

¹The "Satanic Verses," a note by Joel Kuortti

One of the most controversial topics in the *Satanic Verses* "affair" is the question of the "satanic verses" themselves. The title of the novel refers to an incident which is on the disputed terrain between fiction and fact. The "satanic verses" are, in transliteration from Arabic, *tilk al-gharaniq al-'ula wa inna shafa'ata-hunna la-turtaja*, and translate into English as "these are exalted females whose intercession is to be desired" (*Satanic Verses* p. 340). (Note on the translation of these verses.) The verses comprising this sentence are said to have been added to the 53rd sura of the Qur'an entitled *Surat-annajm, The Star* (53:19ff) in order to acknowledge the validity of the goddesses Lat, Manat, and 'Uzza. The tradition goes on to say that the verses were later withdrawn and denounced as "satanic."

But the historicity of the incident is disputed by some of the early Muslim historians, especially (Muhammad ben Yasar) Ibn Ishaq (d. 768 CE), (Muhammad Abu 'Abdullah Ibn Umar) al-Waqidi (747-822 CE), (Muhammad Ibn Muslim Ibn Shihab) al-Zuhri (d. 741 CE), Muhammad Ibn Sa'd (d. 845 CE), al-Tabari (c. 839-923 CE), Ibrahi. Ibn Hisham, Ibn Ishaq's editor, omits the passage, but it is preserved as a quotation from al-Tabari, in Guillaume's translation of Ibn Ishaq (Ishaq 165-166. See Muir, pp.lxxix-lxxx).

Some Islamic and most non-Muslim Western commentators on the Qur'an have accepted this story of Muhammad's momentary acceptance of the verses; others have repudiated it. But the prevailing Muslim view of what is called the "Gharaniq"

incident is that it is a fabrication created by the unbelievers of Mecca in the early days of Islam, and, Haykal comments, afterwards the “story arrested the attention of the western Orientalists who took it as true and repeated it *ad nauseam*.” (Haykal 105) The main argument against the authenticity of the two verses in Haykal and elsewhere is that “its incoherence is evident upon the least scrutiny. It contradicts the infallibility of every prophet in conveying the message of His Lord.” (Haykal 107) In other words, since Muslims believe Muhammad to have faithfully reported God’s word, it is surprising that Muslim scholars have accepted such a discreditable story, and not at all surprising that it might have been invented by Islam’s enemies. In his analysis of the passage, Haykal comes to the conclusion that “this story of the goddesses is a fabrication and a forgery, authored by the enemies of Islam after the first century of Hijrah” (Haykal 144). Zakaria Bashier shares this view, though he further argues that even if the verses were to be regarded as being genuine, they would not impugn the Prophet’s infallibility because they were in fact uttered by Satan. (Bashier 175). He also refers to similar observations by al-Suhayili (see Bashier 173).

The argument that W.M. Watt, for his part, provides for the inarguable authenticity of the verses is that “it is inconceivable that any Muslim would invent such a story, and it is inconceivable that a Muslim scholar would accept such a story from a non-Muslim.” (Watt xxxiv). Similarly, in his highly controversial book *Twenty-Three Years*, the Iranian ‘Ali Dashti concludes that “the evidence given in well-attested reports and in the interpretations of certain commentators makes it likely that the incident occurred.” (Dashti 32). As evidence for the possibility of such a recitation and its subsequent withdrawal, the following passage from the Qur’an is often cited: “And We did not send before you any apostle or prophet, but when he desired, the Shaitan made a suggestion respecting his desire; but Allah annuls that which is cast” (22:52). As the suras of the Qur’an are traditionally not presented in chronological order (and just what that order might be is generally under dispute), it could be possible that this passage is referring to such a withdrawal.

The verses were perhaps first named “satanic verses” by Sir William Muir, as Ahsan notes (Ahsan 139, footnote 2). Later the term was widely adopted, for example by Watt in his book *Muhammad at Mecca*. Daniel Pipes explains that as the term “satanic verses” does not occur anywhere else than in Western Orientalists’ works, and states that Rushdie “unwittingly adopted a part of the orientalist tradition.” (Pipes 116) Rushdie maintains that the term “comes from al-Tabari, one of the canonical Islamic sources.” (Rushdie: “Choice between Light and Dark” 11)

A list of references to the “satanic verses” in the novel.

Page 24

the incident of the Satanic verses in the early career of the Prophet

Page 114

The Star ... At this point, without any trace of hesitation or doubt, he recites two further verses.

Have you thought upon Lat and Uzza, and Manat, the third, the other? . . . ‘They are the exalted birds, and their intercession is desired indeed.’

Page 123 *the three winged creatures, looking like herons or swans or just women*

‘It was the Devil . . .’

Page 124

He stands in front of the statues . . .

After the repudiation of the Satanic verses . . .

Page 340

he would still speak, at nights, verses in Arabic . . .

Page 366

What finally finished Salman with Mahound: the question of the women; and of the Satanic verses.

Page 368

I went on with my devilement, changing verses . . .

Page 373

Have you heard of Lat, and Manat, and Uzza . . .

There are allusions in the London plot from time to time which connect the verses to Gibreel:

Page 285

it proved impossible to identify the verses

Page 445

the return of the little, satanic verses that made him mad

Page 459

What does a poet write? Verses. What jingle-jangles in Gibreel’s brain? Verses. What broke his heart? Verses and again verses

Page 544

But I heard verses/You get me Spoono/V e r s e s

The transliteration is given without diacritical marks. The translation in *The Satanic Verses* here is closest to the one in William Muir, *The Life of Mohammad from Original Sources* 81). Another translation can be found in M. M. Ahsan: “These are the high-soaring ones (deities) whose intercession is to be hoped for!” (Ahsan 132). Arabic variants appear on pp.132 & 141 of the same source, and there are variant transliterations in Muhammad Husayn Haykal, p.111.

Rushdie’s own most extended discussion of this issue appears in his *Critical Quarterly* interview, pp. 59-62.

Karen Armstrong, in her *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*, speculates about what truth might lurk behind this tale without necessarily alleging that Muhammad recognized the three goddesses as in any way comparable to God himself:

The *gharaniq* were probably Numidian cranes which were thought to fly higher than any other bird. Muhammad, who may have believed in the existence of the *banat al-Llah* as he believed in the existence of angels and *jinn*, was giving the “goddesses” a delicate compliment, without compromising his message. The *gharaniq* were not on the same level as al-Llah--not that anybody had suggested that they were--but, hovering as it were between heaven and earth, they could be valid intermediaries between God and man, like the angels, whose intercession is approved in the very next section of

Sura 53. The Quraysh spread the good news throughout the city: "Muhammad has spoken of our gods in splendid fashion. He alleged in what he recited that they are the exalted gharaniq whose intercession is approved.

(p. 114)

Chapter VII: The Angel Azrael

Plot Summary for Chapter VII

This is by far the most eventful chapter in the novel, and the one in which readers are most likely to get lost. The Saladin/Gibreel plot resumes as the former meditates on his two unrequited loves: for London and for Pamela, both of whom have betrayed him. He calls on his wife, now pregnant by Jumpy Joshi, and says he wants to move back into his home, although he seems to have fallen out of love with her. Back in his room at the Shaandaar Cafe, he watches television and muses on various forms of transformation and hybridism which relate to his own transmutation and fantasizes about the sexy teenaged Mishal Sufyan. The first-person demonic narrator of the novel makes one of his brief appearances at the bottom of p. 408 [top of 423]. The guilty Jumpy coerces Pamela into taking Saladin home. The pair is involved in protests against the arrest of Uhuru Simba for the Granny Ripper Murders. Saladin goes with them to a protest meeting where an encounter with Mishal makes him feel doomed. Jumpy mentions Gibreel to him. After hearing evangelist Eugene Dumsday denounce evolution on the radio, he realizes that his personal evolution is not finished.

A heat wave has hit London. At a bizarre party hosted by film maker S. S. Sisodia, Saladin meets Gibreel again. He starts out to attack him, furious at the latter's having abandoned him back when the police came to Rosa Diamond's house; but enraged by the beautiful Alleluia Cone, he more effectively avenges himself accidentally by blurting out the news of his wife's unfaithfulness, unaware of the effect this will have on Gibreel, who is extremely prone to jealousy. Gibreel insanely assaults Jumpy Joshi, whom he fears is lusting after Allie.

Allie, driven to distraction by Gibreel's jealousy, invites Saladin to stay with her and the sedated Gibreel in Scotland. The two lovers are bound in an intensely sexual but destructive relationship which makes Saladin more than ever determined to take his revenge on Gibreel, whom he takes to the Shaandaar Café, where they encounter drunken racists. On the way back to Allie's flat Saladin plants the seeds of his campaign against Gibreel's sanity by telling him of the jealous Strindberg. He begins to use his talent for imitating many voices to make obscene and threatening phone calls to both Allie and Gibreel, and he succeeds in breaking the couple up.

Gibreel, now driven completely insane, is suffering under the delusion that he is the destroyer angel Azrael, whose job is to blow the Last Trumpet and end the world. A riot involving both Blacks and Asians breaks out when--after Uhuru Simba dies in police custody--it is made clear that he was not the Granny Ripper. Gibreel is in his element in this apocalyptic uprising. It is not always clear in what follows how much is Gibreel's insanity and how much is fantastic reality: but he experiences himself as capable of blowing streams of fire out of his trumpet to incinerate various people, including a group of pimps whom he associates with the inhabitants of the Jahilian brothel in his dream. On a realistic level, the ensuing fires are probably just the result of the rioting that has broken out around him. Jumpy Joshi and Pamela

die when the Brickhall Community Relations Council building is torched either by Saladin, or by the police. When Saladin returns to the Shaandaar Café he finds it ablaze as well, and plunges in to try to rescue the Sufyan family, but instead he is rescued by Gibreel. As an ambulance takes the two men away, Gibreel lapses back into madness and dreams the next chapter.

Notes for Chapter VII

Azrael

Azrael, or more commonly "Izra'il" is the principal angel of death in Islam (Netton: *Text*, p. 35).

Page 397 [411]

love, the refractory bird of Meilhac and Halévy's libretto for Carmen

The first lines of the *Habañera* in Act I of Georges Bizet's 1857 opera *Carmen* are "L'amour est un oiseau rebelle / Que nulle ne peut apprivoiser" ("Love is a rebellious bird which nothing can tame"). The libretto was written by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, based on the novel by Prosper Mérimée. Rushdie's erudition let him down here, however; for the words to the *Habañera* were in fact written by Bizet himself (*The Lyric Opera Companion*, 67).

Khayyám FitzGerald's adjectiveless Bird of Time (which has but a little way to fly, and lo! is on the Wing)

Edward Fitzgerald's very loose "translation" of the *Rubáiyát* by Persian poet Omar Khayyam is a classic of English romantic poetry, and contains these lines in its seventh stanza:

The Bird of Time has but a little way
To flutter--and the Bird is on the wing.

a letter written by Henry James, Sr, to his sons

The passage here quoted comes in fact from Henry James, Sr.'s book, *Substance and Shadow* (1866), p. 75. It is quoted in William James' introduction to his father's writings, collected in the volume entitled *The Literary Remains of the Late Henry James* (1884) but is not presented by him as a letter. The passage is most readily available in Matthiessen (156). David Windsor points out that Rushdie evidently encountered the passage as the epigraph to José Donoso's novel, *The Obscene Bird of Night* where the quotation is (mis-) attributed thus: "Henry James Sr., writing to his sons Henry and William." This isn't the only mistake Donoso makes: a comma gets misplaced, and a number of elisions are made as well of the quote that William James uses. But William himself is misquoting his father: in *Substance and Shadow* the sentences are in a different order, and there's a bit that William puts in that isn't there in the original. So Rushdie has to be quoting the misquote (Donoso's) of the misquote (of William's) of Henry James. Donoso's novel tells of a horribly deformed son (called "Boy") born to an important politician, who sets him up on a remote family estate where, but for one person, all of the people will be "freaks of nature," so that he will never grow up feeling abnormal. The one "undeformed person" (who is also writing the story of "Boy") is thus the one "freak" that will further reinforce Boy's "normality."

Bright Elusive Butterfly

Bob Lind's recording of his song "Elusive Butterfly," was an international hit in 1966. The last line of each stanza is "I chased the bright elusive butterfly of love."

Skinnerian-android

From B. F. Skinner (b.1904), developer of experimental behavioral psychology, which focusses on responses to stimuli.

Page 398 [412]

Othello . . . Shylock

Two Shakespeare characters; the first the Black protagonist of the play by the same name, the second the villainous Jew in *The Merchant of Venice*.

the Bengali writer, Nirad Chaudhuri

Bengali by birth, writes in English; author of a genial travel book based on his broadcasts for the BBC entitled *A Passage to England*.

Civis Britannicus sum

I am a British citizen, in Latin to suggest the colonial's allegiance to the empire.

the Golden Bough

Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, first published in 1890, grew through many editions into a massive survey of world mythologies intended to demonstrate an underlying pattern which he first discerned in the legend of the Priest of Diana at the temple of Nemi, who could only gain that post by slaying his predecessor.

[413]

Goan

Goa is a former Portuguese colony on the southwest coast of India. Indian claimed it from the Portuguese in 1961.

Page 399

hospitality . . . the Buster Keaton movie of that name

Keaton's 1923 comedy is actually called *Our Hospitality*. The hapless Keaton finds he is the guest of a family which has carried on a deadly feud with his own family for generations. As good southerners, their sense of hospitality forbids them from killing him while he is actually in their home, so much of the film consists of their efforts to get him to leave and his frantic efforts to prolong his stay.

Ho Chi Minh to cook in its hotel kitchens?

The future Vietnamese leader did in his youth in fact work in the Carlton Hotel as a dishwasher and cake maker.

huddled-masses

Allusion to the Emma Lazarus verses (entitled "The New Colossus") on the Statue of Liberty: "Give me your huddled masses yearning to breathe free."

are-you-now-have-you-ever-been

Applicants for immigration, among others, are frequently asked

to sign forms asking whether they are now or have ever been members of the Nazi or Communist Parties.

Ho Chi Minh

Leader of the communist National Liberation Front during the Vietnam War.

McCarran-Walter Act

A law which for decades forbid those with radical political views entry into the United States.

Karl Marx

Marx lived and worked for many years in London.

Zindabad

Long live (Urdu & Farsi), meaning the same thing as "Viva."

Briefly summarize what Saladin admires about England and what Pamela objects to about it.

Page 401 [415]

Niccolò Machiavelli

Author of *Il Principe* (*The Prince*, 1513), a pragmatic and ruthless guide for the Medici, who ruled Florence during the Renaissance. The revisionist view that *The Prince* is a satire rather than a set of serious proposals has become fashionable in recent years. The *Discorsi* are *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* (1513-21).

Labyrinth

1986 film directed by Jim Henson and involving Muppet characters of his creation.

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Legend

A 1985 film directed by Ridley Scott in which demons seek to annihilate unicorns.

Howard the Duck

A 1986 satire on superheroes which cost millions because of its special effects but was a spectacular flop at the box office.

Page 402

Not since Dr. Strangelove.

The mad scientist in the film by that name (played by Peter Sellers) has an unruly arm which keeps giving the Nazi salute, and which ends by strangling him. The character is a satire on the way in which the U.S. Army adopted a number of scientists who had worked for the Nazis in developing German rockets so that they could help develop the American missile program.

Stephen Potter's amusing little books

Potter popularized the concept of *One-upmanship* in his best-selling book by that title (London: Hart-Davis, 1952) and in several sequels. When one has gained an advantage over someone else one is said to be "one up." To be at a disadvantage, hence, is to be "one down."

denied him at least thrice

Alluding to the Apostle Peter's three-fold denial of Christ (Matthew 26:69-75).

Page 403 [417]

Bentine, Milligan, and Sellers

Michael Bentine, Spike Milligan, and Peter Sellers were the stars of the long-running BBC radio comedy series, *The Goon Show*. See below, p. 406 [417], "the Goons."

Page 404 [418]

a short-story

[419]

Sunt lacrimae rerum

They are tears for misfortune. From Virgil's *Aeneid*, Book 1, line 462 (Latin). (See Verstraete 333.) The John Dryden translation of the *Aeneid*.

Page 405 [419]

Procrustean bed

In Greek mythology Procrustes laid out travelers on his bed, stretching them until they fit (if they were too short) or cutting off the parts that extended (if they were too tall).

Mutilasians

Pun on mutant (mutilated?) Asians; alluding to the tendency of popular culture to create Asian villains.

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lycanthropy

Werewolves.

'I Sing the Body Eclectic'

Punning on the title of a poem by Walt Whitman: "I Sing the Body Electric."

What is the common theme running through this paragraph and the following one?

Page 406

chimera

See above, note to p. 301 [311]. All the following examples are to some extent artificial blends which Saladin judges failures.

the names of the two trees

According to p. 299 [309], they were laburnum and broom.

Esperanto-like vacuity of much modern art

Esperanto is an artificial language designed to be an easy-to-learn international communications medium. Aside from the fact that its roots are entirely European, it has never been very widely adopted and is therefore a failure at communicating, as is much

modern art.

Coca-Colonization

An expression which uses the spread of Coca-Cola to almost all the corners of the earth as a symbol of the exportation of cheap and tasteless American (or Western) culture.

[421]

'the Goons'

See *Bentine, Milligan, and Sellers* above, on p. 403 [421].

Page 407

Shree 420

See note on p. 5 on "My shoes are Japanese." This film contains some of the most popular of Indian film songs.

Parker-Knoll

The British firm of Parker Knoll makes luxurious modern furniture.

[422]

Why does Saladin's agent compare him to Dracula?

Page 408

crazed homosexual Irishmen stuffing babies' mouths with earth
Is this based on some real incident?

'Why demons, when man himself is a demon?' the Nobel laureate Singer's 'last demon' asked from his attic in Tishevit

In Isaac Bashevis' story "The Last Demon," he portrays a demon who has been sent to plague an obscure Polish town inhabited entirely by Jews. He finds himself stranded there for eternity when the Nazis destroy the entire population in the Holocaust.

man is angelic . . . the Leonardo Cartoon

The Leonardo da Vinci cartoon is a large, elaborate drawing he made for a never completed painting of the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus with St. Anne and the infant John the Baptist. Though the children have cherubic smiles, neither one is literally an angel.

Page 410 [424]

Mughlai

In the north Indian Muslim tradition.

pack it in

Shut up.

Discuss Pamela and Jumpy's differing reactions to Saladin.

Page 411 [425]

Why do you think Jumpy has the same dream that Saladin used to have? (See above, p. 400 [414].)

Page 412 [426] *Ascot*

Scene of a famous horse race called “the Royal Meeting” attended each June by royalty and nobility, decked out in high fashion.

Page 413 [427] *the black man who changed his name to Mr X and sued the News of the World for libel*

London tabloids like the sensational *News of the World* are prone to label someone involved in a scandal and whom they hesitate to name in person “Mr. X” because British libel law restricts publishers much more than it does in the U.S. Black Muslims used to substitute “X” for the family names which their ancestors inherited from their slavemasters. See note above on Bilal X, p. 207 [213].

Brickhall Friends Meeting House

The “Religious Society of Friends,” popularly referred to as “Quakers,” have “meeting houses” instead of churches.

Page 414 [428] *the young Stokeley Carmichael*

Radical leader of the the U.S. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, later of the Black Power movement; born in Trinidad--another immigrant.

Walcott Roberts

Perhaps named in tribute to the famous Black Caribbean Nobel-Prize-winning poet Derek Walcott.

the World Service

The BBC’s foreign broadcasting service, whose announcers are famed for their cultivated “proper” accents.

Leviathan

Biblical name for a whale or mythical sea monster, associated with apocalyptic prophecies (see, for instance, Isaiah 27:1).

we shall ourselves be changed . . . We have been made again .
Phrases with vaguely religious connotations, the first perhaps alluding to Paul’s comment on resurrection, “We shall all be changed” (I Corinthians 15:51-52) and the second to the Christian concept of being “born again” (that is, saved).

hewers of the dead wood and the gardeners of the new

Reversing the connotations of the phrase “hewers of wood and drawers of water,” which refers in the Bible to slaves (See Joshua 9:21)

Page 415 [429]

Nkosi sikelel’ i Afrika

“God Bless Africa,” Xhosa hymn, used by the Transkei and some other African countries as a national anthem. The first verse was written by Enoch Sontonga in 1897. Often sung at rallies to support South African blacks.

What is it that Saladin objects to about this rally at the end of the full paragraph on this page? What do you think of his objection?

[430]

I Pity the Poor Immigrant

This Bob Dylan song contains such lines as “that man who with his fingers cheats and who lies with every breath” and “who falls in love with wealth itself and turns his back on me.”

Page 416 [430]

a blazing fire in the center of her forehead
Forecasting the disastrous fire on p. 466 [481].

bun in the oven
Britishism for “pregnant.”

[431]

Mephisto

Brilliant Hungarian film (1981) based on a novel by Klaus Mann.

Page 417

*--Who art thou, then?
--Part of that Power, not understood,
Which always wills the Bad, and always works
the Good.*

The demonic Mephistopheles offers this definition of his role to Faust in Goethe’s play (Part I, lines 1345, 1348-1349), arguing the ambiguity of good and evil. It is also the epigraph of Mikhail Bulgakov’s novel, *The Master and Margarita*, which Rushdie has identified as an important inspiration for *The Satanic Verses* (see below, p. 457 [472], Petersson 288).

Gondwanaland . . . Laurasia

Names assigned by paleogeologists to the early protocontinents which, according to the theory of continental drift, broke apart millions of years to form today’s continents. The theory given here of the origin of the Himalayas is widely accepted. Note that in a sense India itself is an immigrant to South Asia.

Page 418

Fair Winds

This punning store name alludes to the saying “’tis an ill wind that blows nobody good.” Rushdie is not the first to link this saying to wind instruments. It is a common joke among musicians that the oboe is an “ill wind that nobody blows good.”

Ave atque vale

“Hail and farewell;” from Catullus’ Ode 101, line 10.

phoney peace

Reversing the phrase “phony war” used to label the long pause in the winter of 1939-1940 between Hitler’s conquest of Poland and his invasion of France. Many observers felt that a war which would spread widely was unlikely, and denigrated what they viewed as war hysteria with this term.

Page 421 [435]

Friend!

Charles Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*. The title satirizes the tendency of musicals to shorten the titles of literary works, so that, for instance, the musical version of Dickens' *Oliver Twist* became simply *Oliver!*

Jeremy Bentham

The name of an English pragmatic philosopher (1748-1832), not usually associated with entertainment.

Page 422 [436]

the Stucconia of the Veneerings

The Veneerings are a pretentious newly wealthy couple in *Our Mutual Friend*. Their name suggests a veneer of elegance above a crass reality. Stucconia is their mansion, whose name suggests a structure built of cheap stucco rather than noble stone.

Gaffer Hexam

A ghoulish figure in the novel who makes his living dragging drowned bodies from the Thames and robbing them.

dry-ice pea-souper

When coal was widely used in London, the city was plagued with notoriously thick smogs which were said to be "as thick as pea soup." Such a fog is here recreated for the stage with dry ice.

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London Bridge Which Is Of Stone

The first paragraph of *Our Mutual Friend* introduces Gaffer Hexam as follows:

In these times of ours, though concerning the exact year there is no need to be precise, a boat of dirty and disreputable appearance, with two figures in it, floated on the Thames between Southwark Bridge, which is of iron, and London Bridge, which is of stone, as an autumn evening was closing in.

Icequeen Cone

The pun on "icecream cone" must have been in Rushdie's mind much earlier, when he first began referring to her as the "ice queen."

Page 423 [437]

a Curiosity Shop

Alludes to the title of a Dickens novel: *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

Page 424 [438]

Ours is a Copious Language

These lines are a verse arrangement of a passage from *Our Mutual Friend*. Martine Dutheil notes that in the original context "the fatuous Podsnap condescends to a Frenchman who is at

pains to make sense of the conversation. Instead of engaging with his questions, Podsnap keeps correcting his pronunciation: : "Our language," said Mr. Podsnap, with a gracious consciousness of always being right, "is Difficult. Ours is a Copious language, and Trying to Strangers. I will not Pursue my Questions."'" Clearly Rushdie is plucking a passage about British insularity in regard to foreigners out of this very English novel (Dutheil 77).

Rex-Harrisonian speech-song

The brilliant actor Rex Harrison was no singer, but he developed his own manner of talking his way through songs when he starred as Professor Higgins in the musical *My Fair Lady*.

mongoose to her cobra

Mongesees are valued in India for their ability to attack and kill deadly cobras unscathed.

[439]

What follows is tragedy.

Margareta Petersson suggests that this passage echoes a similar passage in Apuleius' *Golden Ass*: "Readers are warned that what follows is tragedy not comedy, and that they must read it in a suitably grave frame of mind" (Apuleius 239, Petersson 334).

in which clowns re-enact what was first done by heroes and by kings

Alludes to the opening lines of "The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" by Karl Marx: "Hegel remarks somewhere that all great world historical facts and personages occur, as it were, twice. He has forgotten to add the first time as tragedy, the second as farce."

Page 425 [440]

mutton dressed as lamb

An older woman dressed to look younger.

Page 426 [441]

neo-Procrustean

See above, note on Procrustean bed, for p. 405 [419].

Page 427

altered states

Allusion to the title of the 1980 film in which the main character is transmuted into a violent beast.

[442]

intentionalist fallacy

In literary criticism, the phrase "intentional fallacy" refers to the view that a work's meaning should be judged by its author's intentions. A short definition.

Page 428 [443] *I follow him to serve my turn upon him*

A quotation from the villainous Iago in Act I, Scene 1, line 42 of Shakespeare's *Othello*, explaining that the former serves the latter only so he can work his revenge upon him.

Page 429

Fury-haunted

The bird-women who punished those who committed certain crimes; their most noted victim was Orestes.

[444]

Oresteian imagination

Orestes returned from exile to kill his mother and her lover for betraying and murdering his father, dramatized in Aeschylus' *The Eumenides*.

quixotic

Like that of the very vulnerable would-be knight, Cervantes' Don Quixote.

Shabash, mubarak

Well done, congratulations (Urdu & Persian).

Page 430

That is no lady

Variation on the old joke: "Who was that lady I saw you with last night?" "That was no lady; that was my wife!"

What effect does Saladin's revelation about his wife's pregnancy have on Gibreel?

[445]

that bridge Which Is Of Iron

See note, above, on p. 422 [437] on *London Bridge Which Is Of Stone*.

Page 431 [446]

Hadrian's Wall

A wall built to defend Roman Britain from invading northern tribes.

the old elopers' haven Gretna Green

Gretna Green used to be famous throughout England as the first town across the border in Scotland in which one could be married without the delays required elsewhere; hence it was a popular destination for eloping couples.

Lockerbie

Scottish town, seemingly mentioned at random, but by coincidence the site several months after the novel was published of the Pan Am 103 explosion (see above, p. 4).

Page 432 [447]

character isn't destiny any more

The saying "character is destiny" is attributed to the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus.

Discuss the disagreement between Allie and her mother over modern history.

Page 433

Persepolis

The ancient capital of Persia (modern Iran).

[448]

woz ear

Cockney version of "was here."

Page 434 [449]

some rakshasa kind of demon

The Rakshas (Sanskrit), ruled over by Ravana, have the power to change their shape into those of animals and monsters.

bilkul

Completely (Hindi).

Page 435

Captain Ahab

The obsessed captain who hunts Moby Dick in Herman Melville's novel and is ultimately destroyed by the great white whale.

trimmer Ishmael

Ishmael is the narrator of *Moby Dick*, and is the sole survivor of the shipwreck which ends Ahab's quest. A "trimmer" is one who refuses to take sides, who trims his sails to suit the winds of popular opinion.

[450]

the Grand Panjandrum

A pompous official, from a 1755 story by Samuel Foote.

Page 438 [453]

bhai-bhai!

Brother and brother (Hindi).

Page 439

a Crusoe-city marooned on the island of its past, and trying, with the help of a Man-Friday underclass, to keep up appearances

In Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* the shipwrecked mariner tries to recreate his civilization in miniature, using as his servant the marooned native he calls "Friday." The British are now marooned on their own island home, and the natives of their former colonies have come to live and work, often at menial jobs. The Defoe

novel is a favorite object of allusions by postcolonial anglophone writers.

[454]

Covent Garden

Formerly a famous outdoor produce market, now specializing in handicrafts and souvenirs.

yoni

Vagina (Sanskrit). The traditional female counterpart to the male *lingam* (see below, p. 517 [531]).

Potemkin

Sergei Eisenstein's revolutionary 1925 film, *The Battleship Potemkin* about the 1905 Russian revolution, highly innovative and widely admired.

Kane

Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* (1941), also much admired for its innovative camera techniques.

Otto e Mezzo

The original Italian title of *8 1/2*, the autobiographical film by Federico Fellini (1963).

The Seven Samurai

Akira Kurosawa's influential 1954 film.

Alphaville

See above, p. 4.

El Angel Exterminador

Luis Buñuel's *The Exterminating Angel* (1962). Note that each of these films was made by a director from a different country.

Page 440

Mother India

A spectacular 1957 film about rural poverty directed by Mehboob Khan. Rushdie says of the film that it was

*the big attempt to make a kind of Gone With the Wind myth of the nation, and took the biggest movie star in India at the time, Nargis, and asked her, basically, to impersonate the nation. And the nation was invented as a village woman who triumphed over horrible hardships. At the beginning of the film, she has two children, and her husband is working in the fields and a boulder rolls down the hillside and crushes his hands. And she is required, therefore, to take over the male role, to run the family, to work in the fields and so on, and there is the usual run of wicked land owners. She has a good son and a bad son. There is quite an interestingly suppressed incest theme. Some of this crops up in *The Moor's Last Sigh*. Anyway, the point about *Mother India* is that it had a success on a scale that is almost unimaginable. It became a sort of gigantic event in the history of the country, and it did become a kind of nation-building.*

Rushdie goes on to comment on Nargis' later career:

... after she played Mother India it's as if she couldn't get rid of the part. She had been so stamped with that part that not only was it difficult for other people to see her differently, it became difficult for her to see herself differently. So she started pontificating, and there's an extraordinary passage which is recorded in the biography of Satyajit Ray, in which Nargis lays into him and says that his films are terrible, because they are anti-nationalist. And the reason they are anti-nationalist is because they show "negative aspects" of India. Whereas she, in her films, always tried to concentrate on the positive aspects. I think this passage is very illuminating. It indicates how Ray was never really popular in India, and the way in which the people who had been involved in Bombay cinema's sentimentalisation of the national ideal were actually quite hostile to that kind of art cinema--they thought it was negative.

Rushdie: "Interview," pp. 53-54.

Mr India

A science-fictional 1987 thriller directed by Shekhar Kapoor, starring Anil Kapoor, Sridevi and Amrish Puri.

Shree Charsawbees

Shree 420 (Hindi). See note on p. 5 on "My shoes are Japanese."

Ray

Satyajit Ray, director of *The World of Apu* and other fine Indian films not widely appreciated in his homeland. See Rushdie's "

Mrinal Sen

A Bengali filmmaker whose 1969 feature *Bhuvan Shome* was widely viewed as harbinger of a "new cinema movement," featuring low-budget, serious films.

Aravindan

Art film director from Kerala.

Ghatak

Ritwik Ghatak is a distinguished Bengali director.

aubergines

Eggplants.

sikh kababs

Skewered roasted meat.

aubergines

Eggplants.

seth

Member of a subcaste of businessmen stereotyped as greedy.

Page 441 [456]

Strindberg

August Strindberg, Swedish playwright (1849-1912).

Page 442*Harriet Bosse*

Married to the notoriously jealous and misogynistic Strindberg 1901-1904.

Dream

Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Cliff Richard

Hugely popular British pop star of English ancestry, but born in India. See Nazareth, p. 170.

Page 443 [458]

How does the anonymous caller know the intimate details of Allie's body and preferences in lovemaking?

Page 444 [459]*something demonic*

Suggesting that these, too, are Satanic verses.

Page 446 [460]*Knickernacker*

"Knickers" are panties and a "knacker" is a person who slaughters worn-out horses to sell them for dog food; so this invented word has an aggressive sexual connotation.

Page 447 [462] *Glory of the Coming of the Lord*

Allusion to the apocalyptic opening line of Julia Ward Howe's *Battle Hymn of the Republic*: "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord./He has trampled out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored." (These lines allude to a passage at the beginning of Isaiah 5 in which God's coming judgment is compared to the crushing of grapes.)

Fleet-Street diarists

Popular newspaper columnists. Most London newspapers used to have their offices on Fleet Street.

Page 448 [463]*trumpet Azrael*

The legendary trumpet to be blown by the archangel Gabriel at the end of the world.

Page 449 [464]*It appeared that Dr Simba . . .*

This account satirizes the tradition of police murdering radical captives in prison, then claiming they died either through highly improbable accidents or by committing suicide.

Why do you suppose that Rushdie has chosen to have Gibreel go on his apocalyptic mission just as the reaction to this incident breaks out? How are the two actions connected with each other?

Page 450 [465]*John Kingsley Read*

Leader of the neo-Fascist National Party, Read was tried in 1978 under the 1965 race relations act for incitement to racial hatred when he reacted to the murder of a young Southall Asian boy by saying "one down, a million to go." A sensation was created when the judge at his trial instructed the jury to find him innocent. A motion calling for the judge's removal from the bench was signed by 100 Labor Party members (See "Judge Defends Racial Slurs"). Rushdie first referred in print to this episode in his essay "The New Empire within Britain" in 1982.

Qazhafi

One of several possible spellings in English of the name of Libya's ruler, Muammar Khaddafi.

Khomeni

The Ayatollah is here alluded to by name, a fact ignored by most of those who have discussed the Rushdie controversy. See "Freethought Traditions in the Islamic World" for a discussion of this topic.

Louis Farrakhan

The vituperative Black supremacist American leader. All three of these figures are the sort of extremists that the "moderate" press would call on a radical to repudiate.

[466]

Inspector Kinch

The name is probably an allusion to the nickname of Stephen Dedalus in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. On p. 455 [470] we learn that his first name is Stephen.

Page 453 [468]*Crowds began to gather*

The riots which follow are based on the black riots in several British cities in 1980-1981 and 1985. See Solomos, pp. 175-233.

Page 454 [469]*testudo*

A military formation invented by the ancient Romans, in which a mass of men covered themselves with their shields to form a solid roof, resembling a turtle (Latin *testudo*).

Page 455 [470]*pint*

Pint of bitters=beer.

not by a long chalk

Americans say instead, "not by a long shot."

Page 456 [471]

Billy the Kid, Ned Kelly

See note for p. 262 [272]. All of the outlaws mentioned in this passage had something of a reputation as popular heroes.

Butch Cassidy

Founder with Harry Longbaugh (“the Sundance Kid”) of the Wild Bunch, which robbed banks and trains in the 1890s in the Rocky Mountains. More on Butch Cassidy.

James brothers

Jesse and Frank James robbed banks, stagecoaches, and trains in the decades following the Civil War.

Captain Moonlight

In the nineteenth century this term referred to rural gangs that often robbed and burned English farms in Ireland. They were popularly regarded as resistance fighters, and thus this reference is much more closely related to anticolonialism than the others. “Captain Moonlight” is also included by James Joyce in the “Cyclops” chapter of *Ulysses* in a long list of famous heroes and heroines (Comerford, p. 45).

Kelly gang

The gang led by Australian Ned Kelly (see above, p. 263 [272]).

Page 457 [472]

Gibreel who walks down the streets of London, trying to understand the will of god.

Rushdie provides his own comment on the scene which follows:

It should . . . be said that the two books that were most influential on the shape this novel took do not include the Qur’an. One was William Blake’s *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, the classic meditation on the interpenetration of good and evil; the other *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov, the great Russian lyrical and comical novel, in which the Devil descends upon Moscow and wreaks havoc upon the corrupt, materialist, decadent inhabitants and turns out, by the end, not to be such a bad chap after all.”

(“In Good Faith” 403). See Radha Balasubramanian, “The Similarities between Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Master and Margarita* and Salman Rushdie’s *The Satanic Verses*.”

Page 458 [473]

what is to be done?

Title of a number of important Russian works, most famously a 1902 pamphlet by Lenin about the organization of revolution. Like Lenin, Gibreel is contemplating his own violent plan for redemption (Kuortti).

Page 459 [474]

Airstrip One

The name George Orwell gave England in his nightmarish novel, *Nineteen-Eighty-Four*.

Mahagonny

Brecht and Weill’s decadent American city, see above, p. 3.

Alphaville

See above, p. 4.

Babylondon

Babylon crossed with London; see above, p. 4.

[475]

Queen Boudicca

Queen of the English tribe the Iceni; led a revolt against the Romans in Britain and sacked several cities, including London. More often spelled Boadicea.

Page 460 [475]

pussies-galore

Prostitutes, but alluding to character of that name played by Honor Blackman in the James Bond film *Goldfinger*.

Who do you say that I am?

Jesus’ query to his disciples in Mark 8:29. Compare with the refrain, “What kind of an idea are you?”

Page 461 [476]

genie of the lamp

The spirit that inhabited Aladdin’s lamp in *The Thousand and One Nights*.

the Roc

See above, note on p. 117 [119].

‘Isandhlwana’, ‘Rorke’s Drift’

On January 22, 1879, the Zulus attacked and annihilated a British force in the South African village of Isandhlwana inflicting one of the greatest defeats on Britain in modern history. Later that same day, 4,000 Zulus who had failed to arrive in time for the first battle turned on the nearby mission station of Rorke’s Drift and assailed it in waves in a battle that lasted for many hours. The heroic defense of the station by a handful of British troops is celebrated in the 1964 film *Zulu* (featuring, among others, Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi as his own ancestor), which probably brought the battle to Rushdie’s attention. The film is interesting as a post-colonial document since it portrays the Zulus (definitely “worthy enemies”) as almost unimaginably brave and extremely intelligent, their defeat being made possible only by the fact that they had few rifles. But Rushdie’s white residents have chosen these names for their apartment buildings as symbols of white resistance to black encroachment. The 1979 film *Zulu Dawn* depicts the battle of Isandhlwana. Compare with American “Remember the Alamo!”

Mandela

Nelson Mandela, long-imprisoned member of the African National Party of South Africa, symbol of resistance to apartheid. Mandela's freedom and election to the presidency occurred after the publication of the novel.

Toussaint l'Ouverture

Black leader of the successful Haitian revolution during the French Revolution.

Page 462 [477]

chimeras

See above, p. 406 [420].

a river the colour of blood

Fulfilling Enoch Powell's prophecy, cited earlier, Chapter 3, p. 462 [477].

Page 463 [478]

there he blows!

The traditional cry of the whaler upon spotting a spouting whale--"There *she* blows!" is here punningly used to refer to the blowing of the apocalyptic last trumpet. Gayatri Spivak notes that Gibreel's patronymic, Ismail Najmuddin, contains a reference to the Biblical figure called "Ishamel," which is also the name of the narrator of *Moby Dick* (47).

Page 464 [479]

'most horrid, malicious, bloody flames'

From Samuel Pepys' description of the Great Fire of London, September 2, 1666: "When we could endure no more upon the water, we to a little alehouse on the Bankside over against the Three Cranes, and there stayed till it was dark almost and saw the fire grow; and as it grow darker, appered more and more, and in Corners and upon steeples and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire" (Pepys).

Why is the style of the Communications Relations Council significant?

own goal

In soccer (English "football"), when a player inadvertently puts the ball into his own team's goal. The police are suggesting that the victims have blown themselves up by accident in trying to carry out a terrorist bombing.

Page 465

What do the narrator's questions imply about the fire at the CRC?

Page 466 [481]

'I look down towards his feet,' Othello said of Iago, 'but that's a fable.'

Shakespeare: Othello V:ii:286. Othello says this just after learning that he has been tricked into jealously killing his wife by the villainous Iago. He means that he thinks Iago must be a devil, so he looks at his feet to see whether he has demonic cloven hooves. But he dismisses this test for a grimmer one when in the next line he says "If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee," and stabs him shortly before killing himself.

Page 468 [483]

like the red sea

See above, p. 236 [242], and the next chapter, "The Parting of the Arabian Sea."

fire . . . smoke

The fleeing Hebrews were led by a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day (Exodus 13: 21-22). Compare to the Hijab in the preceding chapter. See note above, on p. 376 [388].

Page 469 [484]

The Ten Commandments

The 1956 film uses spectacular special effects to depict the flight of the Hebrews from Egypt, including the parting of the Red Sea and the death of all the first-born Egyptian children. Gibreel is beginning the dream

Chapter VIII:

The Parting of the Arabian Sea

Plot outline for Chapter VIII

It is important to know that the events in this chapter are based on a real occurrence. In 1983 thirty-eight fanatical Shi'ites walked into Hawkes Bay in Karachi (the site of the Rushdie family home in Pakistan). Their leader had persuaded them that a path through the sea would miraculously open, enabling them to walk to the holy city of Kerbala in Iraq (Ruthven 44-45).

The story of the mystical Ayesha from the end of Chapter IV resumes. One disaster after another assails the pilgrims following Ayesha in her march to the sea; but she insists on continuing, as does Mishal, Mirza Saeed's wife, despite his repeated attempts to dissuade her. He tries to persuade Ayesha to accept airplane tickets to complete the pilgrimage to Mecca (which is in fact the most common way for pilgrims to make the hajj today); but she refuses. Her fanaticism makes her more and more ruthless, unmoved even by the deaths of fifteen thousand miners nearby. She behaves like the evil Ayesha of the Desh plot when an Imam announces that an abandoned baby is a "Devil's Child," and allows the congregation of the mosque to stone it to death. Finally, the horrified Mirza Saeed watches as his wife and others walk into the sea and are drowned; though all other witnesses claim that the sea did miraculously open as Ayesha had expected and the group crossed safely. Mirza Saeed returns home and starves himself to death, in his dying moments joining his wife and Ayesha in their pilgrimage to Mecca, though probably only in his mind.

Notes to Chapter VIII

Page 471 [484] *The Parting of the Arabian Sea*
See above, pp. 236 [243], 468 [483].

Page 473 [487]

sanyasi

A devout Hindu who has sworn to relinquish the things of this world and wander the world in poverty, living off what he can beg (Sanskrit, Hindi).

Page 474 [488]

looking like a mango-stone had got stuck in his throat
Most uncomfortable since mangoes have very large, sharp-edged seeds.

potato burtha

Spicy mashed potatoes (Hindi).

parathas

Flat bread fried in ghee, often stuffed with spiced peas or potatoes.

Page 475 [489]

arré deo

Hey, you! (Hindi)

Family Planning dolls

Explained on p. 224-225 [231].

mausi

A respectful term for one's mother's sister (Hindi).

RSS

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh ("National Self-Service" Organization); a fanatically Hindu political organization with close ties to the Bhartiya Janata Party. The assassin of Mahatma Gandhi was a member.

Vishwa Hindu Parishad

Vishwa Hindu Parishad ("World Hindu Council"), another Hindu fundamentalist organization which often works closely with the RSS.

Page 476 [490]

communal

In Indian usage, this term refers to sectarianism, and is often used in phrases such as "communal violence," referring to violence between Hindus and Muslims.

Hindu-Muslim bhai-bhai

Hindus and Muslims are brothers. A slogan made famous by Jawaharlal Nehru (Jussawalla, "Dastan" 57)

shakti

The divine power or energy often personified as female, for example Kali, Durga, Lakshmi (Sanskrit). Mirza Saeed is arguing that that they are merely metaphors for a purely spiritual reality.

Page 477 [491]

Sarpanch

See above, note on p. 225 [232].

Page 478 [492]

windscreen

British for windshield.

Page 479 [493]

pugri

Turban (Hindi, Urdu).

biri

An Indian cigarillo, contains tobacco wrapped in a leaf of another plant (Hindi).

Page 482 [496]

her silver hair was streaked with gold
The reverse of the usual process.

Bibiji
See above, p. 217 [223].

Page 483 [497]

butterfly clouds still trailed off her like glory
Alluding to William Wordsworth's poem: "Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood:

But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy.
(stanza 5, lines 7-9)

Page 484 [498]

lemmings
According to (inaccurate) legend, lemmings periodically stampede suicidally into the sea.

Circe
See above, p. 24.

pipe-player
The Pied Piper of Hamelin.

Devil's verses
More Satanic verses.

a choice . . . between the devil and the deep blue sea
Formerly a common expression for a situation with no good choices, here made literal. Mirza Saeed is probably quoting the refrain of of Harold Arlen's popular song, "Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea" (lyrics by Ted Koehler).

Page 485 [499]

refused to sleep beside him
This may not be merely a personal reaction, since when a Moslem man disavows Islam or becomes a heretic, it is incumbent upon his wife to refrain from sexual intercourse with him (Massud Alemi).

Page 486 [500]

banghis
Literally "sweepers," but more generally, untouchables, low-caste people (Hindi).

Page 487 [501]

The entire discussion about love at the bottom of this page is conducted in clichés.

all for love
Title of John Dryden's (1677) play based on Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Love . . . is a many-splendoured thing."
A popular song from the 1955 movie of the same name.

The next two commonplaces are immigrants, translations from foreign languages:

Makes the world go round
Originally a line from an old French folk song.

Love conquers all
Translation of Vergil's *Eclogue* no. 2, line 68: "Omnia vincit amor."

[502]

isn't it?
Isn't that so? See above, p. 310 [320].

Page 488

What is the point of the pamphlets being handed out by extremist Hindus?

yatris
Travelers, pilgrims (Sanskrit, Hindi).

hoardings
Billboards.

Page 492

[506]

Venetian scene of devastation
Although the streets and squares of Venice are often flooded in modern times during high tides, this more likely refers to the fact that the city is threaded with numerous canals: any city whose streets are filled with water could be called a Venice.

Page 492

The water had an odd, reddish tint that made the sodden populace imagine that the street was flowing with blood.
Another version of Enoch Powell's vision come true; see note on p. 186 [192].

Page 493

[507]

mining disaster
Mining is a dangerous occupation, but the fantastic scale of this disaster makes clear that it is miraculous punishment for the miners' opposition to the march (see above, pp. 489 [503], 492

[505]).

kauri

Hindi for cowrie shells, which were used as currency throughout much of Asia and Africa in ancient times. There is a common phrase, “*kana kauri*,” which refers to a coin of such a small denomination as to be virtually valueless (Hussain).

dam

“Value,” used in both the monetary and philosophical senses (Hindi). But also punning on the English expression “Not worth a damn,” which may in fact have been derived from the Indian word (Windsor).

Page 496 [510]

The Imam

The recurrence of the title here reminds us of the ruthless Imam of the Dosh plot, and shows us how Ayesha’s idealism has turned to evil. It is as if the cruelty of the earlier Ayesha and the fanaticism of the earlier Imam have now joined forces. Yet another Imam, in Delhi, is depicted on p. 519 [533].

Page 497 [511]

stoned the baby to death

According to Srinivas Aravamudan, this scene recalls “the bloody and unsuccessful campaign conducted after Muhammad’s death by his favourite wife, Ayesha, against the fourth Khalifa, . . . Ali-- a historical reference often cited by fundamentalists . . . as a proof that women should not enter public life” (13).

Page 498 [512]

filmi ganas

Popular film tunes: the staple of popular music in India (Hindi). A history of filmi music.

nautch-girl

Indian secular dancer in a tradition going back to the Mughal courts (from Sanskrit-Hindi *naach*: dance).

‘Ho ji!’

A vaguely celebratory exclamation meaning something like “Hurray!” (Hindi). A common refrain in popular songs.

Page 499 [513]

In this plot, Mirza Saeed plays the role of the doubting tempter which was played by Salman in the Jahilia plot. Compare the two in terms of how sympathetically they are portrayed: their motives, attitudes, and deeds.

Page 501 [515]

Shangri-La

See note on p. 295 [305].

thela

A four-wheeled cart used by street vendors (Hindi).

Partition was quite a disaster here on land.

The 1947 partition of the former British colony into India and Pakistan was marked by violent riots, looting, and enormous bloodshed.

Page 503 [517] *dancing on a fire*

Walking on hot coals is a traditional practice of certain Hindu mystics called “firewalkers.”

Page 504

kiss of life

Mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration.

[518]

CID man

Plainclothes detective from the Criminal Investigation Department. The acronym is often jokingly said to stand for “cop in disguise.”

Page 505 [519]

punkahs

See above, p. 231 [237].

What evidence is there that the seas really parted and spared the pilgrims? What evidence is there that they simply drowned? What is Rushdie trying to convey by presenting this conflict evidence?

Page 505

What is the significance of the destruction of the tree in the garden?

Chapter IX: The Wonderful Lamp

Plot outline for Chapter IX

A year and a half later, Saladin flies home to be with his dying father. He has heard that Gibreel is now making films based on the “dreams” which have alternated with the present-day plot throughout the novel. On the plane he reads of various scandals and disasters taking place in India: clearly it is no utopia. Whereas Saladin resents the former maidservant who has married his father and taken on his mother’s identity, his lover/friend Zeeny Vakil immediately sympathizes with her. After years of hostility to his father, Saladin finds no support in those surrounding him for his attitude. As he sits by his father’s bedside the two are finally reconciled. Saladin has inherited his father’s estate and is now rich. Meanwhile a dispute over a film on Indian sectarianism has become the center of a censorship controversy in a way that ominously foreshadows the treatment which Rushdie’s *Satanic Verses* was to receive upon publication.

Gibreel has also returned to Bombay, depressed and suicidal. The movie he tries to make is a “satanic” inversion of the traditional tale from the *Ramayana*, reflecting his disillusionment with love after having been rejected by Allie. Ultimately he goes entirely mad, kills Sisodia and Allie (hurling the latter symbolically from the same skyscraper from which Rekha Merchant had flung herself). Visiting Saladin, he confesses, then draws a revolver from the “magic” lamp Saladin had inherited from his father, and shoots himself. Zeeny Vakil’s final words to Saladin, “Let’s get the hell out of here,” may be ambiguous: they could mean only “Let’s leave,” but she may also be inviting him to leave the realm of the Satanic in which he has been living for so long.

Notes for Chapter IX

Page 509

[523]

A Wonderful Lamp

Alludes to the *Arabian Nights* tale, “Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp.”

Page 511

[525]

GP

General practitioner (doctor).

[526]

Khalistan zealot

Sikh separatist, many of whom have been involved in terrorist acts, including the assassination of Indira Gandhi.

Page 513

[527]

pooja

See note above on p. 68 [69].

Page 514

[528]

Solan

The ancestral home of Rushdie’s family is in Solan, called the “Anees Villa Estate.” When the Rushdies moved to Pakistan, it was declared “evacuee property” and seized by the state and converted into the office of the district education officer, then made a magistrate’s residence. After a lengthy legal battle, the family regained title to the house. See J. N. Sadhu, pp. 20-23. (Joel Kuortti)

Page 516

[531]

islands in the stream

The title of a novel by Ernest Hemingway.

Page 517

[531]

Shiva lingam

The *lingam*, or phallic stone associated with Shiva, is one of the most commonly venerated objects in Hinduism (Sanskrit).

[532]

bride suicide

Murder reported as suicide; see above, p. 250 [258].

Gaffer Hexam

See above, p. 422 [436].

Page 518

massacre of Muslims

In late May of 1987 a number of Muslims were massacred at Meerut, purportedly by police forces. (David Windsor)

once-popular Chief Minister

Farooq Abdullah. There was a riot against him in Kashmir in 1987 during the Eid celebrations (which took place on May 29).

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[533]

HISTORY SHEETERS

Indian English for people with a criminal record.

Juma Masjid in Old Delhi

The largest mosque in India, built in the 17th century, more often spelled “Jami Masjid.” The walled city of Old Delhi is a Muslim stronghold, as opposed to Hindu-dominated New Delhi.

Bandh

General strike used as a political protest (Hindi).

member of the mile high . . . club

According to modern legend, anyone who has successfully performed intercourse in an airplane in flight.

Page 520

[534]

sugar . . . brown

“Brown sugar” is heroin, but these can also be read as racist slogans (see above, p. 261 [269]). The phrase was popularized in a song by that title by the Rolling Stones on their album “Sticky Fingers.” “Brown sugar” can also refer to sex with women of color.

Why do you think Rushdie has chosen to tell the story of Saladin’s father’s death in this final chapter? How does it relate to the rest of the novel? What functions does it serve at the end of the book?

Page 523

[538]

perhaps in the parallel universes of quantum theory

Some scientists have speculated that at each and every moment in which one thing rather than another might have happened, both do in fact happen, reality forking at that point into separate universes. Many “parallel” universes would then coexist simultaneously differing more or less from each other. The idea has been a commonplace in science fiction stories for decades.

Page 525

[539]

this pharmaceutical Tamburlane

London theater critic Kenneth Tynan concluded his 1960 review of an Oxford University Dramatic Society production of Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine the Great* (directed by John Duncan) with this whimsical parody, which he introduced as follows: “The supporting cast, studded as it is with constantly repeated names like Usumcasane, Theridamas, Mycetes, Celebinus and Callipine, got blurred in my mind, rather as if they were a horde of pills and wonder drugs bent on decimating one another” (Tynan 26).

Page 526

[540]

Eek, bhaak, thoo

Noises indicating something distasteful being spit out, also used as an expression of disgust (Hindi).

Abba

Father (Urdu).

The Devil damn thee black, thou cream-fac’d loon

A casually racist rebuke uttered by the besieged Macbeth to his servant in Act V, scene 3, line 11.

Page 528

[542]

Finnegan’s wake

James Joyce’s novel, *Finnegan’s Wake*, is based on a popular Irish ballad about a man who loved to drink so much he refused to stay inert at his own wake.

[541]

achkan jackets

Long formal jacket associated with turn-of-the-century Muslim nobility, now rapidly disappearing (Urdu, Hindi).

allsorts

Assorted hard candies.

Page 529

[543]

the lamp

See above, p. 509 [523].

Page 530

[545]

Urdu

The language most commonly spoken by Muslim Indians.

the world, somebody wrote, is the place we prove real by dying in it

The “somebody” is Edward Bond, a British playwright. The last paragraph of the “Author’s Preface” to his play *Lear* reads as follows: “Act One shows a world dominated by myth. Act Two shows the clash between myth and reality, between superstitious men and the autonomous world. Act Three shows a resolution of this, in the world we prove real by dying in it” (p. xiv).

Page 532

[547]

Claridge’s Hotel

London’s most famous and luxurious hotel.

Page 534 [549]*How has Saladin changed after his father’s death?***Page 536**

[550]

Childhood’s End

Probably a sly reference to the title of Arthur C. Clarke’s science fiction novel. Clarke has lived for some years in Sri Lanka.

Page 536

[550]

George Miranda

Perhaps alluding to the character in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. See above, p. 53 [49].

Dhobi Talao Boozier

A tavern in the Dhobi Talao district of Bombay.

Fundamentalists of both religions had instantly sought injunctions

Rushdie’s earlier novel *Shame* was banned in Pakistan, and *Midnight’s Children* condemned in India.

Page 537

[551]

Gateway of India

An impressive arch built near the harbor to commemorate the visit of King George V and Queen Mary in 1911.

Shiv Sena

See note above, on p. 55.

Page 539

[554]

dadas

Literally “brothers,” but here, pimps (Hindi).

Page 542

[556]

All-India Radio

The official government radio network.

“language press”

Newspapers and magazines in the many languages of India other than English.

Page 545

Why do you think the novel ends with Gibreel’s suicide?

The Unity of *The Satanic Verses*

Paul Brians

The Satanic Verses has been attacked by many critics as incoherent, as a disorganized mixture of plots, themes, and characters. Even a cursory survey of the preceding notes reveals that Rushdie has sought to knit together the various threads of his novel by introducing a host of cross-references, repeating the names of characters, catch phrases, and images in a complex network of allusions and echoes. Yet these might be viewed as desperate attempts to give a surface appearance of unity to a basically chaotic work.

I am persuaded that *The Satanic Verses* is indeed unified by a related set of topics, all of them widely acknowledged in earlier criticism, but perhaps not arrayed in the way I do here. This is my personal understanding of what holds the various plots of the novel together in a way that articulates a consistent world view.

Rushdie says that novels do not lay down rules, but ask questions. In fact he claims that by asking questions, good fiction can help to create a changed world. Novels like *The Satanic Verses* don't settle debates: they articulate the terms of debate and ask hard questions of the opposing sides, thereby helping to usher "newness" into the world. One of the unifying themes of *The Satanic Verses* is newness, or change. It attacks rigid, self-righteous orthodoxies and celebrates doubt, questioning, disruption, innovation. This much is obvious.

But Rushdie is focussing on a particular set of issues relating to rigidity and change: those identified with what is sometimes called "identity politics." It is unfortunate that this term is primarily associated with the opponents of such politics because it so aptly sums up what feminism, Afrocentrism, gay pride, national liberation movements and a host of other causes have in common.

People who find themselves excluded or suppressed by dominant groups try by various means to find an effective voice and tools for action to create power and authority for themselves. It is these struggles that are the basic underlying matter of Rushdie's novel. The question that is asked throughout this novel is "What kind of an idea are you?" In other words, on what ideas, experiences, and relationships do you base your definition of yourself--your identity?

People who find themselves identified as "foreigners" or "aliens" often find unwelcome hostile identities imposed upon them. The common catch-phrase in literary theory these days is "demonization," and it is this term that Rushdie makes concrete in his novel by turning Saladin, the immigrant who is most determined to identify with the English, literally into a demon. (Of course he is also able to earn his living only by taking on the guise of a space alien.) The other immigrants who assume horns later in the novel express the same satirical view of English bigotry. But this is only the beginning of Rushdie's exploration of the theme of identity.

In the distant past, European observers writing about people in colonized nations often distinguished between "unspoiled natives" who dwelled in childlike, ignorant innocence which was

part of their charm, and others who had been "spoiled" by contact with a European civilization they could mimic but never truly master. This formula not only justified the colonial domination of colonized "children" as a form of parental concern, even charity ("the white man's burden"), but rationalized measures taken to prevent inhabitants of the colonies from gaining the education and jobs they would have needed to rule themselves in the modern world.

Less obviously vicious but still prejudicial was a later formula according to which writing about what is now called "postcolonial" literature emphasized the position of writers from the "third world" writing in English as exiles, uprooted and stranded in alien, often hostile cultures far from home, working in a language that may not have been their own. Immigrants were called "exiles" whether they had actually been driven from their homeland or--as was much more common--they had sought increased opportunity by voluntarily moving abroad. "Exile" is a weak image, and Rushdie rejects it. His immigrants are sources of energy and creativity, busily redefining the culture of their adopted homelands.

In a more recent period, the standard formula has referred to the "center" and the "periphery." Europe and the U.S. constitute the center, writers from nations like Nigeria, Jamaica, and India belong to the periphery. Their voices are said to have been "marginalised," thrust from the center, forced into the margins. People using this language do so with more or less irony; but all too often it becomes just another way of saying that we should pay attention to our less fortunate fellows. The challenge of "marginalised" voices is to find the center, or shift it to themselves, seize the podium, and speak their piece.

What Rushdie does in *The Satanic Verses* is to reverse these terms. He challenges the English/European/white sense of identity. He rejects its claims to centrality. London is changed into an exotic land where people follow strange customs (wiping themselves "with paper only" and eating bony fish). 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, by the Romans and the Normans.

The only major character with a traditional English heritage is Pamela, who is striving mightily to escape that very heritage and mistakes Saladin for an exotic "alien" who can link her to India, when the main reason he is drawn to her is that she represents escape from the Indianness he is trying to flee. (This same sort of cross-purposes Indian-European relationship is also dealt with in a Raja Rao's remarkable 1960 novel *The Serpent and the Rope*.) Rosa Diamond is an Englishwoman yearning to become Latin American or to be conquered by invading Normans. The bigots who beat Chamcha in the police van are all--as he notes--no more English in their heritage than he, but his color and identity as a postcolonial immigrant allows them to treat him as a complete alien.

Minor Anglo-Saxon characters are venal (Hal Valance), bigoted (the punks who spit on the food in the Shaandaar Café), tyrannical (Margaret Thatcher), or stupid (Eugene Dumsday).

Rushdie has turned the tables on Anglo-Americans. Their travel writers have for generations dwelt on the failings of the benighted natives of far-off lands: it is now their turn to become a set of cartoons, to provide the background for the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the really important characters.

But Rushdie does not engage in this sort of caricature to privilege his immigrants as somehow morally superior. They are all morally flawed as well, though treated in a more complex manner. He is not saying that being from a former colony of Britain grants one any particular virtue; it is only that he is interested in focussing on such people. Of course he is perfectly aware that by doing so he is disorienting his “mainstream” English and American readers, giving them a taste of what it feels like to be bit players in a drama which is not essentially about them.

Further, he is not asking how immigrants can become “English” (in the way that Otto Cone strove to become English); he is instead asking how immigrants can create an identity for themselves in England which is richer, newer, more interesting than the traditional stereotypes associated with the old center of empire.

One traditional strategy of oppressed or marginalised groups is to try to create a sense of identity by dwelling on their shared history. Sometimes this takes the form of referring back to a historical period of suffering, as in the case of African-Americans finding a common ground in their heritage of slavery. This can be a powerful move when one belongs to a minority with a commonly recognized shared past of suffering. But this strategy has some often-noted unfortunate by-products. For one thing, it relies for its effectiveness on the hope that members of the majority group will accept the responsibility for their ancestors’ deeds. Even when majorities acknowledge the injustices of the past, guilt is not an emotion that can often motivate action to atone for those injustices. The Hindu miners in the Titlipur story who hark back to their suffering under Islamic rule to justify their attacks on the Muslim pilgrims illustrate the all too common phenomenon of historical grievances being used by one group to justify atrocities against another. Another instance in the novel is the group of Sikh terrorists who blow up the plane at the beginning. During the riot, whites emblazon their apartment houses with references to nineteenth-century wars in South Africa, posing as beleaguered English South African settlers surrounded by hostile Zulus (461). In our time Northern Ireland and the Balkans have provided vivid European examples of the deadly effects of this sort of thing.

The politics of shared grievance also focus attention on the past rather than on the future. Rushdie wants people to remember that Union Carbide’s neglect cost the lives and health of thousands of Indians in the Bhopal disaster (and he clearly wants the company held responsible), but he does not want the very identity of India to be defined only by a chain of misfortunes. The most important aspect of the Indian cultural heritage for him is its rich, creative variety. Its history is more than a mere list of the crimes committed against it by others; and he is prepared to add the crimes committed by Indians against each other to its portrait as well.

Another approach to identity politics is to hark back to a positive historical heritage instead of to a time of suffering. Thus the black Caribbean immigrants in the novel seek to emphasize an African heritage which is actually very distant from their lived experience. Chamcha mentally mocks them for singing the “African National Anthem.” The black leader originally named “Sylvester Roberts” has chosen the absurd name “Uhuru Simba” in an attempt to “Africanize” his identity. It seems clear that Rushdie shares at least some of Chamcha’s reservations about Afrocentrism in the scene of the defense rally for the arrested Dr. Simba (413-416). Choosing Chamcha as his point of view character allows him to critique the limits of such ideas even as he acknowledges the justness of their cause.

In the first chapter of the book, George Miranda and Bhupen Gandhi match Zeeny’s proud references to Indian accomplishments and her list of crimes against Indians with their own examples of atrocities committed by Indians (54-57). Bhupen ends his tirade against modern India (56-57) by asking the emblematic question, “Who do we think we [are]?”

Rushdie seems to be trying to say that Indians, like all human beings, are both victims and criminals, both creators and destroyers. He is not proposing a sort of bland homogenized theory of original sin according to which all people are equally guilty and none specifically to blame: clearly he cares passionately that wrongs be righted and criminals identified and punished. Rather he rejects both martyrdom and triumphant nationalism as inadequate foundations for a satisfactory self-identity.

Another common source of identity is, of course, religion. Who would have thought that in the latter part of the twentieth century, so many conflicts would come to be defined in religious terms? Israeli Jews vs. Palestinians, Sikhs vs. Hindus, Hindus vs. Muslims, Serbs vs. Croats, Irish Catholics vs. Irish Protestants—we seem to be embroiled in a new age of Wars of Religion. For Rushdie, orthodox religion signifies intolerance, repressiveness, rigidity. Dumsday represents the know-nothing Christian right and the Imam fanatical Muslim extremism. The Imam’s hatred of the former Shah of Iran and SAVAK is no doubt shared by Rushdie; but his alternative is even more monstrous: a giant insatiable maw devouring the people it claims to save. It is one of the more poignant ironies of “the Rushdie affair” that Khomeini evidently died without ever realizing that the novel he had denounced contained a devastating portrait of him.

If Rushdie had only denounced such fanaticism, few in the Muslim world would have endorsed Khomeini’s fatwa. But Rushdie goes on to call into question the credibility and beneficence of orthodox, traditional Islam. Gibreel’s dreams challenge the Qur’an’s claims to infallibility, accuse Islam of the repression of women, call into question the probity and honesty of the Prophet himself.

Rushdie does not create these dreams out of a simple desire to blaspheme for blasphemy’s sake. He is following in the footsteps of the great eighteenth-century Enlightenment critics of religion like Voltaire who sought to undermine the authoritarian power structures of their day by challenging their religious underpinnings. So long as the Church endorsed slavery, the

divine right of kings, and censorship, the sort of liberating changes the rationalists yearned for could not come to pass, unless the Church's authority could be called into question. Similarly, Rushdie sees modern societies like Iran and Pakistan as cursed by religious convictions that bring out the worst qualities in their believers. (In *The Moor's Last Sigh* he challenges Hindu fanaticism as well.)

The entire novel strives to break down absolutes, to blur easy dichotomies, to question traditional assumptions of all kinds. There are to be no simple answers to the query, "What kind of an idea are we?" Demons can behave like angels and vice versa. High ideals can lead people to commit terrible crimes. Love can be mixed with jealous hate. Exalted faith can lead to tragedy. Just as Rushdie strives to destroy the distinction between center and periphery, so he challenges easy distinctions between good and evil.

At the end of the novel, Saladin returns to India, finally to reconcile himself with his father. But this is no simple return to his roots. The father with whom he is reconciled is a changed man. Saladin could not have loved him until he had become the enfeebled, benign shadow of his former self on his deathbed. Part of his heritage--the lamp--proves deadly. His inheritance does not include the home he grew up in. Zeeny, who elsewhere warmly urges his Indian roots on him, has little use for sentimental attachment to Peristan. Let it make way for the new, she says. Saladin seems finally to agree. He is ready to put aside not only the "fairy-tales" of religion but his personal history as well. In the end he opts for newness, for "If the old refused to die, the new could not be born" (547).

In the end, despite the postmodern trappings of Rushdie's narrative, the values of the novel seem remarkably traditional: belief in individual liberty and tolerance, freedom of expression, skepticism about dogma, and belief in the redemptive power of love. Lest we too quickly claim triumphantly that these are distinctively European values, Rushdie reminds us of the remarkably intelligent and innovative Mughal ruler of India, Akbar, who challenged the orthodoxies of his time and brought more than his share of newness into the world (190).

One could derive from the book a sort of existentialist morality: there are no absolutes, but we are responsible for the choices we make, the alliances we forge, the relationships we enter into. Our choices define us. We cannot shift the responsibility for our actions to God or history. "What kind of an idea are you?" is a question addressed not only to immigrants, but to all of us.

Selected Sources

I have drawn on these books and articles in creating these notes. However, this is far from being a comprehensive bibliography of scholarship on *The Satanic Verses*, nor is it intended to be a list of the best sources. Rather it consists primarily of sources which provided assistance in tracking down allusions in the novel. Many fine interpretive articles and books are not listed.

Unfortunately I cannot cite some of my most useful sources, since they involved personal communication with persons who did not wish to be cited by name. However, out of many others I am happy to thank Massud Alemi, Martine Duthiel, Paul Harmer, Azfar Hussain, Suzanne Keene, Joel Kuortti, Sudhakar Chandrasekhara, Ina Westphal, Mel Wiebe, David Windsor and James Woolley for identifying various references.

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